# Using Infographics to Support Student Learning

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When looking for a way to introduce students to the class or to a new concept, skill, or idea, readings and text-based resources are often the most readily available, but infographics, whether simple or complex, can help students learn in new ways and offer multiple and varied entry points into the course material.

I use visuals in a variety of different ways in my classes. I've included three examples, ranging in topic and detail, that I share with my English 302 students throughout the semester.

**Figure 1:**
This first infographic is perhaps the simplest in structure but the most useful to orient students to the course expectations. Explaining not only the types of work that students will have to do in this course but also when they are expected to this work means that they can create a schedule that works for them. Listing the expectations in a visually appealing format makes students more likely to engage with it as they can easily see the distinct days of the week.



**Figure 2:**
When students in a new semester struggle with a concept that previous students didn't find as challenging, I find that creating a visual aid helps to clarify things. This second example, focused on academic discipline, is one I created relatively quickly when it became clear that students needed an additional resource.
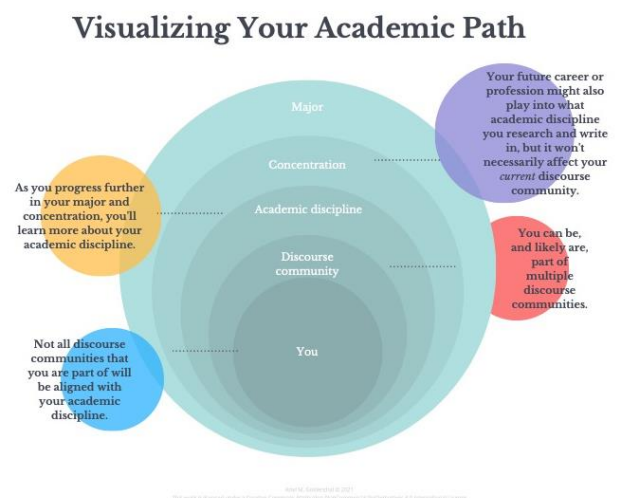


*Figure 1, a weekly overview of my English 302 class*

*Figure 2, concentric circles covering discourse community, major, and academic discipline*

**Figure 3:**
The final sample infographic is one that I developed to teach one of the most complicated skills that we ask of students: Synthesizing sources. In contrast to the shorter infographic that I created rapidly in response to student need, this synthesis infographic is one that I created and tweaked over multiple semesters.

This complex infographic covers multiple aspects of synthesis using visuals, icons, and short text to explain the concept. The idea came from mini-lecture I used to give students in which I described the process of synthesizing sources as the method of baking chocolate chip cookies. After a few semesters of the same simile, I supplemented it with a visual that I then expanded into this more detailed infographic, which gives an overview of not only the steps to synthesizing sources, but also the thinking behind it.

While I do occasionally record videos or otherwise talk with my students about the infographics that I create, my goal is for them to stand on their own so students can reference them later in the semester, further supporting



*Figure 3, a description of synthesizing sources*