

## Appendix

### Assignment Sheet: The Real/Ideal Research Project

This research project is split into three components. The components are purposefully ordered so that one leads to the next. Each component can be considered a separate mini-project that coalesces to form the Real/Ideal Research Project.

**Component 1:** In this first component, you will write a personal narrative that focuses on your emotional connection to a specific inequity or injustice you have experienced, are currently experiencing, or have witnessed. The inequity/injustice you select may be related to gender, race, religion, family, class, physical appearance, or something else. While the specific inequity/injustice you decide to spotlight is up to you, it must be something 1) with which you have personal experience, and 2) that has had an emotional impact upon you. These two points are significant because your narrative must do more than recount an experience. It must also explore your personal connections and emotional ties to this experience. You are encouraged to write honestly, explaining and exploring this experience and its emotional impact.

The following chart is designed to help you brainstorm topics for your personal narrative. Chart #1 is completed for you as an example. Chart #2 is left blank for you to complete.

**Chart #1**

<b>Specific inequity/injustice:</b> <i>Being told I could not volunteer for a position at my church because I was a woman and only men were allowed to hold that position.</i>	
<b>Step-by-step breakdown of experience</b>	<b>Emotional experience/impact</b>
<i>My church was looking for a volunteer to edit our monthly newsletter. I decided to volunteer.</i>	<i>I felt excited about the idea because I liked writing and I thought it would be a good addition to my resume for college applications.</i>
<i>I was told I could not be the editor because I was a woman.</i>	<i>I felt surprised at the response. They never said they were looking for a man specifically.</i>
<i>I asked why the editor needed to be a man. They said because that was the rule. It had always been a man.</i>	<i>I felt angry at this rule. I felt that it was unfair and had nothing to do with my writing or editing abilities.</i>
<i>They suggested I be the editor's assistant.</i>	<i>I felt even angrier at this suggestion. I started to feel anger and resentment towards the church for making this rule.</i>

Chart #2

<b>Specific inequity/injustice:</b>	
<b>Step-by-step breakdown of experience</b>	<b>Emotional experience/impact</b>

In addition to the chart, you can use the following questions to guide your narrative:

1. Based on the brainstorming chart, what are the specific emotions that characterize this experience for you?
  - a. What do you notice about the progression of your emotions? Does one lead to, build off of, and/or contradict another?
  - b. Do your emotions change throughout your experience? Do you move from one emotion to another?
  - c. Do you experience a single emotion repeatedly? If so, does this repeated emotion remain consistent or do you experience it with more or less intensity as the situation progresses?
2. What observations can you make regarding your emotions and the specific people, places, and/or events involved in your experience? For example, is one type of emotion frequently connected to a particular person or place?
3. In what specific ways did/do you express these emotions? For instance, were/are your emotions expressed publicly? Privately? Verbally? In writing?
4. What observations can you make regarding your emotions and your actions?
5. Does this experience make you feel a certain way about your past? Your present? Your future?
6. Is this an experience from your past or an experience of which you are in the midst?
  - a. If from the past, does this experience still impact you today? In what ways?
  - b. If a current experience, what impact does this experience have on how you feel about your present and/or future circumstances?

The final draft of Component 1 should be at least 750 words.

**Component 2:** In this second component, you will continue exploring the inequity/injustice you wrote about in your personal narrative. However, in this component, you will bring in outside sources as a way of helping you to understand the specific ideologies that drive this inequity. In other words, you are going to conduct research regarding the specific ideas, knowledge, and histories that legitimize and propel this unjust practice. The aim of this component is to help you understand the ways in which your personal, emotional experience is not solely personal. Rather, it is reciprocally entwined with current and past cultural norms, subjectivities, systems of belief, and power hierarchies. Put simply, in the second component of your research project, you will situate your emotional experience within a larger rhetorical framework.

If we briefly return to the example offered in Chart #1, we can more fully understand this component. The student who was told she could not volunteer for a position at her church might conduct research on the gender roles and norms of the early Christian church. Or she might be interested in researching how women are portrayed in the Bible and the relationship between these historic portrayals and more modern depictions of women in the Church. Alternatively, the student may not want to take a religious approach at all, and she might decide to research gender roles and norms in the writing/editing industry.

The final draft of Component 2 should be at least 1500 words and contain at least 4 scholarly sources.

**Component 3:** In this third component, you will reflect on the first two components of your research — what we can think of as the “Real” components — in order to imagine a more “Ideal” space. Based on your personal emotional experiences and the research you conducted, what conventions, relationships, expectations, beliefs, and/or practices might need to be reconfigured in order to respond to and challenge this inequity? What specific people/groups might be involved in/impacted by this reconfiguration? How can you strategically call upon pathos, logos, and/or ethos to facilitate this change? In this component of your project, not only should you imagine and write about this more ideal space, but you should also identify at least one tangible action you could take to help make this ideal a reality and the specific ways you would call upon pathos, logos, and/or ethos to challenge this inequity.

After explaining the potential action, you should also reflect on the potential emotional and social implications of such an action. That is, what impact could this action have on you emotionally? On others? How might this action support, challenge, clarify, and/or otherwise respond to the emotions you wrote about in Component 1? Additionally, in what ways might the action align with, challenge, and/or improve the social context? What are the potential risks of this action?

To return again to our example, the student who was not allowed to volunteer for her church might imagine a more ideal space in which volunteers were evaluated based on their skills and experiences rather than their gender. She might decide that one tangible action she can take would be to write a letter to her church and propose a volunteer selection process in which church volunteers submit their resumes for blind-review. Or she might decide it would be more productive to meet with someone face-to-face and discuss her idea. Either way, this student

would write about the steps she would need to take and the potential implications of such an action.

The final draft of Component 3 should be at least 750 words.