Literacy Self-Study

**WHY**

How much do you know about yourself as a writer? Perhaps you write in between facebook posts (which is also writing) or texting with your friends (which is also writing).In our first major assignment, you will probe your writing process through the collection and analysis of a specific kind of data.

This data, however, concerns a much larger set of issues than your individual successes and failures, as your position as a writer has a critical impact on the way your social position (as a college student, as a teenager, or as a member of your particular generation) is viewed by society at large. Therefore through this analysis you will be asked to not only consider the data as a reflection of your own writing practices, but as an addition to a wide range of conversations *about you*, but not necessarily directed *at you*.

The main goals for this assignment are to:

* Collect, organize, and successfully present primary research
* Develop an understanding of the opportunities and limitations of different methods of representing data in a visual way
* Reflect on your own rhetorical situation
* Develop an awareness of your personal reading and writing practices

**WHAT:**

**Literacy Log:** Your first stage in this assignment will be to collect data on your reading and writing practices. In order to accomplish this you will be charged with creating a log to document each time that you either read or write over a period of 24 hours. This data will need to be recorded by computer, and you will need to hand in a copy of the data as a part of the final project. The challenge of this portion of the assignment is not only to record a vast amount of data, but to begin to organize and evaluate that data for patterns you might touch on in the argument paper. At this stage it is not vital for you to understand what these patterns *mean*, as that will take place during the next phase of the assignment.

**Argument Paper:** Throughout this first unit we will read several articles that talk about your generation, age group, or particular demographic. While these articles will inevitably speak *about* you, they will infrequently speak *to* you. Using your data as a source (one that you should cite in the paper!), you will therefore write an argumentative paper that adds your voice to the voice, the voice of your social group, to the conversation. The goal of this section of the assignment is to translate the messiness of the data into a clear story that a reader can follow, and which presents a case for a particular approach or perspective of undergraduate/millennial/Purdue/teenage writing. The completed self-profile should come to around 750-1000 words in MLA format.

The self-profile will also require you to use visual components to tell your story. This may include graphs, charts, screenshots, or even camera-phone pictures that provide your reader with a richer understanding of your reading and writing practices. The kind of visual you incorporate into your essay depends on the argument you are trying to make, and you should look at the articles we read as examples of how different arguments can be supported by different visuals.

**Reflective Cover Memo:** Along with the rest of the completed assignment you will submit a cover sheet that connects the themes of your argument paper to the larger ideas that we have been working on in class. This phase also gives you a chance to reflect on what you have learned about your writing by approaching it from a data-driven perspective.

**WHEN:**

 **Literacy Log (submitted with possible topic):** January 21st

 **Draft of Self-Profile:** January 28th

 **Final Draft of Self-Profile**

 **(with cover memo):** February 4th