**Writing Assignment and Rubric**

**Rationale:**  This assignment is a genre-based writing assignment for a first-year seminar course. Hyon recommends a genre awareness approach to teaching writing in order to “prepare multilingual university students, and in fact all students, for the hybrid and complex nature of genres at the university and beyond…. [This approach] involves students researching and analyzing genres[[1]](#footnote-1) from various disciplines and various authentic writing prompts [which] allows students to develop the ‘rhetorical flexibility’ needed to adapt to new genres and new contexts” (p. 83). According to Hyon, “[A] genre awareness approach is particularly beneficial for U.S.-educated multilingual students who may not have received extensive high school instruction in genre and genre variation” (p. 71). In addition to being an authentic real-world genre, the restaurant review assignment provides students with an opportunity to practice both *evaluative* and *descriptive* writing, types of writing they will likely be asked to do again in future college courses or workplace settings.

**Considerations for adaptation:** Every discipline produces texts that fall into different genres. Rather than asking students to read one type of genre (e.g., a peer-reviewed journal article, book chapter, book in the discipline) and write a completely different type of genre (e.g., an “academic essay”), faculty might consider asking students to produce a genre (e.g., a book review, a response article) that the students have been assigned read, have had a chance to analyze according to genre-specific characteristics, and can model.

**Assignment: Local Area Restaurant Review**

**Purpose:** In order to help visitors to X College more thoroughly assess their off-campus dining options, you will write a ***description*** and ***evaluation*** of a local area restaurant (NOT a fast-food chain restaurant) and a meal you ate there.

**Audience**: Current and prospective students and their families, guests of X College.

**Occasion[[2]](#footnote-2)**: The College is updating its webpages and would like to include student reviews on the “Area Restaurants” page linked from the “Visitor’s Center.”

Using the guidance provided by “Questions to Ask When Evaluating Restaurants,” “How to Review a Restaurant Like a Pro,” “Quick Guide to an Evaluation Essay,” “Descriptive Essays,” and “Descriptive Writing,”[[3]](#footnote-3) write a 750-1000 word (~3-4 pages double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins) review of the restaurant and the food you ate there.

Your review should include both a ***description*** and an ***evaluation*** of the restaurant itself (the atmosphere, the service, the menu options, etc.) and the food you ate.

Rationale:

**Rubric**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Points****Possible** | **Points Earned** |
| Content * provides a detailed **description** of the restaurant
* provides a detailed **description** of the meal
* **evaluates** the physical and atmospheric elements of the restaurant (e.g., the restaurant’s location, service, menu options, customers, etc.)
* **evaluates** the quality and taste of the meal
* includes **concrete evidence** to support the claims
* answers reader’s question: “Should I eat there or not?”
 | **50** |  |
| Organization * includes an engaging opening that gets readers interested and engaged
* uses transitions and “signpost language” to ensure the review progresses smoothly (see *course handbook* 25-28)
* maintains coherence; fully developed body paragraphs proceed in a logical manner
* concludes logically; includes an overall summary of the dining experience
 | **15** |  |
| Style/Audience Awareness* demonstrates an awareness of audience (College-affiliated visitors to local area)
* demonstrates an awareness of the rhetorical situation (describing and evaluating a local restaurant)
* varies word choice and sentence structure to craft a compelling voice that engages readers
 | **15** |  |
| Grammar/Mechanics* follows guidelines for standard written American English grammar, punctuation, syntax, spelling, capitalization, usage (see *course handbook*)
* meets length requirements (750-1000 words)
* includes proper in-text documentation and reference list (as applicable)
 | **10** |  |
| Process (all 7 = 10 points, 5-6= 7.5 points, 3-4 = 5 points, 0-2 = 0 points)* Prewriting due [date]
* First draft due [date]
* Self Evaluation due [date]
* Rough draft due [date]
* Peer review due [date]
* Revision plan due [date]
* Conference [date]
 | **10** |  |
| **Total** | **100** |  |

1. See the [Rhetorical Analysis exercise](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tvucMOzm-5Qd6cqCFLFiWyFfGS-wBifpBuKMdN---CI/edit?usp=sharing) included with this module. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Providing a concrete, specific purpose, audience, and occasion for the assignment lends additional authenticity to the writing prompt. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These readings give students access to the language of evaluative and descriptive writing and provides explicit instruction in the styles and forms of writing that the professor expects students to produce in the assignment. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)