

Sample Assignments

Sample Informal Writing Assignments

Informal writing provides students the opportunity to write to learn. These assignments are often short, reflective, and personal. The following are examples of informal writing that are appropriate for Hullabaloo U:

Admit Cards

Ask students to come to class with a question about a topic, a chapter summary, or an answer to a question about the reading. The purpose of such an assignment is for students to demonstrate that they have prepared for the class. Admit cards might be used merely as a record of attendance, or more substantively, as an assessment of students' preparation, an alternative to a quiz.

Reaction/Reflection Cards

Have students write a brief reflection on a reading assignment, in-class activity or discussion, or beyond-the-classroom experience like a cultural event on an index card. This is a helpful method to gauge student interest in, understanding of, and reactions to class content.

The One-Minute Paper

The purpose of a "one-minute paper" is to provide an opportunity for individuals to focus their attention and organize their thoughts. The title is a bit of a misnomer – you may give students up to 5 to 10 minutes to write a response to "prompts." Often these papers lead to questions, promote class discussions, provide for reflection, and improve writing on exams.

Examples of appropriate occasions to use "one-minute paper" exercise include:

- Prior to a class discussion about an assigned reading
- After a short lecture on a specific concept or particularly difficult idea
 - At the end of a class period
 - Prior to the start of a project (after the assignment directions have been given)

Usually not graded, or considered part of the attendance grade for the day, these assignments are used to discover how well students understood the material, to determine the usefulness of an assignment, to encourage writing/critical thinking, to see if students understood the point, and/or to learn more about students.

Sample prompts include:

- *What was the most valuable thing you learned during this class/session?*
- *What question(s) remain in your mind as we end this session?*
 - *What was the "muddiest" point in this session? (In other words, what was least clear to you?)*

Journals/Blogs

Journals may take a variety of forms, including blogs, e-mail, joint group or class products, or traditional handwritten notebooks. Following are sample assignment descriptions:

Journal/Blog/Canvas posting: Throughout the semester, students will write three informal reflections on course experiences. Writing prompts will be provided. These reflections will be graded primarily for

completion and demonstrated effort, and should be emailed/posted to Canvas by the beginning of class on the date indicated on the course calendar.

Below are sample prompts that can be used in your class. They are arranged by topic and can be adjusted as needed for your students.

Academic Strategies	What is the hardest class you are taking this semester? What are you doing to be successful in the course?
	Tell me about the other classes you are taking this fall. How are things going? Have you had any grades from tests and papers? If so, are you doing as well as you expected? Also, what challenges is the course presenting you and what are some strategies you use to overcome them?
Alcohol	What are some general perceptions about alcohol and college life? Is there more or less drinking going on than you thought? Why do you think freshmen engage in drinking at a greater rate than other students? Lastly, if you choose to drink, what are some ways you can do so safe and responsibly?
Campus Resources	What are some of the campus resources you learned about and used this semester? How have they helped you in your transition to the University?
Employability	What is your dream job?
Goals	Look ahead to your graduation four or five years from now-what do you want your Aggie legacy to be? What would you like to contribute to the Aggie community? How are you planning on achieving these things?
Involvement/Engagement	Tell me about a club or organization you have gotten involved with on campus. What are you learning as a result of your involvement? How is it going to help with your future?
Positive Relationships	Who is a faculty member you would like to get to know this semester? How do you plan to build a relationship with this individual? Does anything about getting to know a faculty member cause you anxiety? If so, what?
	Who is your favorite new person you have met at Texas A&M?
	What was the most meaningful compliment you have ever received? Who gave it to you? When was it given? Why was it meaningful?
Time Management	Please assess your personal satisfaction with your time management thus far. Discuss one strategy you've used to successfully manage your time.
	To what extent is the way you spend your time aligned with your most important values? What have you learned about managing time, and what is an example of how you have succeeded in managing your time?
Transition	Why did you choose to come to Texas A&M? What are your hopes? Fear? What do you think of life after high school so far?

	<p>What aspects of college are you most looking forward to throughout your first year?</p> <p>How is the culture here in College Station different from where you are from?</p> <p>How has college been going so far? In other words, how are you adjusting to life at Texas A&M? Are there any challenges that you've faced? What are you most proud of so far? What are you most excited about?</p>
Transition/Mid-Term	<p>Now that you have been in college for a month, please reflect back and describe how things are going, both academically and socially. Also, how is college measuring up against your expectations that you had before you arrived?</p>
Values/Identity	<p>What are your thoughts on the topic of diversity? How comfortable are you discussing diversity issues such as race, gender, or sexual orientation? Does any particular issue cause you more discomfort? Why? What is the importance of discussing this in Hullabaloo U?</p> <p>While at Texas A&M have you met/worked with anyone who came from a different cultural background than you? What did you learn about yourself through this interaction?</p>
Reflection	<p>Looking back on this semester, what are 3 lessons you have learned? What would you do differently if you had the ability to go back in time? Did you make any decisions that made you feel proud? If so what were they? What advice would you give to the incoming students next Fall?</p>

Self-Disclosure Assignments (to aid in Community Building)

Life Map & Goals

Draw a life map, like those shared in class, which charts your life from birth to being a student at Texas A&M University. Include significant people, places, experiences, goals, values, and/or beliefs, as well as a photo of you. On a separate page, list 3-4 academic, social, personal wellbeing or career goals for your semester and/or your time at Texas A&M. The Life Map & Goals must be submitted through Canvas by *time on date*, so that a PowerPoint can be made with all Life Maps prior to class. You will share highlights from your life map and goals in a 1-minute informal presentation to your classmates during class on *date*.

Refer to the Self-Disclosure Activities in the Community Building section for additional ideas. Some require out-of-class preparation so may need to be listed as an assignment.

Campus Resource/Campus Engagement Assignments

“Do You Know” Presentation

In pairs/small groups, students will be responsible for preparing a brief “Do You Know?” Presentation which will be shared with classmates at the beginning of each class period starting the fourth week of class. For this activity, you and your partner will select a presentation week and a University office, program, resource or opportunity. Then you will research and educate your classmates on this topic or area (2 minutes) during class on your selected week. You can share this information either as a traditional “live” presentation or as a video. Please provide your classmates with a brief handout (no more than one page) sharing the highlights of this resource area (location, contact info, website, hours, services provided, any other relevant information). This will be a way we can learn about all the University has to offer students. The presentation media (video/PowerPoint) and handout are due at midnight the night before class on your chosen week so that materials can be made available to classmates. More details will be provided in class.

Aggie Bucket List Challenge

With a partner/small group, complete 3 items on the Aggie Bucket List. Document your adventures together through photos, video, or other media. Prepare a creative 2-minute multimedia presentation (video, Prezi, PowerPoint presentation, etc.) to share your adventure with your classmates. Presentations will be shared with the class on *date*. There will be a prize for the best presentation as voted on by the class. *See next page for example* Aggie Bucket List.

Aggie Bucket List

(50 things you should do before graduating from Texas A&M)

1. Master your Aggie Intro (Howdy! My name is ____ and I am a proud member of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Class of ____)
2. Learn all the Texas A&M Yells (words and Pass Back hand signals)
3. Learn to sing the Aggie War Hymn and Spirit of Aggieland
4. Visit 10 tables at the MSC Open House
5. Go to Midnight Yell
6. Go to Silver Taps
7. Visit Bonfire Memorial
8. Visit the Bush Library
9. Go to First Friday in Bryan
10. Stand with the 12th Man at a football game
11. Get a picture with Reveille
12. Attend Aggie Ring Day
13. Go to an on campus event
14. Eat at a local BCS restaurant (not a chain)
15. Join a student organization
16. Say Howdy to a tour group
17. Visit the Rec Center
18. Attend Muster
19. Take a nap in the Flag Room of the MSC
20. Volunteer in the local BCS community
21. Go to the Aggieland mural at Century Square and take a picture.
22. Take a walk around The Gardens
23. Feed the ducks in Research Park
24. Watch Corps march-in before a football game
25. Learn about the Aggie Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients in the Hall of Honor of the MSC
26. Guess the number of train engines at an Aggie baseball game
27. Attend a career fair
28. Visit Reveille's grave site
29. Take a picture in front of the Aggie Ring at The Association of Former Students
30. Ride every on-campus Aggieland Spirit bus route
31. Watch the sunset from the top of West Campus Garage
32. Apply for a leadership position within a student organization
33. Participate in Big Event
34. Study abroad
35. Help end power-based personal violence by going to the Green Dot Bystander Training
36. STAND Up for those who have gone through trauma with a STAND Up workshop
37. Participate in an intramural sport
38. Attend victory yell after a football game at the YMCA
39. Deactivate your social media for a week, and use your extra time to have an Aggie adventure
40. Participate in an Outdoor Adventures trip with the Rec Center
41. Eat at the University Club in Rudder Tower for a meal with a view
42. Run or walk in a 5K for a student organization
43. Say "thank you" to a university employee
44. Cast your vote in Student Government elections
45. Write a letter to a family for Silver Taps
46. Create your profile on Find-an-Aggie (aggienetwork.com)
47. Attend Pull Out Day and officially get to whoop
48. Order your Aggie Ring once you have 90 hours
49. Go to Elephant Walk when you're a senior
50. Snap a graduation picture in front of the Administration Building



Academic Success Strategies Assignments

Academic Success Strategies Activity:

One goal of this class is to help you be successful in your other academic courses. In order to help foster habits and behaviors that lead to academic success, you will be required to earn 60 points by choosing activities from the list below. You do not need to do all the activities on the list, but you do need to accumulate 60 points over the course of the semester (in any combination you choose). Evidence (paper, confirmation slip, etc.) is due one week from when you attend event or complete task.

Earn 60 more points from the list below.

- _____ Visit a professor for one (or more) of your classes during office hours and discuss how you prepare each week for their class. What were their suggestions for change? (10 points per professor) – bring signature from professor with your paragraph summary of suggested changes for each class
- _____ Visit a professor for one (or more) of your classes during office hours and discuss how you prepared for their last completed test/quiz. What were their suggestions for change? (10 points per professor) – bring signature from professor with your paragraph summary of suggested changes for the next test
- _____ Attend an SI session (10 points each) – bring signature from SI leader
- _____ Type your notes for one of your classes using the strategies for organizing/annotating described here: [https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-\(1\)/Reviewing-Lecture-Notes](https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-(1)/Reviewing-Lecture-Notes) (10 points per lecture) – submit those notes before the deadline above
- _____ Create a 5-Day study plan as described here: [https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-\(1\)/Study-Learning-Handouts](https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-(1)/Study-Learning-Handouts) for one of your exams (10 points per plan) – submit the plan before the deadline above
- _____ Make an outline for a chapter in one of your textbooks using the textbook outline models described here: [https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-\(1\)/Reading-Strategies-KWL-Method](https://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-(1)/Reading-Strategies-KWL-Method) (10 points per outline) – submit the outline before the deadline above
- _____ Make an appointment to review a paper draft for a class written assignment at the University Writing Center. Submit a signature from UWC consultant (10 points)
- _____ If you are struggling with transitioning your study skill techniques to the college level, visit the Academic Success Center receptionist (9th floor Rudder Tower) and review the services that you could pursue as a student for FREE! Ask what an Academic coach could do for you. (10 points) – bring a signed business card from the receptionist with your paragraph summary of what services the ASC provides.

Time Management Logs

During the semester you will complete two different experiential logs that detail how you are using your time. More details will be provided in class. Bring your log with you to class on the assigned date ready to discuss.

Sample Final Projects

Dear New Aggie Letter

Write a letter or record a video reflection to a future new student that synthesizes your first semester of college. Describe what you've learned, experiences that have challenged you, highlights of your first semester, people in the Texas A&M or Bryan/College Station community who have impacted you, and any advice you have for an incoming Aggie. Minimum Length: 1 full page typed, single spaced OR 2 minutes for a video reflection. An example and full grading rubric will be provided in class.

Final Reflections:

Select one question from each of the following two categories.

I. PERSONAL REFLECTION (Choose 1)

- a. Reflect on the Lifeline activity that you completed during the first week of class. If you were to create a Lifeline now, what would you include? What have been the most influential events of your semester? What challenges have you faced? What successes have you celebrated?
- b. Reflect on the person that you were when you first entered Hullabaloo U. How are you a different person now? In what ways have you changed? Has your growth been positive? What factors have influenced your growth this semester?

II. COLLEGE SUCCESS RESOURCES (Choose 1)

- a. If you had a friend who was having trouble in their classes what resources would you recommend to them? What resources at Texas A&M have you found to be helpful to your academic success? Why?
- b. The University sets high academic expectations and there are many people in place to support you along the way. It is primarily up to YOU, however, to take responsibility for your academic success. Identify and describe 4-6 steps to academic success at Texas A&M. What plan do you have to ensure that you succeed in college?

Final Presentation:

Design and deliver a creative presentation reflecting on and synthesizing your experiences during your first semester at Texas A&M. The presentation will be given to the class on the day of the Final Exam, and must be no longer than 2 minutes in length. The way you present is up to you: PowerPoint, video, poster board, interpretive dance, graphic novel, etc. However, the following messages must be conveyed during your time:

- **Introduction.** Who are you? Where did you come from? Why did you come to Texas A&M?
- **Transition.** Describe your first semester of college. What were your first thoughts moving onto campus? What are your favorite memories from your first semester? Where did you find challenges and struggles?
- **Academic Strategies.** Transitioning from high school to college can be difficult. How did you make the academic transition? What Texas A&M resources did you utilize to help you become a successful college student?
- What is your favorite part of being a student at Texas A&M?
- **Plan for next semester.** What have you learned about yourself this semester? How will this new knowledge help you in the years to come? What is one suggestion you have for incoming students next year?