**Paper Packet #1**

**Reflection Paper: The Postmortem**

**Length**: 2-3 pages reflecting on the process of creating your documents.

**Value:** 25 points

**Overview:** Do a close reading of your faux documents and reflect on the process of creating them. When it comes to analyzing your work, do not merely explain your original intentions, i.e. “what you were trying to do.” I wrote the assignment and am very aware of its goals. (Don’t tell me things I already know!) I know this assignment inside out *as a professor*, but I do not know it from the perspective of a student, nor have I ever completed the assignment myself. So I want you to be thoughtful and insightful and give me a perspective that I don’t already have.

**Prewriting:** print the final drafts of your Detective’s Report and Journalist’s Account. Do a close reading, making notes in the margins.

**Note:** the prompts below are jumping off points. You certainly do not need to address every question. (In fact, I would suggest that you limit yourself to a few of the prompts.) What’s important is that you write a thoughtful and insightful analysis of your work and writing process.

**Prompts:** What did you find challenging about this assignment? Consider how writing these documents was similar/different than other types of academic writing. Did this assignment show you anything about your own strengths and weaknesses as a writer? What insights from this assignment can you apply to your academic writing?

What do you see about your Detective’s Report that you didn’t see before? How well do you see your choices working? In addition to considering things that worked well, look for aspects that didn’t work as well as you’d hoped. Look for “mistakes”: places that don’t ring true, details that aren’t authentic—for example, details the detective wouldn’t include, or that he would present differently (language, units or method of measurement). Perhaps there are moments/details that should be described precisely, but instead are hazy or vague (or even missing completely). Or maybe you neglected to consider some aspect of what the detective’s audience would value, or overstressed one aspect and neglected another. Reflect on the reasons that might be behind these mistakes or omissions: Is there an aspect of the rhetorical situation that you did not imagine fully? Did you let your detective’s “mask” slip?

Since you have only just finished the Journalist’s Account, I have not included specific prompts just on it, but you may certainly address that assignment in your essay, if you wish, using the above prompts as jumping off points.

**Revision:** This essay will only go through one formal draft; however, once you’ve written out all your thoughts, you should revise your essay for unity. This essay shouldn’t be a random collection of “bullet point” thoughts, but instead should be several observations unified by an overall thesis.

**Audience:** when it comes to academic writing assignments, you will often be asked to craft your writing to appeal to a specific audience, even though your professor will be your only actual reader. There is no such pretext here. You are writing to an audience of exactly one. Me. You should craft your essay to be effective with that audience.

**Evaluation:** I am assessing how everything is written, not just the creative documents. Your analytical writing is not an informal “process note,” but a formal academic paper that will also consider audience and purpose.

**Final Thoughts:**

* **Specificity:** Be specific about your observations—what you see about your work, the underlying reasons, strategies, etc. Give specific examples to illustrate your observations.
* Your job here is not to automatically defend your faux documents (“cheerlead” for them), nor am I asking you to mercilessly rake them over the coals. What I’m looking for is honest self-assessment — a sincere attempt at objectivity, and insight.