

Creative Nonfiction and Science Writing
Unit 6 Major Assignment: Revision that Complicates “Truth” and Ethics
Assignment Sheet

DUE DATE: _____

SUMMARY OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Choose one of the essays that you completed in one of the previous units. Offer a radical and global revision of this essay with particular attention to questions of truth and ethics, based on the readings and discussions from this unit. As you revise, ask yourself: How do I know what I know? What doubts do I have? What are the ramifications of the language and metaphors that I use? Make your questions and doubts visible in the text, and invite your reader to ask these questions with you.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

This semester we’ve learned about the importance of revision. The final major assignment asks you to practice making global revisions to show that you can “re-see” and reshape your writing. Remember that revision should be a process of discovery; use the final project to deepen your thinking.

REQUIREMENTS AND GENERATIVE CONSTRAINTS

Introductory Statement

- The introductory statement should consist of at least two double-spaced pages of writing. The introductory statement can be written in the form of a letter addressed to the class.
- Indicate what you discovered through the process of writing and revising this project.
- Summarize how your revised essay exposes questions for truth and ethics. And quote from your revised essay to provide examples of where questions of truth and ethics are raised in the piece.
- Explain how your essay draws upon the readings from the final unit of the course. Your explanation should be substantive and should consist of more than one paragraph of discussion.
- Review your essay by identifying at least four of your craft and rhetorical choices and explaining their effects. Be specific and quote amply from your essay to provide evidence and examples of each feature you describe.
- If you chose to ignore any of my suggestions for revision, explain your rationale in the introductory statement. Specify which suggestions you ignored, and explain how your choices serve your aims.

Draft and Revision of One Essay from Class

- Employ multiple forms of revision. As we saw in class with Kent Haruf’s and Barbara Tomlinson’s research, revision can mean *expansion* as well as *cutting*, *recasting*, etc. Perform more than one of the following revision actions: Expand, cut, rearrange, rewrite, recast, fix, add connecting phrases (or enact any of the other revision verbs that we discussed in class).
- Your revised essay can be any page length.
- Like Sommers’s experienced writers, you should make *global* revisions, not just sentence-level revisions. Your draft should appear, at a glance, significantly different from your original.
- Address all of my comments on the graded assignment, and go beyond my comments as well.
- Make questions of truth and ethics visible in the text, without losing the substance of the original essay. That is, your essay should be about both truth/ethics and your original essay topic at once.
- Style, tone, word choice, verb tense, grammar, and spelling should be consistent. All departures from convention should have a clear purpose and should contribute to the meaning of the piece.