

Teaming Students with a Forester to Teach Place-based Business Communication Focused on Sustainability

Jim Henry
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Abstract

A technique for teaching sustainability-conscious business writing is discussed: teams of three students were placed through service learning to assist a Forester in composing a History of Forestry Management in Hawai'i. Students worked both on site, at the Forestry Division's offices, and virtually, using Google Docs, which enabled the Forester to insert frequent comments regarding content or suggestions for follow-up research and which enabled the instructor to coach the student writers on audience, purpose, and *ethos*. Teaching opportunities and pitfalls are addressed, with an emphasis on how the instructor's roles as writing coach took different forms. Students honed their skills in archival research (on site and online), interviewing, and composing a history that began before contact with western navigators, underscoring the key role of forests in providing fresh water in Hawai'i and how stewardship of the land—or *ʻāina* in the Native Hawaiian belief system—figures into this history.

Introduction

Drawing on research that demonstrates that service learning helps students retain more information in class, achieve higher course grades, and have greater satisfaction with the course (Gray et al., 1998), Kathy Mennen (2006) has described a business communication course that seeks to leverage these advantages by partnering with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters local chapter. This paper presents a similar partnership over successive spring semesters: an upper-division writing course was affiliated with service learning to place teams of two or three students each in an organization where they could complete a writing project and reflect critically upon this project as it implemented classroom learning (See Turnley [2007] for integrating critical approaches to service-learning projects). One team worked with a Forester's office to help in the (gargantuan) task of composing a History of Forestry Management in Hawai'i. In this report, key elements of the course design are discussed, including the terms of articulation with service learning, important factors in partnering with the Department of Forestry and Wildlife, challenges and opportunities for teaching and learning occasioned by the collaboration, and an assessment of the experience as it furthered student learning in business communication. Conclusions address ways in which the whole experience rendered students and instructor alike more informed on forestry and on the many ways in which forests have played—and must continue to play—a key role in sustainability in Hawai'i.

First in the process was a formal solicitation of for- and non-profit collaborators through our campus Service Learning office. Writing accomplished through Service Learning projects can take a variety of forms (see Bowdon & Scott, 2003; Deans, 2000). Because Service Learning places students in varieties of positions and capacities throughout the state, it was necessary that potential collaborators knew exactly what was being solicited: partner organizations with an available (and engaged) point of contact who

could oversee a writing project composed by students for the organization while an instructor coached students through the process. Prior experience had shown that the point of contact's active engagement was key, as were the criteria for students' writing work. Accordingly, a memo of information was included in the posting that Service Learning sent out, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Sample Informational memo Distributed Through the Campus Service Learning Listserv

Seeking: Community Organizations That Could Use a Student Writing Team

Course: English 308, Technical Writing

Project: Editing and technical writing conducted in teams of two or three in an organizational context. By "technical writing," we mean just about any documents produced by an organization for internal purposes or to be sent out, in print or electronic form. Examples include: manuals covering organizational policies or products, reports conducted and written for (or about) the organization, instructional documents, brochures, and web sites. (Although students don't necessarily have expertise in composing the HTML, they can bring valuable expertise in conceptualizing, organizing, writing copy, and editing existing copy.) Students may also conduct research for an organization to complete a specific report, such as a literature review, an article for publication, a feasibility study, or proposals. They may also aid subject matter experts in the organization in compiling and composing specific reports such as environmental impact statements or annual reports. Your organization can take part by contacting us with the name of the point of contact who will serve as project supervisor on site.

Writers: All students are upper-division students at the University of Hawai'i from a variety of majors. Our course is a writing intensive course and this project constitutes a large portion of students' grades.

Oversight: Dr. Jim Henry, Associate Professor of English and Director of Composition and Rhetoric, will oversee the work and coach students through the project.

Duration: Projects begin as of Thursday, February 28, and must be concluded by Thursday, May 1.

The team writing approach was emphasized because of the long-standing affirmation that students need experience in collaborative writing, dating at least to Ede and Lunsford's (1992) pioneering work and confirmed recently by professional writers discussing team writing in self-composed video logs (Henry, 2012b). Forester Ron Cannarella answered the listserv query by e-mail and expressed enthusiasm, offering to visit the class to talk about a project on which he needed help: a comprehensive History of Forestry Management in Hawai'i, to be supplied to the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. During his class visit, his PowerPoint orientation to his needs, along with his enthusiasm, resulted in a team of three students immediately expressing a desire to partner with the Forestry Division. Their next task was to develop a project proposal, using samples from previous teams in this course. The proposal they submitted is shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2.**Formal Proposal for the Team Project Submitted at Inception of the Work**

To: Professor Jim Henry
From: Alysia Malawa, Keahi Kaleopa'a, and Mark King
Date: March 17th, 2008
Subject: Term Project Proposal

Introduction:

Every seven years the Federal Government of the United States releases a new Farm Bill. This bill has far-reaching effects and encompasses small family owned farms and dairy operation to huge subsidized agribusiness. It also involves the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). The Farm Bill proposed in 2008 includes a new section requiring each state to complete a state-wide assessment of forest conditions and forested lands to be finished by July 18th, 2010. Our English group is working with the DLNR, Division of Forestry in Hawaii, to complete part of this section. We will write a history of forest management in Hawaii from Pre-Mahele, or the distribution of the Hawaiian lands, to the present.

Problem Statement or Needs Assessment:

In order to complete the requirements set forth by the 2008 Farm Bill the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry for the state of Hawaii must complete a state-wide assessment of forest conditions and forested lands. Included in this assessment is a history of forest conditions and forest management in Hawaii. The DLNR needs to complete this assessment by 2010 in order to continue getting funding from the Federal government.

Objectives:

By April 28th, 2008 Keahi, Mark and Alysia will have completed a history of Forestry and Forest management in Hawaii to be used by the DLNR in their state-wide assessment of Forest conditions and forested lands.

Plan (Schedule to Completion with Assigned Tasks):

Thursday March 12th, 2008: Alysia, Mark and Keahi to the DLNR to meet with Ron Walker and Moana Rowland and begin the research process.

Monday March 16th, 2008: Alysia and Keahi to the DLNR to continue research.

Wednesday March 17th, 2008: Alysia to the DLNR to continue research.

Thursday March 18th, 2008: Keahi and Mark to the DLNR to continue research. Document Review Form completed in class.

Wednesday March 25th, 2008: Keahi and Mark to the DLNR to continue research. Professor Jim Henry will accompany them to discuss the project and help compile an outline.

Wednesday April 1st, 2008: Initial research finalized; group meeting to discuss the organization of the writing. Each group member will begin an individual outline.

Wednesday April 8th, 2008: The group will convene to combine their individual outlines into one group-wide outline.

Wednesday April 15th, 2008: Each group member will bring the first draft of his or her portion of the report and a completed document review form. We will revise the documents as a group.

Wednesday April 22nd, 2008: We will have completed the Final draft and the group will convene to add the final editing touches and finalize the project.

Tuesday April 28th, 2008: We will turn in our final project.

Evaluation or Quality Control:

We will maintain quality control by turning in a progress report to professor Jim Henry on March 21st, 2008. We will also have Ron Cannarella at the DLNR evaluate our work and provide us with feedback over the course of the project. In addition to these evaluations, Mark, Keahi and Alysia will evaluate each others' work and make sure each group member is on task throughout the writing process.

Personnel and Qualifications:

We are qualified for this project because of our training and experience with technical writing in Professor Jim Henry's class. Keahi has previous knowledge of the Pre-Mahele history of Hawaii, and Alysia has had experience studying forest management in Hawaii and the effects of invasive species on Hawaii's forests. As a history major, Mark has experience writing historical papers and doing research in the subject.

Note. Pseudonyms have been substituted for the names of the students who gave permission to cite their work after the semester was completed.

This proposal achieved several goals. In addition to familiarizing students with the genre of an Internal Proposal, it obliged them through this genre's categories to state the general genre of writing they'd be engaging with, demonstrate some initial familiarity with the rhetorical circumstances of its writing, establish a timeline of activities, establish a measure for quality control, and state formally their qualifications. Doing so helped the three students affirm that they were qualified to take on the job even if they were relatively inexperienced in business writing, because of their respective academic undertakings. The proposal also enabled a discussion of the timeline, noting how it would likely shift as students learned more and wrote more.

Once the team had assembled and met with Mr. Cannarella, their next task was to research the genre in which they would be writing. This task is given to all participants in the course regardless of the nature of the organization with which they have teamed, so that students can develop an understanding of what the document they are collaborating on looks like under various circumstances in other settings. The objectives in this part of the assignment are two: (1) providing students with some background familiarity so that they feel a bit more confident in collaborating with their point of contact; and (2) teaching students to hone their skills in text analysis for key issues such as audience, purpose, and *ethos*. A very helpful framework (see Figure 3) for doing so has been described by Amidon (2006), designed to infuse teaching with concepts from the "learning organization":

Figure 3.***Amidon's Heuristic for Guiding Students Through Business Genre Analysis*****Section 1: Social Image**

What is the name of this genre? What did you know about this genre before you selected the text? How did you learn about the genre? What kind of information or knowledge do you expect to get out of the genre?

Section 2: Rhetorical Dynamics

Writer: What kind of people write in this genre? What kind of credentials do you think they have? By what criteria do you think writers are selected?

Audience: Who reads this genre? Who is addressed? Are there multiple audiences for this genre? If so, how is each audience served differently? What education level is the audience expected to have? What are the beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices of the audience?

Text: What is the purpose of the text? Why was it written? What relationship between the reader and the writer is implied by the text? How is the text appropriate to the context that required it be written? How well will the text adapt to the differing needs of multiple readers?

Section 3: Formal Features

Overall: What is the most distinctive feature of the genre? What are the rules for writing in this genre? What type of arrangement of information do you expect to see in this genre?

Tone: How would you describe the tone of the genre? Personal or impersonal? Formal or informal? Forceful or passive?

Voice: Does the genre use first, second, or third person pronouns? Are full names and titles expected in this genre? Are contractions acceptable in this genre?

Syntax: Are complete sentences expected in this genre at all times? Is the genre primarily written in simple sentences, or are longer, compound, and complex sentences used? Does the genre rely more on paragraphs or bullets? How long are the paragraphs? Are transition words used to help the reader move from paragraph to paragraph?

Format: Are the texts in the genre single-spaced or double-spaced? Does the genre use multiple fonts? What fonts are used? Is bold or italicized text used? Are headers used to separate text? If so, how many levels of headers are used? Are graphics and/ or illustrations used in the text? Are the graphics and illustrations explained to the audience? (425)

In the case of this student writing team, they located several examples of histories online, and one student was majoring in history. Students' understandings of history writing were primarily academic (though tinged with understandings gleaned from such popular sources as The History Channel), and as the Proposal indicated, one of the team participants was already familiar with books tracing the history of Hawai'i. Using Amidon's heuristic, the writing team and instructor discussed a variety of generic features that students were likely to encounter in their collaboration with Mr. Cannarella on this particular version of the genre. Once this level of comfort with the genre had been established, students were tasked with using one of our course support documents to determine how this genre would take form for the specifics of the historical account as required by the Forestry Division. Working as a team, the three students began completing the Document Review Form used by all course participants in their projects as per their project proposal, and then they supplemented their initial work by querying the

Forester for more specifics in face-to-face (F2F) and virtual meetings. The form they used is included below in Figure 4:

Figure 4.

Document review form used by students to query their point-of-contact on the specifics of the History of Forestry Management in Hawai'i

Document Review Form

What is the purpose of this document?

Who is the audience? What is their organizational position? What is their organizational role? (Transmitter? Decision maker? Action taker? Advisor? Learner? Implementer?) How does your writing accommodate these roles?

What knowledge is your audience likely to have of the topic, and what background knowledge must you supply?

Does your audience already hold an opinion on the topic? How do you accommodate this opinion?

What is your audience's attitude toward you as the author of the document?

Under what conditions will they be reading this document? What will they do with it?

How does your document meet expectations for document design for this specific genre?

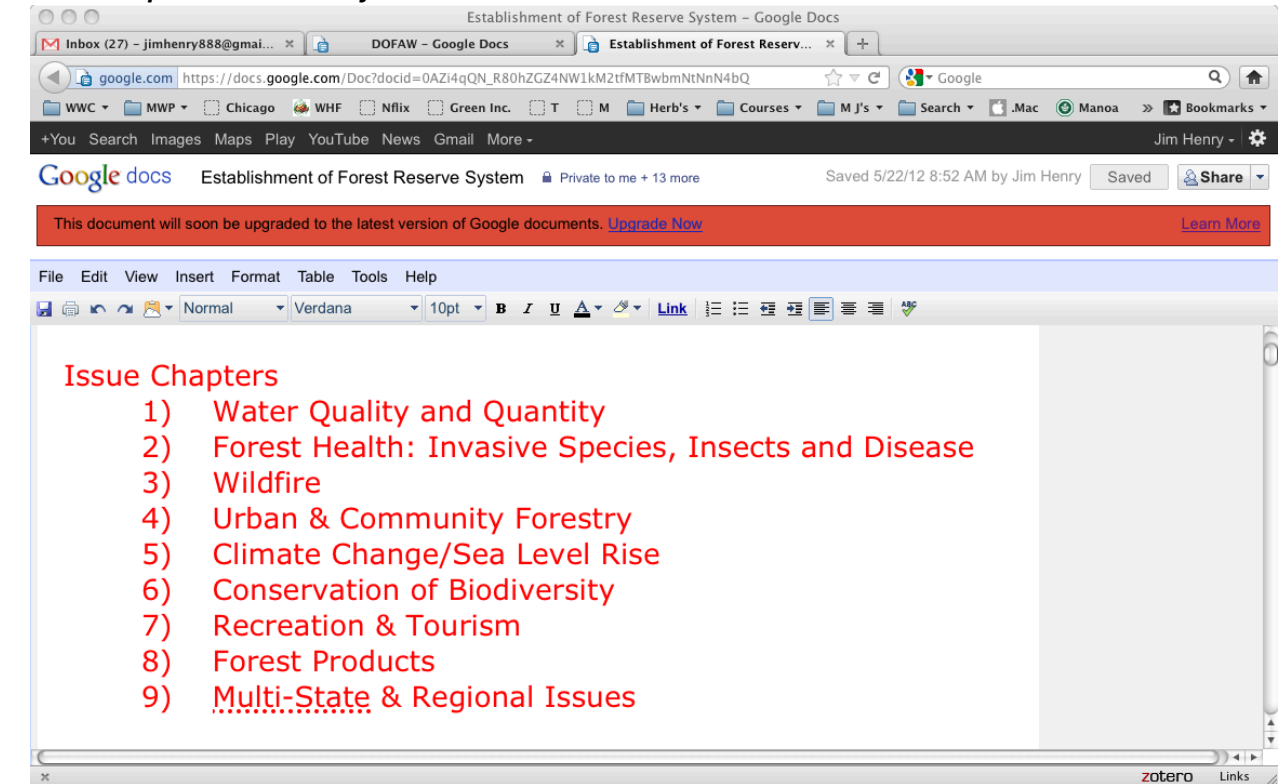
This second document anchored the generic "history" more firmly in the immediate workplace cultural context where it would take form. Writing out discursive answers to these questions prompted the students to think of the document in very human terms, and wondering about such questions as "What knowledge is your audience likely to have of the topic?" generated a lot of feedback from Mr. Cannarella. The history was being written primarily for a Washington, D.C. audience, with implications for sustaining best environmental forestry practices. Through such straightforward fact gathering, the students were able to ascertain the importance of the project and also figure out how they could contribute.

As per the student proposal (and at the instructor's request), the instructor accompanied the team to the forestry offices in downtown Honolulu to begin work. In the first meeting (and the instructor's only visit to the site), the scope of the project was explained in more detail, and as Mr. Cannarella identified different topics that would figure in this history, the instructor captured them on a laptop. After a thirty-minute discussion, more than a dozen topics had been generated, and the forester reviewed them and mused upon sequencing. While considering the sequencing, the group also considered composing options. The instructor had worked with Google Docs on some university committees and suggested using this application. Mr. Cannarella agreed to try it. Within fifteen minutes, the document that would guide students' work during the next seven weeks had been set up, enabling them to pick and choose topics from the forester's list (and his links to ample resources in the Division's physical and virtual resources).

The Google Docs interface has undergone some changes since this project, but screen captures (see Figure 5) during the project show the initial outline.

Figure 5.

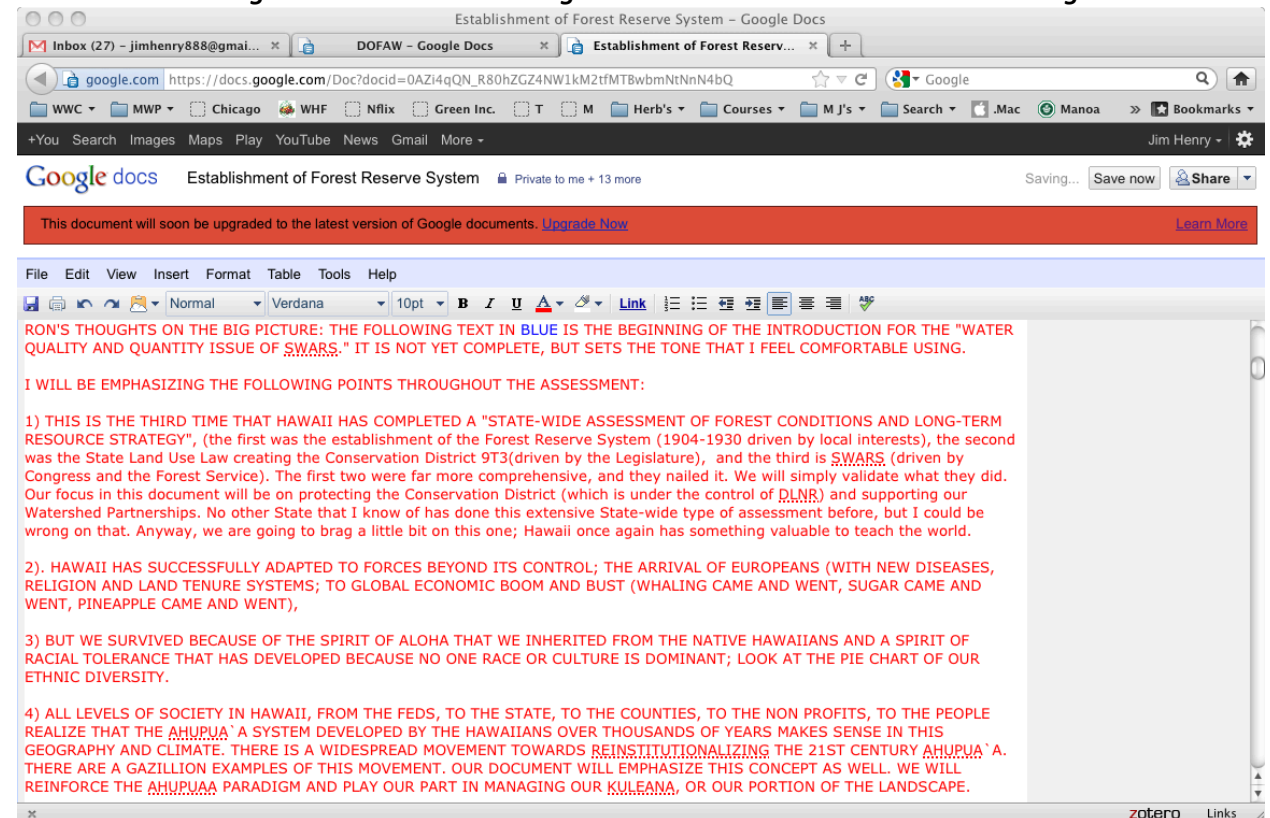
Initial Chapters Established for Students to Research and Write About



The Division's archives, on site and virtual, enabled students to familiarize themselves with one topic each and proceed to drafting its section of the history. From this point onward, this document became a virtual classroom, as Mr. Cannarella would point students in the direction of needed information and as the instructor would watch their evolving writing performances to coach them, blending F2F feedback with the virtual (Henry, 2011). For example, early on Mr. Cannarella posted several paragraphs (see Figure 6) that were not content per se so much as orientation toward the *ethos* of the document that he wanted to establish, providing the student writers with valuable guidelines as they sought out and represented information:

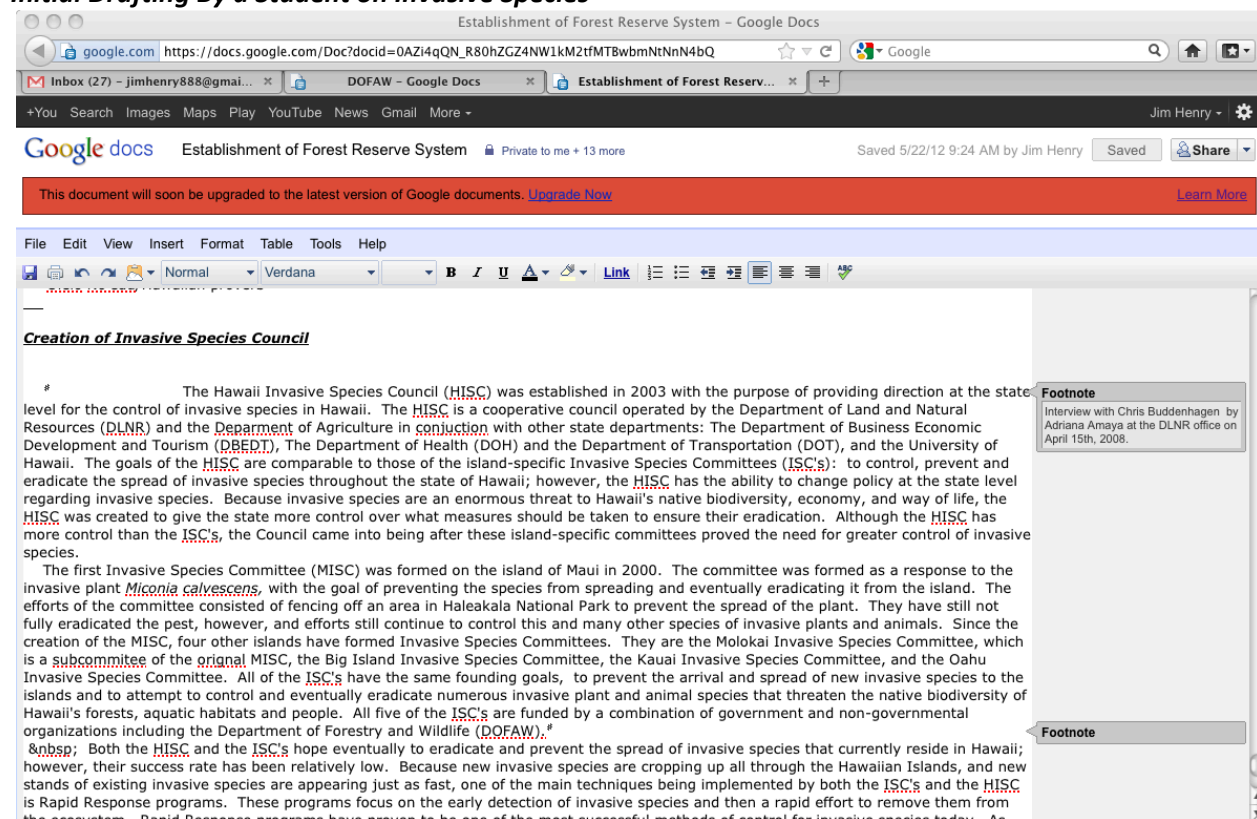
Figure 6.

Screen Shot Showing Mr. Cannarella Orienting the Student Writers to the Ethos He Sought



With such support documents to help students confidently begin drafting sections for the report, the students followed a "divide-and-conquer" approach to collaborative writing. In their Proposal, they had noted that Alysia had done prior research on invasive species, and so she began drafting this section of the history (see figure 7):

Figure 7.
Initial Drafting By a Student on Invasive Species

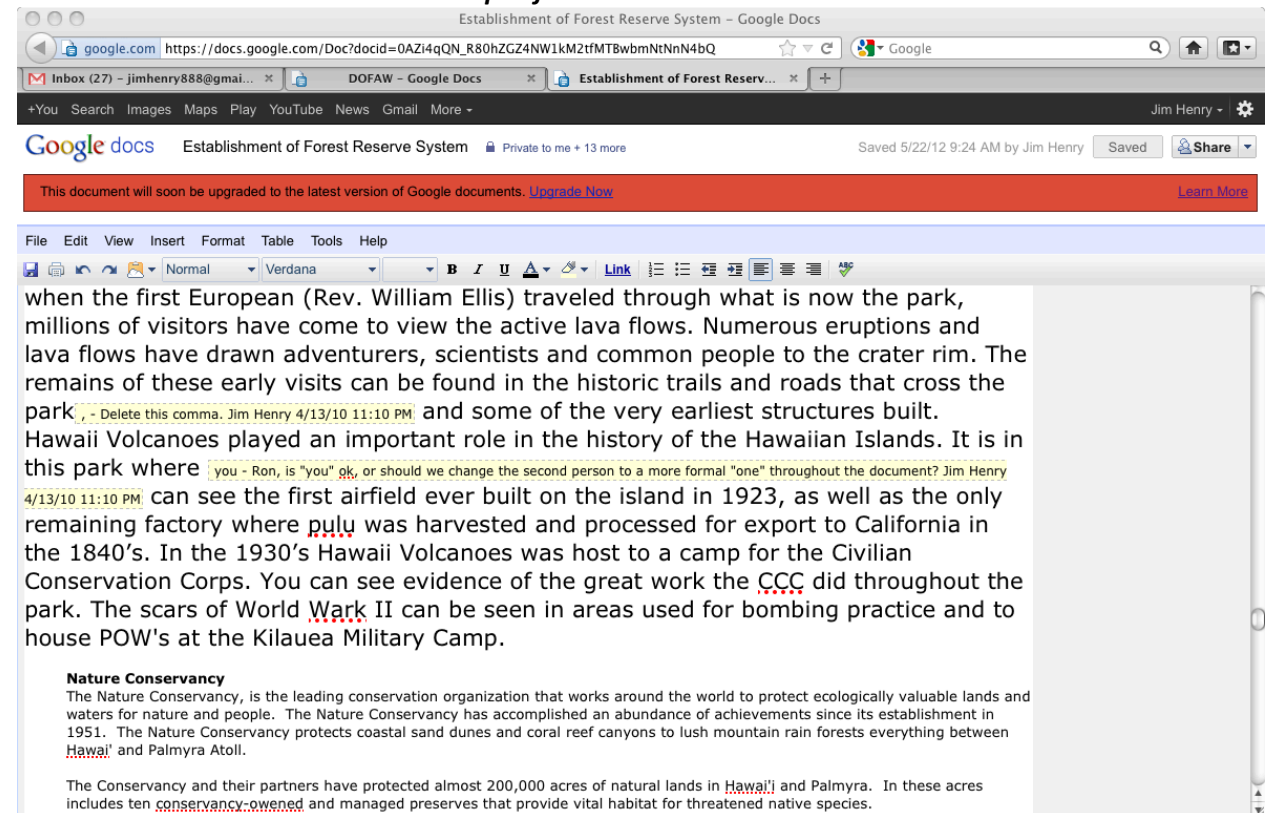


This writing thus enabled the student to build upon her (primarily academic) research on invasive species in Hawai'i and repurpose such knowledge for this document. The content reflects a lot of her work done on site in the Division's archives and online. In addition, Mr. Cannarella recommended that students interview various key actors in forestry management in Hawai'i over the years, to infuse this history with their voices. When he made this recommendation, students sought out the instructor. None of them had experience in interviewing, and they wanted advice on how to proceed. In class the instructor provided them with reference texts on do's and don'ts of interviewing, they elaborated some questions for their interviewees. Instructor and students took turns role-playing to help students muster the art of formulating open-ended questions likely to bring good commentary and using probes to elicit more commentary if an interviewee was particularly taciturn. The end result was a number of quite successful interviews accomplished by students and integrated into the report, signaled in the Google Doc by the "Footnote" icon in the right-hand column.

Other times, the instructor's role became more evident in the document itself. Direct instructions were sometimes inserted (as in the case of a "Delete this comma" that violated punctuation rules worked on in class) or questions to Mr. Cannarella that had implications for more global rhetorical issues:

Figure 8.

The Instructor's Interventions at Both Specific and More General Levels



What this document does not show is the extra work required of students when comments such as these appeared. In the realm of grammar and usage, every course participant was required to elaborate a "self-editing checklist" over the term, compiled from weekly exercises in class and from errors identified by the instructor in each student's writing. As the course progressed, students elaborated checklists with items as specific as "commas before coordinating conjunctions," and they were required to apply these checklists when reviewing their work and the work of others. When an error such as the one above occurred, it enabled the instructor to check in very quickly with the transgressor and assure that he or she understood the flag, then add it to the checklist. At a more global level, each group was required to elaborate a style sheet for their team project, enabling each contributor to assure a usage that matched his or her teammates'. The instructor's question to Mr. Cannarella in yellow above elicited a response that enabled this team to determine the level of formality that they would apply across the document.

Because collaborative writing projects in academic settings are often fraught with problems of unequal participation, a Progress Report was required very early on in the process to affirm that all contributors were participating equitably (See also Rentz, Arduser, Meloncon, & Debs [2009] and Snyder [2009] on implementing team writing in the business communication classroom). In addition to enabling the instructor to intervene if such is not the case, the Progress Report, collaboratively written, enables each

team to address any conflicts that arise and solve many of them on their own. (Historically in this course, conflicts have arisen and been resolved by the teams, invisible to the instructor until the final group self-evaluation.) Equally importantly, the Progress Report enabled the instructor to provide valuable formative feedback while learning was underway, so that students could adjust their performances as they progressed. Below, in Figure 9, is the Progress Report provided by this team:

Figure 9.

Progress Report As Submitted By the Student Team and As It Allowed Surface-level Corrections, Formative Feedback, and Adjusting of Deliverable Expectations and Timeline

FROM: Keahi, Mark, Alysia

TO: Professor Jim Henry

DATE: March 30, 2009

RE: Status report on history of DOFAW

Introduction

Our continued purpose is to create a history of the Department of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) in Hawaii. Our composition will then be a chapter in DOFAW's report to the United States Government concerning the Farm Bill.

Scope

The history of DOFAW in Hawaii spans over a hundred years. There have been numerous authors who have written the early history of DOFAW; however, the more recent history has not been written. Our focus should now be on the past 15 years of the DOFAW. The amount of research the team has to do is still vast because of the many programs DOFAW is involved in. There are some milestones in the organizations history that must be covered in our report.

Comment: Insert an apostrophe for the possessive.

Work Completed

Our first trip to the office had us looking at the culture of the DOFAW offices. We were also able to interview (informally) Ron Walker, who has been with the department for over 30 years. He helped with the overview of the department as well as gave us access to his library.

Keahi- I have a general overview about the early formations of DOFAW in Hawaii. I have gone down to the DOFAW offices twice now; one of those times I went with Professor Henry and we met with Ron Cannarella, who is in charge of overseeing the project. Ron provided some sources, which I read through and took notes on (2 hrs). I spent a total of around 6-7 hours at the offices so far gathering information.

Comment: Good accounting. Each team member should be keeping track of how much time spent for every task accomplished. Your final group evaluation should include this information to fully represent the contribution of each team member.

Mark and Alysia both went to the offices twice as well. They were able to copy some information that is going to aid them in composing the history. We have not started to compose the history yet.

Comment: Based on our trip, the time to begin composing is NOW. It will require more trips to the office, so be sure to document each one, including a good level of detail of the work done while there. At the end of each visit, stop to look over your notes and add some more on just exactly which sources you consulted and what questions you have—for the group and for Ron.

Projected Work and Schedule

The work was divided between the three of us as follows: Keahi pre and post Mahele periods and early history. Mark is doing wildlife and Alysia is doing plant life. We have to restructure our research to include more recent history (past 15 years) along with specific examples or programs that DOFAW is/was involved in.

Comment: I think you will need more than one, given that many of the sources you will need to help write the history are located there.

At least one more trip to the DOFAW offices will be required where we can interview people and look at the library.

Figure 9. Continued.

There is still a lot of work that needs to be done. As of April 1, we wanted to have our research finalized; however, I think we are going to have to push back that deadline.

Problems: Because Ron Cannarella was on vacation for a week we were doing research that did not relate to what he wanted in the final report. I am concerned about the time we have to finish the project because this project is not the only one for us students. I know the document we produce should be impeccable because it is going to the Federal Government and I don't want it to be hastily done. Could we consider only focusing on the past 15 years of DOFAW and its milestones because the early history has already been well documented?

Milestones that have to be researched

- Tropical Forest Recovery Act
- Establishment of Forest Reserves
- Conservation Zones
- Impact of Endangered Species Act
- Creation of Experimental Forest
- Land Use Zoning Act

Conclusion

Because we have to restructure our research the timetable for completion also shifted. We have many interviews we have to conduct in order to complete the project, which poses problems because they only can meet or talk when they have time.

Comment: I agree. Don't make the mistake of thinking that first you complete all of your research, then you write the report. The drafting and reading will evolve in tandem.

Comment: I think that is a good plan, based on our conversations with Ron. The headings you propose, Keahi, match the ones I had noted pretty well, too. Yesterday I inserted them into the Google Doc document that I set up. See if you can open it in class so that we can show it to Mark and Alysia. I tried to add them as contributors but was unable to, so we will have to ask Ron to do it.

In this Progress Report, the team conveyed some challenges, including their under-estimation of the time needed to complete the project and a proposal to reduce the number of sections that they would be contributing. Having followed their progress already to the degree that it was reflected in the Google Doc, the instructor was aware that the initial sections as proposed constituted more work than students could complete during the semester, especially given the added tasks of completing interviews with key actors as suggested by Mr. Cannarella. Once it had been confirmed with him that the added time required by the interviews and redacting of them took away from time that could be allotted to other sections, the forester, instructor, and students mutually agreed to scale back the number of sections. Such exchanges were key to the collaboration, as they enabled Mr. Cannarella and the instructor to oversee student performances from their respective vantage points without diminishing the expectations of all parties.

By semester's end, the team had furnished all of the drafts of sections as proposed in their Progress Report, and Mr. Cannarella was quite pleased with their performance. He also canvassed other office members, and he had this to report via e-mail: "Without exception, the professionals within [Department of Land and Natural Resources] expressed how much they had appreciated the interaction with the students, and how personally fulfilling it was for them to have an opportunity to pass on their experience to an interested person." He also added this comment: "You and your students fundamentally changed the way we work at [Department of Forestry and Wildlife] by introducing us to Google Docs. Because of this technology, I have literally used NO PAPER in producing endless drafts of documents, and not one drop of jet fuel has been used for our daily work between [collaborator] on Kauai and me here in Honolulu." Hence the collaborative venture succeeded not only in providing a real-world setting for students to hone their business communication skills, it also enabled this particular workplace to update some of its communication practices as a result of the collaboration. As these students "fit" into the organization, they also enabled the local culture to develop in new ways (Henry, 2012a). A resounding mark of success was that Mr. Cannarella solicited the help of another team of student writers the following spring!

For their parts, the student teams were required to submit an end-of-semester self-evaluation of their performance, using a standard template that included, among other prompts, the following: "What was most successful about this writing project? Why? List the attributes of your collaboration that most contributed to this success." This team's response to this prompt was the following:

In terms of meeting the learning outcomes of the Technical Writing course, the first-hand research was one of the most successful aspects of our project. We learned how to conduct a personal interview and then how to synthesize that primary research into a technical document. Splitting up the work evenly between group members was also a good move. Giving each member individual responsibility for their own portion made sure that no one would be left picking up the slack and doing more work than other group members.

From the perspective of course instructor, this team's success in meeting the learning outcomes for technical and business communication were unequivocal. With impressive speed and efficiency, they assimilated effectively into the workplace culture of the Department of Forestry and Wildlife, gaining skills in using their library and online sources and approximating the *ethos* that Mr. Cannarella sought for this report on forestry management quite effectively. During the seven weeks that they "dwelled" in this report writing discourse (see Reynolds, 2005), they also learned to compile a style sheet as a team and apply it successfully, and each individual addressed shortcomings in grammar, usage, and punctuation by compiling personal editing checklists. To make this collaboration happen, they also gained skills in composing an Internal Proposal, a Progress Report, and a final Self-Evaluation, which they are certain to encounter in similar forms in their futures as business communicators. Along the way, they developed valuable "habits of mind" important to success as a professional writer as identified by Walters, Hunter, and Giddens (2007): persevere, attempt challenges, embrace learning, exhibit keen interest in subject, engage in collaboration, understand how to write in complicated contexts, respond positively to critique, and engage in metacognition.

This venture in service learning shows students learning important business communication principles while, along with their instructor, learning a lot about sustainability as the locale requires and supports it. Student research taught both them and their instructor about forest management, invasive species, watershed partnerships, and the roles of indigenous knowledge as it was incorporated into the original Tropical Forest Recovery Plan. For example, the section of the History as it stood when the students completed their work stood as follows:

The Native Hawaiian perspective was welcomed and integrated into the Plan, integrating Hawaiian values: *laulima*, to work cooperatively; *lokomaka'i*, to share; *'imi 'ike*, to seek knowledge; *na'au pono*, to possess a deep sense of integrity which foster positive relationships; and *aloha 'aina*, to understand and appreciate the interdependence of humanity and the environment when interpreting management actions. (History 5)

In the final accounting, the student writing team and their instructor not only spent a semester engaged in teaching and learning several key genres in business communication, they also underwent a "greening" (Henry, 2010), emerging from the experience as what Agrawal (2005) would describe as "environmental subjects . . . those who care about the environment" (p.164). Much of students' writing reflected the goals of eco-composition (Dobrin, 2009; Dobrin & Weisser, 2002; Owens, 2001), enabling students and instructor alike to glean ways that this collaborative writing effort contributed to a more sustainable future. Focusing a semester's worth of reading and writing about forestry and its role in water management in the environment of Hawai'i and composing a report to the Secretary of the

Department of Agriculture positioned all involved to engage with teaching and learning with the utmost care and energy that our state deserves.

References

- Agrawal, A. (2005). *Environmentality: Technologies of government and the making of subjects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Amidon, S. R. (2006). Writing the learning organization: A framework for teaching and research. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 68, 406-428.
- Bowdon, M., & Scott, B. (2003). *Service-learning in technical and professional communication*. New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Deans, T. (2000). *Writing partnerships: Service-learning in composition*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Dobrin, S. I. (2009). Becoming ecocomposition. Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. San Francisco. 13 March 2009. Featured address.
- Dobrin, S. I., & C. R. Weisser. (2002). *Natural discourse: Toward ecocomposition*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Ede, L, & A. Lunsford. (1992). *Singular texts/plural authors*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Gray, M.J., Ondaatje, E.H., Fricker, R., Geschwind, S., Goldman, C.A., Kaganoff, T., et al. (1998). *Coupling service and learning in higher education: The final report of the Learn and Serve America, Higher Education Program*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
- Henry, J. (2012a). How can technical communicators fit into contemporary organizations? In S. Selber & J. Johnson-Eilola (Eds.), *Solving Problems in Technical Communication* (pp.75-97). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Henry, J. (2012b). Performing professionally as a writer: Research revival vlogs. *College Composition and Communication Online*, 1(1). Retrieved August 31, 2012, from <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/ccconline/v1-1/henry>
- Henry, J. (2011). Hybridizing F2F and virtual collaboration between a government agency and service-learning technical writing students. In M. A. Bowden and R. G. Carpenter (Eds), *Higher Education, Emerging Technologies, and Community Partnerships: Concepts, Models, and Applications* (pp. 58-67). Hershey, PA: IGI Global Publications.
- Henry, J. (2010). Greening the subject of/through technical writing. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 13, 139-145.
- Mennen, K. (2006). Use service learning to add real-world writing to your course. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69, 192- 195.

- Owens, D. (2001). *Composition and sustainability: Teaching for a threatened generation*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Rentz, K., L. Arduser, L. Meloncon, & M.B. Debs. (2009). Designing a successful group report experience. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 72, 79-84.
- Reynolds, N. (2005). *Geographies of writing: Inhabiting places and encountering difference*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Snyder, L.G. (2009). Teaching teams about teamwork: Preparation, practice, and performance review. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 72, 74-79.
- Turnley, M. (2007). Integrating critical approaches to technology and service-learning projects. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 16, 103–123.
- Walters, M., Hunter, S., & Giddens, E. (2007). Qualitative research on what leads to success in professional writing. *International Journal on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 1(2). Retrieved August 31, 2012, from <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijstol/v1n2/articles/walters/index.htm>

JIM HENRY directs the Mānoa Writing Program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, administering 500+ sections of writing-across-the-curriculum courses per semester. His book *Writing Workplace Cultures: An Archaeology of Professional Writing* presented workplace writing autoethnographies composed by 83 MA students over seven years and won ABC's 2001 Distinguished Publication award.