

## ENG3771, Unit 2: Service Learning Project and Workplace Collaboration



### Introduction

In small teams of students, you will complete a service learning-based project that manages some form of complexity that you identify at the New York City College of Technology (City Tech). While creating your project deliverables, you will model workplace cooperation, collaboration, and record keeping.

What exactly do I mean by “service learning?” According to “The National and Community Service Act of 1990 and US Code 12511:

The term “service learning” . . . means a method:

- (A) under which Corps members learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs;
- (B) that provides structured time for a Corps member to think, talk, or write about what the Corps member did and saw during an actual service activity;
- (C) that provides Corps members with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations in their own communities; and
- (D) that helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others, good citizenship, and civic responsibility.

Your goal for this project is to respond to a need of the City Tech community, develop your abilities to meet that need, and knowledgeably explain the process and rhetorical choices that you made to achieve your project’s aims.

As a team, you will identify a problem or need of the City Tech community and propose a research-supported solution. The scale of the problem that you choose to study and propose a solution to is up to each team. In addition to proposing a solution, you will collect data, use library research tools, create supporting materials that support the argument of your proposal, and expand your skill set to complete this team-based, collaborative project. Throughout the project, think about how you can leverage the work you do on this for improving your skill set and job application materials.

This project is **a lot of work**, but you also have **a lot of time** to complete it in before the end of the semester. The keys to success are cooperation, collaboration, planning, and delegation.

## Assignment Deliverables

Most of these deliverables are created collaboratively by the team as a whole except for the individual project narratives at the end of the project. I recommend using Google Drive for most of your drafting and planning of documents, but you will likely need to use other tools, software, and services to create the project deliverables. Due to the wide variety of solutions to this project, it is the responsibility of each team to invest the time and training necessary for those things that they do not know and leverage those things that they do know for solving problems. I will be here to support, assist, and mentor, but this project is meant to provide students with a self-motivated experience similar to collaborating on a team-based workplace project.

**Meeting Minutes:** This will be an on-going Google Document that you create together. Add a page break, title the page with the date, the recorder's name, and the team members present (always give first and last names for each team member). Your minutes should include what you discussed, what you did, any decisions made, and what you plan to at your next meeting.

**Pitch:** This will be your first component to the project. Together, brainstorm different problems that need to be addressed around campus. Choose a problem that can be fixed or managed with a technical communication solution. **It must be a solution that you can implement in the time available or a campaign promoting a solution that you would be unable to implement in the time available.** Prepare a 5-minute presentation to deliver in front of the class that explains the problem and your proposed solution. Only one team member is required to speak, but all team members must join the presenter in front of the class. The deliverables for this component include a script or outline and your PowerPoint file. One team member can submit viewable links as a comment to the appropriate blog post.

**Proposal:** Following the example of a proposal memo in *Writing That Works*, you will collaboratively create a proposal for your project. Identify the current situation and problem, detail your research into its past and present on campus and off (Are others dealing with a similar problem? If so, what did they do?), include background data obtained from interviews and questionnaires with potential users of your solution, your technical communication-based solution (e.g., poster, website, brochure, video, podcast, instruction manual, etc.), your proposed timeline, your resources and personal experiences (why are you four-five the right team for the job), etc. A minimal proposal will be at least eight pages long, but it is very likely that your proposal will extend beyond that threshold. Your research must include observations, interviews with students, faculty, and staff, research in the archives, college reports, and academic journals. The Ursula C. Schwerin Library Archives are a good place to begin (<http://library.citytech.cuny.edu/services/archive/index.php>). It should include images as part of your evidence of a problem and an illustration of your proposed solution (with proper parenthetical citation). For your research, include

parenthetical citations and a concluding Works Cited list in MLA format. Remember, all projects need a strong foundation to build upon. If you create a great proposal with a good self-motivated schedule, you are more likely to keep on-track and create useful deliverables.

**Proposal-Focused Promotional Material:** To support your proposal's argument, each team will produce a selection of deliverables using at least two of the following media: poster, brochure, flyer, postcards, website, and social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.). Each deliverable should include a 500-word memo that explains your team's rationalization for using that media and using that media specifically in the way you choose to use it, and reports on feedback that you received from 10 people not in your team about the usability and suitability of each deliverable. Please note that each team will need to plan and execute their own usability testing for these deliverables. I cannot seek official approval for posting your work where approval is required, but there are designated places around campus where approval is not required, and of course, approval is not required for the work that you create online on your own website, blog, or social media account. However, you should always be aware of multiple audiences and to what extent you want to post your materials while you are gathering usability testing data and making revisions.

**Team Presentation:** With the final deliverable completed, your team as a whole will give an approximately 20-minute presentation to the class detailing the major components of your project process: problem and research, proposed solution, draft deliverable, usability testing results, and final deliverable. This will be followed by a 5-minute q&a session. I will be looking for the other teams to ask probing and insightful questions. Your deliverables for this component will include a script for all parts and indicating who will be speaking at any given time and a supporting PowerPoint. Practice your presentation beforehand and record the practice presentation for submission. Come dressed in synced business attire on the day of your presentation.

**Project Blog Post:** Each team will create a blog post that summarizes your team's project in words (250-500 words) and pictures (at least two—one of your team and one relating to the focus of your proposal). In your blog post, you will link to a PDF document of your proposal, which includes appendices for your team's meeting minutes, pitch script, pitch PowerPoint slides, final presentation script, final presentation PowerPoint slides, promotional deliverables, and promotional material memos. Before uploading your PDF to OpenLab, each team must make sure that its file size does not exceed 30 MB. It is the responsibility of each team to learn how to use Adobe Acrobat Pro or other PDF authoring software to assemble this final document.

**Project Proposal Printed:** Each team will print and bind (using a 3-ring binder, spiral binding, or other professional method) a copy of their project proposal PDF. If your team creates print-media promotional materials, you may include finished

versions (e.g., a folded brochure) in your bound proposal next to the appropriate appendix.

**Individual Project Narrative:** While the preceding components are written collaboratively and include all team members’ names, each team member will write a 500-word memo analyzing their project and reporting on his or her involvement on the project. The memo should describe the project process, the rhetorical choices made as a team, the way your project’s components used overlapping WOVEN (written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal) modes to maximize their usefulness, and a summary of your specific contributions to your team. Each student should email her or his project narrative memo to Professor Ellis as a Word docx file attachment before class on the first day of team presentations using this file name convention: lastname.firstname.narrative.docx (e.g., burdell.george.narrative.docx).

### Tentative Schedule

7	M	3/9	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 4, “Revising the Draft.”	Conduct mock interviews.	
	W	3/11	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 5, “Collaborative Writing.”	Catch up on beginning of class reading presentations.  Introduce Unit 2 Service-Learning Research Project.  Form into teams.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
8	M	3/16	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 6, “Researching Your Subject.”	Setup Google Drive shared folder for each team.  Create first meeting minutes lecture and exercise.	<b>Project 1 Deliverables due as a Blog Post on our OpenLab site.</b>  <b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	3/18	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 7, “Designing Effective Documents and Visuals.”	Develop project idea and draft your team project pitch.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week’s meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
9	M	3/23	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 8, “Understanding the Principles of Business Correspondence.”	Deliver class pitches.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	3/25	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 9, “Writing Business	Develop timeline for project and include in today’s meeting	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>

			Correspondence.”	minutes.	<b>Each team member: submit this week’s meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
10	M	3/30	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 10, “Writing Informal Reports.”	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	4/1	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 11, Writing Formal Reports.	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week’s meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
11	M	4/6	<b>No Class: Spring Recess</b>		
	W	4/8	<b>No Class: Spring Recess</b>		
12	M	4/13	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 12, “Writing Instructions.”	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	4/15	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 13, “Writing Proposals.”	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week’s meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
13	M	4/20	<i>Writing That Works</i> , Ch 15, “Writing for the Web: Rhetorical Principles for a Diverse Medium.”	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	4/22	Susan Colantuono, “The Career Advice You Probably Didn’t Get,” <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/susan_colantuono_the_career_advice_you_probably_didn_t_get?language=en">http://www.ted.com/talks/susan_colantuono_the_career_advice_you_probably_didn_t_get?language=en</a>	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week’s meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
14	M	4/27	Shawn Achor, “The Happy Secret to Better Work,” <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work?language=en">http://www.ted.com/talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work?language=en</a>	Discussion. Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>

	W	4/29	Nigel Marsh, "How to Make Work-Life Balance Work," <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marshall_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work?language=en">http://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marshall_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work?language=en</a>	Discussion.  Team studio time.  Internal peer review on draft proposal.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week's meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
15	M	5/4	Mellody Hobson, "Color Blind or Color Brave?," <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/mellody_hobson_color_blind_or_color_brave?language=en">https://www.ted.com/talks/mellody_hobson_color_blind_or_color_brave?language=en</a>	Discussion.  Team studio time.  External peer review on revised draft proposal.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>
	W	5/6	Angel Lee Duckworth, "The Key to Success? Grit," <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit?language=en">http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit?language=en</a>	Discussion.  Team studio time.	<b>Beginning of class writing.</b>  <b>Each team member: submit this week's meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
16	M	5/11		Unit 2 wrap up and OpenLab blog post demo.	
	W	5/13		Team studio time.	<b>Each team member: submit this week's meeting minutes to OpenLab by the end of class.</b>
17	M	5/18		Team presentations.	<b>Submit Unit 2 deliverables as a blog post on OpenLab (Only one post needed per team, but all team members should be listed in post).</b>
	W	5/20		Team presentations.	

## Holistic Grading

I grade your work holistically. First, this means that your work must be complete, on time, and done using the writing process. If these components are not met, you will likely lose points. Second, I evaluate your work using the attached grading rubric. I deduct points from a maximum score of 100 based on the weaknesses that I might find in your work. I will include constructive criticism and advice with your grade. This feedback will be useful for your final portfolio. Third, your grade will likely be higher if you can develop more revisions of each part, because each revision is like a mathematical iteration bringing you closer to being a very effective communicator. However, this process only works when your revisions are substantial—going back to the foundations of your writing, composing, and ideas. Simply copyediting or proofreading in the revision process will help with the Conventions section of the rubric but not likely the other parts of the rubric. Carefully consider how you do use the revision process.

## Grading Rubric

Scale	Basic	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Mature	Exemplary
<b>Rhetorical Awareness</b> Response to the situation/assignment, considering elements such as purpose, audience, register, and context	Ignores two or more aspects of the situation and thus does not fulfill the task	Ignores at least one aspect of the situation and thus compromises effectiveness	Attempts to respond to all aspects of the situation, but the attempt is insufficient or inappropriate	Addresses the situation in a complete but perfunctory or predictable way	Addresses the situation completely, with unexpected insight	Addresses the situation in a complete, sophisticated manner that could advance professional discourse on the topic
<b>Stance and Support</b> Argument, evidence, and analysis	Involves an unspecified or confusing argument; lacks appropriate evidence	Makes an overly general argument; has weak or contradictory evidence	Lacks a unified argument; lacks significance (“so what?”); lacks sufficient analysis	Offers a unified, significant, and common position with predictable evidence and analysis	Offers a unified, distinct position with compelling evidence and analysis	Offers an inventive, expert-like position with precise and convincing evidence and analysis
<b>Organization</b> Structure and coherence, including elements such as introductions and conclusions as well as logical connections within and among paragraphs (or other meaningful chunks)	Lacks unity in constituent parts (such as paragraphs); fails to create coherence among constituent parts	Uses insufficient unifying statements (e.g., thesis statements, topic sentences, headings, or forecasting statements); uses few effective connections (e.g., transitions, match cuts, and hyperlinks)	Uses some effective unifying claims, but a few are unclear; makes connections weakly or inconsistently, as when claims appear as random lists or when paragraphs’ topics lack explicit ties to the thesis	States unifying claims with supporting points that relate clearly to the overall argument and employs an effective but mechanical scheme	Asserts and sustains a claim that develops progressively and adapts typical organizational schemes for the context, achieving substantive coherence	Asserts a sophisticated claim by incorporating diverse perspectives that are organized to achieve maximum coherence and momentum

<b>Conventions</b> Expectations for grammar, mechanics, style, citation, and genre	Involves errors that risk making the overall message distorted or incomprehensible	Involves a major pattern of errors	Involves some distracting errors	Meets expectations, with minor errors	Exceeds expectations in a virtually flawless manner	Manipulates expectations in ways that advance the argument
<b>Design for Medium</b> Features that use affordances to enhance factors such as comprehensibility and usability	Lacks the features necessary for the genre; neglects significant affordances, such as linking on the web; uses features that conflict with or ignore the argument	Omits some important features; involves distracting inconsistencies in features (e.g., type and headings); uses features that don't support argument	Uses features that support with argument, but some match imprecisely with content; involves minor omissions or inconsistencies	Supports the argument with features that are generally suited to genre and content	Promotes engagement and supports the argument with features that efficiently use affordances	Persuades with careful, seamless integration of features and content and with innovative use of affordances

**Table 16.** Outcomes for English 1101 and English 1102 specified by the Board of Regents and by Georgia Tech's Writing and Communication Program (NB: In each cell, one or more items separated by semicolons could apply)