

**ENGL 245, SEMINAR IN THE MAJOR, "WRITING RIVERS" | WRITING PROJECT TWO (WP2)
ACTION PROJECT + RHETORICAL CRITIQUE OF APPLIED ENVIRONMENTAL RHETORIC
45% of final grade | 10 pgs., double spaced, plus supplemental material**

How do we work through the project?

- ✓ Tuesday, September 26: Start Thinking
- ✓ Thursday, October 12: Find Inspiration
- ✓ Thursday, October 26: Pitch Your Idea
- ✓ Week of Monday, November 6: Meet with Dr. Druschke
 - Thursday, November 9 through Thursday, November 30: Act!
 - Thursday, November 30: Submit Writing Fellow Draft
 - Tuesday, December 5: Lightning presentations
 - Thursday, December 7: In-class workshop
 - Thursday, December 7: CGD returns Writing Fellow Drafts
 - Thursday, December 7 through Wednesday, December 13: Meet with Writing Fellow
 - Monday, December 18 via email: Submit Final Draft!

What's the point of the project?

In lieu of a final exam, the culmination of this class is an action project and subsequent argumentative paper. This final action project is your chance to "give a shit about something": to find some way to engage in an activity you care about related to water that moves an audience to share your passion. The point here is not for you to satisfy Dr. Druschke with your action, but, instead, to find something that YOU can be passionate about, to take action on that passion, and to justify your choice. Your action should be consequential for an identified target audience and build from interdisciplinary perspectives. This action can be taken individually or in a group, but each student will write an individual final paper after the action is complete.

For your final paper, your job is to take a position related to the value—or lack thereof!—of doing this sort of applied, engaged work for rhetorical studies, English studies more broadly, or environmental activism. You should use your action project experience as evidence for an argument of your choosing. You might suggest, for instance, that a rhetorical approach enlivens environmental activism and public engagement (and offer details **from the literature and from your experience** about how and why), or claim that your action project experience deepened or complicated your understanding of the rhetorical theory we covered in the class (and explain how), or argue that this kind of action has no place in English studies.

My hope is that the action project experience is valuable to you, but I'm not going to dictate what conclusions you come to about the value of that experience in the context of your major. **This argumentative paper should use the tools of the course to critique your action project, and integrate that critique with the scholarly literature from the course to take a position about the role of engagement and action in rhetorical studies/English studies and of rhetorical studies/English studies in public engagement.**

You should see this project and paper as the capstone of your work this semester, showcasing what you've learned about your discipline, about watershed science, about activism, and about yourself.

What should I write?

Your ten-page (double-spaced) analysis should:

- describe—IN DETAIL!—the preparation for, execution of, and consequences of your action
- analyze the action taken including a consideration of:
 - why this was the best possible action to take given the situation and any constraints (what other alternatives did you weigh? why did you choose this one?)
 - a description of the situation you were hoping to intervene in

- the specific audience that you targeted and why this was the appropriate audience – what do they know about the issue? what do you know about them? how did you work to connect to them specifically?
- the potential intended and unintended consequences of the action
- the particular content, design, and delivery choices and their connections to desired consequences
- HOW THIS ACTION EXEMPLIFIED THE LEARNING YOU DID IN THIS CLASS (THIS SHOULD BE THE MAJORITY OF YOUR PAPER!)
- what the specific exigence was that you were reacting to and why you addressed this exigence in this particular way
- how you assessed or evaluated the success of your action and how satisfied you are with the outcome
- attach documentation of the action (photos, outreach materials, lesson plans, etc.)

What will an “A” paper look like?

- Take a position about the role of engagement and action in rhetorical studies/English studies and of rhetorical studies/English studies in public engagement.
- Use the tools of the course to critique your action project, and integrate that critique with the scholarly literature from the course.
- Explain precisely why you chose the action, including an explanation of what was gained or lost through this choice. Why was this action appropriate to the issue, the exigence, the course, and the student? How did you prepare for potential intended or unintended consequences?
- Describe in specific detail the action taken and include (as an appendix) documentation of that action. Discuss why or why not this action achieved the desired outcome.
- Draw heavily from multiple course readings, including specific concepts, ideas, quotes, and theories. Students will use the course readings to complicate, clarify, or analyze their action, and use their action to test, complicate, or clarify course readings.
- Make a clear argument about what role the creation and execution of this action project—and, perhaps, of environmental advocacy more broadly—have in rhetorical studies/English studies –OR– what role rhetorical studies/English studies has in environmental advocacy.
- Be imaginative, lively, informative, and consequential.
- Be grammatically and syntactically flawless.

But seriously, do you have a detailed scoring rubric?

Yes! Check the new scoring rubric for more details on the evaluation of your final paper.

What should we learn through this project?

This project offers a chance to hit on all (or almost all) of our course learning outcomes. Remember those?

- √ Learn about rhetorical studies, rivers, and dams.
- √ Engage with Wisconsin’s aquatic ecosystems and their humans.
- √ Create original, coherent, and compelling arguments in text and in life that push beyond summary to analysis and independent and critical thinking.
- √ Apply the tools of rhetoric to embrace risks, solve problems, and take action in the public sphere.
- √ Partner with others to address timely problems and create positive community change.
- √ Consider the role of environmental advocacy in the English major and the role of English in advocacy.
- √ Give a shit about something! And act on that passion.