**Rhetorical Analysis: Scholarly Article**

Audience: Academic, specifically advanced undergraduate and graduate students in your discipline.

Purpose: This assignment is designed to meet the Students as Scholars objectives to

learn "how knowledge is situated and shared in relevant scholarly contexts" and

understand how genre functions in your future professional discourse community.

Requirements: Select a recent issue of a peer reviewed journal published by your association and

select either a primary (original) research article or a secondary literature review and follow the instructions below. Your response to this assignment should take the form of a well organized 2-3 page essay (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font).

Grading: This paper is worth \_\_ points or \_\_% of your total grade for the course and may be revised if it is resubmitted, along with the original graded copy, one week after it is returned.

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; please submit both paper and Bb copies.

Last week you examined a professional association in your field and we considered how these groups functioned as *discourse communities* to advance the objectives of their disciplines. The assignment outlined here is designed to help you discover how those goals are achieved through the various *genres* employed by writers in those communities. A useful way to think about this is to consider James Martin's comment that "genres are how things get done when language is used to accomplish them" (as cited in Swales, 2010, p. 221). Thus, genres are purposeful and their rhetorical features reflect the values and expectations of their discourse communities. For this paper consider the mission statement of your association (this may be under "aims" or similar language on the publication's website) and make a point of your own about how the article found in your journal's issue meets the group's stated goals. What does the genre "get done"?

Please don't get hung up on trying to compose a thesis before beginning this paper. Since this is a "discovery" assignment, you won't be able to answer the prompt until you have thoughtfully considered the items below. (Please don't answer these questions sequentially; the purpose of this list is to guide your examination of your journal and the article.)

* Your introductory paragraph should mention your association and its goals, as well as the journal and its audience. Be as specific as possible about the journal's readers; for example, the American Medical Association's publications are obviously written for physicians, but who else would read them? Include the name of the publication's editor and supply their credentials. Organize the information requested below into coherent paragraphs; each item does not require a separate paragraph (for example, the next two items could be combined into a single paragraph).
* Review the table of contents (ToC) and report on various topics represented (just some examples); is there a wide variety of subject matter, or are the articles more narrowly focused? Is yours a special issue devoted to a single topic?
* What genres does the journal contain? Are there editorials and/or book reviews in addition to the scholarly articles?
* Select an article that interests you the most (this may also help with your choice of a research project), be certain it is peer reviewed, and identify its genre (an original research article? a literature review?). In addition, provide a sentence or two on its topic and biographical information on the lead author with a few of their other publications (e.g. John Smith, professor of planetary harmony at Sky University, has also written…). Then carefully review the article you selected and conduct a rhetorical analysis of the piece. Find and quote examples of the specialized vocabulary used by this discourse community. What role would the authors' purposes play in your answer? Remember to correctly cite quotations and paraphrases in the style most appropriate for your discipline and provide a references page.
* Finally, as suggested in the prompt above, reflect on what gets "done," as Martin put it, by the genre you examined, and how it gets done. How did it help its writers advance knowledge in your discipline and meet the goals of the association's membership? In other words, connect the group's goals with the genres the author(s) chose.

Please let me know if I can help.

Swales, J. (2011). The concept of discourse community. In Wardle, E. & Downs, D. (Eds.), *Writing about Writing* (pp. 215-227). Boston: Bedford St. Martins.

[Creative Commons License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) “Rhetorical Analysis: Scholarly Genre" is the original work of Virginia Hoy developed and revised between 2016 and 2018 and reviewed by colleagues in the George Mason University Composition Program. It is licensed [CC-BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which means that it may be reused, adapted, or remixed by others as long as any document that incorporates content taken from this assignment includes or links to the following: a statement giving credit for the borrowed content, a link to the license, and an account of any changes made to the content.