

Writing Considerations for the Blog: Six Principles

Purpose

- Before you write a post, remember the **purpose** of our course blog: to share our ideas generated by the readings and experiences in the class. Our blog is an **open public platform**, so be aware that your audience extends beyond the classroom.
- Write to your intended audience: readers, like us, with an interest in the topic. Our writing should be clear enough to engage them in our learning process, by inviting them into the theoretical and physical spaces that we are entering together. More immediately, we are writing to, and for, each other. The tone is casual-academic: relaxed, specific, and smart.

Support

- As a matter of credibility and responsibility, you must support your ideas and credit your sources. The internet reminds us that writing is a conversation, and our writing is only richer when we acknowledge the multiple sources that we bring into play. Clearly cite and reference your sources. Link to your sources, when possible. When you link to a source, you allow your readers access to your primary material.

Organization

- Blogging is just not about plain text written on a page; a good post integrates visual media into its discourse. Embrace the communicative function of images, videos, etc. Your media, however, should be clearly relevant to the context of the post and must be integrated with a complete reference and descriptive caption.
- Note: Compress and resize images *before* adding them to your blog, so that our website does not become bogged down with large files that can affect loading time. Here are two free tools for compressing [jpeg](#) and [png](#) files.

Coherence

- Construct clear paragraphs with topic sentences. Bloggers should begin a paragraph with the most important sentence, then explain or elaborate on that sentence. For a blog, seven or eight sentences per paragraph is usually sufficient.

Clarity

- A blog post is a publication, so proofread carefully for spelling, grammar, and mechanics before you post.
- Voice: Even a classroom weblog can be engaging to public readers. Avoid jargon, inside references to course content that go unexplained, and boring writing. Speak in a real voice about real ideas and issues of interest.

- Read every post out loud slowly, at least once, before posting.

Insight

- Write about the part of the assignment that truly interests you, that part you love. A weblog is the place for passions and opinions. The more engaged you are with your subject, the more insightful your writing will be.
- Embrace the “provisional” nature of blog-thinking. Blogs can be spaces for short stabs of insight, sharp observations, or tentative reflection. Their lack of finish is part of what makes them so compelling—be free to air ideas and explore observations with no ‘end in sight’ —which is different than how you would write in a polished academic paper.