

Women Writers Online Project

Step One: Project Proposal

As your final project for the semester, you will be working with the database [Women Writers Online](#) with a text of your choosing. This proposal should be 1-2 pages outlining which text you are selecting, which assignment you are choosing, and what you hope to gain from this experience. If you have an idea outside of the two options below, you may pitch it but you should also talk about it with me in person so we can determine the details. This will be preliminary, but should indicate that you have already begun to think seriously about the project and the work it will entail.

Option One: Five Page Edition of a Text

As you can tell from WWO or some of the other texts we are reading in this course, there is a significant amount of intermediary work that goes into creating a text for public or student consumption. Part of this is modernizing, formatting, and retyping. Part of it is scholarly, adding in footnotes, glosses, and explanatory material. This assignment entails making a five-page edition of a text (it can be an excerpt or a combination of small texts). You will determine how you want to format it and which choices you will make in modernizing the language or not.

You should also include footnotes (on the bottom of a page, explanatory) and/or glosses (brief definitions on the side margins) explaining tricky moments for an imagined reader at the undergraduate level. When might they need more context? When could you rephrase something to make it more clear? What expert knowledge can you provide someone unfamiliar with this text or time period?

Your edition should begin with a short, 2 page introduction. You've read a ton of these by now, but picture something from the Norton Anthologies or the like that sets the stage for the text. What themes, or features should the reader pay attention to? How do you want to direct their reading experience? This should be written without jargon in clear, accessible prose.

You will explain these choices in the accompanying cover letter, which will take the place of your brief memo. That 1-2 page letter should also cover why you chose this text, what your process was, how you determined what to gloss and annotate, how much to intervene, and other methodological considerations. What did you learn from this process, about textuality, editorial practices, and yourself a reader and critic?

Option Two: Syllabus Inclusion Pitch

Details: 6-8 pages

This could be fun if you imagine yourself teaching literature some day, or simply want an excuse to read beyond the syllabus. This assignment asks you to make a case for including something on the syllabus that isn't already a part of it. This should be a primary text written in English between 1300-1700.

In order to complete this paper, you will need to read your inclusion carefully. Then you should write an essay that demonstrates why this is an important text. This can be a bit more informal than your usual academic prose and will likely be structured a bit differently. You should explain why this text is important, what you think students could learn from it, what kinds of conversations you envision with it, and where in the syllabus it fits. What would it offer a class like "Early Women Writers"? What other courses would it fit well with? If it doesn't fit well, why not? (If you read something, still write about it, don't read a second thing).

Remember to include a brief reflection on how this assignment furthers your progress toward the goals you set yourself in your Grade Goal Statement. You can include this before the essay, after the essay, or as a separate document.

[AI and course policies redacted]