

Assignment

Weekly Reflections Questions

Each week you will write a reflection that documents your experiences with this course's Learning Management System (LMS). In your one paragraph reflections, consider a combination of the following questions:

- What features about Moodle do you like? Why?
- What features about Moodle do you dislike? Why?
- What, if any, social networking sites do you have experience with?
- How is Moodle similar to and different from any social networking site that you have experience using? For example, study the interface layout, navigation, notifications, where tools are located, color scheme, etc.
- After focusing on the similarities and differences between Moodle and social networking sites, explain whether you believe those similarities and differences were helpful or harmful to your own *learning* of rhetoric and composition. In other words, discuss the relationship between the design of Moodle and how it might have helped or hurt how you learn writing. How does the design of the Moodle interface affect the work you (are able to) do?
- What aspect of Moodle, if any, do you believe should be designed by students? In other words, if you could change any aspect of Moodle to better support you as a student, what would it be and why?
- In what ways does the design of Moodle impact how you communicate with me and your peers and how you come to practice writing.
- What assumptions do you think the LMS interface makes about you, the student, about how you learn? How do these assumptions affect how you engage with the course, your classmates and/or the instructor? What and/or who seems to be privileged through the design of Moodle?
- Do any of the tools in the LMS make you think about issues of power, oppression, race, gender, agency, accessibility, disability, etc.?

Part I: LMS Project (written component)

You have been studying and practicing writing and rhetoric by conducting textual analysis and inquiry-research. You have also been writing weekly reflections on your interactions with the LMS. Now you are ready to practice creating your own rhetorical situation through this inquiry-based project called the Learning Management System (LMS) digital writing project. This project has two components, a written and a digital.

Learning management systems are a common and important aspect of learning, especially online learning. Many institutions rely on them for instruction. For example, they are used for submitting assignments, completing quizzes, posting grades, and engaging in class discussions, etc. Throughout this course, you have used Moodle in a variety of ways, and you have been reflecting on your experiences engaging with the LMS. This project asks you to build on your experiences using Moodle by drawing on your rhetorical analysis and research skills to conduct a thorough investigation of and analysis into the effects that [Moodle](#) has on your learning. Importantly, I am not looking for a basic description of Moodle. Instead, focus on your own argument about LMSs based on *the effects* of Moodle on your learning. Visit the [Moodle](#)

[This file is supplemental material to Arzu-Carmichael, *Studying the Rhetoric of the LMS in the Online Composition Classroom*, prompt 6.2 (2022), doi: 10.31719/pjaw.v6i2.102]

website, and gather information that responds to a combination of the following questions:

- Who is involved in the creation of Moodle? What do you know about the creators? Do they list their credentials on the site? Is there any way to contact them?
- What images are displayed on the website? Who and what is (not) represented?
- Does anything on the site make you think about issues related to identity, representation, diversity, or inclusion?
- Are there any investors? advertisers? Who is funding the company?
- How is information presented? What modes are adopted?
- Does the information seem accurate? Is there any bias? (cultural, political, religious, etc.)
- Is the information recent?
- What can we learn about the company that can teach us about the LMS we use here?
- What did you learn about the company (any politics behind it) that can inform any choices made regarding the design of the LMS interface? Pay attention to multiple interfaces here. You might look at how assignments are submitted, how the discussion board is framed, and even how communication such as chat and email are designed.
- How do scholars who study issues related to technology, issues, interface, and online pedagogy, etc. conceptualize the LMS and what conceptualization do you find most engaging and productive that might speak to your own experience?

Part II: LMS Project (digital component)

Now that you have gathered details about the LMS, this final part of the project asks you to share your findings with your audience by presenting an argument about the LMS. Both your weekly reflections and your research of the LMS company were to prepare you for the final digital writing presentation. Importantly, you are not expected to share all of your findings from your inquiry; instead, consider that your audience are students new to online learning and/or to the university, and determine what they should know about the LMS based on your own personal experiences and your own research.

As we have learned from Ball, Sheppard, and Arola (2018), selecting technology to share your project depends on a number of factors such as the rhetorical situation of your project, the most appropriate modes and media to fit that situation, and any affordances that are available for you to create your project. Below is a list of commonly used media. Explore each page before deciding on which you would use to share your findings. This list simply offers suggestions, so feel free to use any tool you are comfortable with. For more examples of technology choices, see Ball, Sheppard, and Arola's *Writer/designer: A guide to making multimodal projects*.

Infographic ([Venngage](#), [Piktochart](#))

Presentation (PowerPoint, [Google Slides](#))

Movie ([iMovie](#) [Mac], [Moviemaker](#) [Windows], [YouTube Editor](#))

Website ([Google Sites](#), [Weebly](#), [Wix](#))

Audio ([Podcast](#), [Audacity](#))

Images ([Poster](#), [Storybird](#), [Fotor](#))