

Community Wikipedia Project

Writing Wikipedia

For the second half of the semester, we'll be focusing on taking both what we've learned about Camden and what we've learned about editing Wikipedia and putting them into practice by actually editing Camden's page or creating other, related pages. Starting by working in sandboxes, we'll transform Camden's Wikipedia page bit by bit.

Milestones

Community Partner Meeting

Our primary community partner meeting will be held during week 1 of the project. Come to class ready to take notes on our partners' observations of the Wikipedia page and with questions to ask that might elicit potential avenues for research.

Proposals

After extensive conversations about both Wikipedia and the city of Camden, it's time to narrow down what you want to work on. This assignment is a concise proposal to work on an aspect of Camden's wiki page or to start a new page.

50 points, due week 2

Weekly Writing

Each week for the first portion of the project, you'll be asked to produce 1000 characters of writing in your sandbox. Note that this is not necessarily 1000 characters of *new writing*. Substantive revisions will also count. Note that all of this writing must include proper citations as defined by Wikipedia's guidelines.

5 points each, due Week 3, Week 4

First Peer Review

The first formal chance for you and your peers to discuss one another's work and help one another improve. Note that the focus of this peer review is *on the quality of the comments you produce*. Note that all written comments and feedback will be given via the correct Talk page. You will receive a separate handout for this assignment.

Draft: 10 points, due Week 5 (class meeting 1)

Comments: 20 points, due Week 5 (class meeting 2)

Second Peer Review

Similar to the above review, this is a chance to discuss our edits as a class. Note that the focus has flipped: we are focusing on the quality of our work above the quality of our comments. There will, again, be another handout for this portion of the assignment.

Draft: 20 points, due Week 7 (class meeting 1)
Comments: 10 points, due Week 7 (class meeting 2)

“Final” Draft

I put final in quotes here because, of course, on Wikipedia nothing is ever really final. This is a polished product that integrates seamlessly with the rest of the Wikipedia page. A separate handout will be given with details.

Due Week 9 (during finals week)

Article Proposal

Writing Wikipedia
Travis DuBose

After extensive conversations about both Wikipedia and the city of Camden, it's time to narrow down what you want to work on. This assignment is a concise proposal to work on an aspect of Camden's wiki page or to start a new page.

Requirements

First, give an overview of what you want to work on and why you want to work on it. What general topic do you have in mind? What time period or subject in Camden's history? This overview should be 2-3 substantial paragraphs about the kinds of additions you hope to make.

Next, talk about the specific ways you hope to implement your changes: are you proposing an entirely new page or are you hoping to add to the main wiki page? What kinds of media do you want to add or statistics do you want to include? Note that this section is the one that will most benefit from conversations with your peers. And remember: be specific.

Finally, talk about research pathways. What kinds of sources do you hope to draw from? What kind of research do you need to do in order to make your proposal successful?

Advice

Collaborate. Writing for Wikipedia is tough, as we've seen. So talk about ways that you can form a community of editors in this class in order to best support the work you're going to be doing. Look for ways to share sources and help one another get the work done.

Also, carefully consider what you say in this proposal: though there is some wiggle room to allow for the discovery inherent in the research process, note that, largely, you are committing to whatever topic you propose here. So think carefully and make sure your topic is both something that interests you and will benefit the project as a whole.

Peer Review 1

For this first peer review, I'm going to focus on the quality of your comments to one another. Though I will look at your work and give you feedback on your talk page, what I really want to do is encourage you to be critical readers of one another's work.

Requirements

Week 5 (class meeting 1) - 4,500 polished characters in your sandbox

Week 5 (class meeting 2) - A substantial response to your two assigned peers

For your submission, try to bring whatever work you've done as close to "mainspace ready" as you can: I'll be looking for the number and quality of citations as well as how closely you adhere to the style guide requirements we've discussed.

For your comments, revisit the trainings we've done: use the language of Wikipedia editors to give feedback. Talk about issues of neutrality and whether or not the article adheres to the criteria of noteworthiness established by Wikipedia. Look at other talk pages on Wikipedia. What kinds of things are discussed there? Note that these comments should be delivered via the talk page.

Final Submissions

Writing Wikipedia

For your final submission for this semester, you're going to have options: a baseline amount of words that you can reduce by engaging in other activities on Wikipedia.

Requirements

Baseline: 8,000 characters in Mainspace

Note that these contributions will be assessed according to how well they conform to Wikipedia's guidelines. So consider very carefully the following dimensions:

- Style: Does your contribution conform to Wikipedia's writing style and requirements for neutrality?
- Noteworthiness: This is something we're discussing a lot in class, but be sure all of your work has at least some degree of noteworthiness as defined by Wikipedia.
- Citations: Do you have sufficient numbers of reliable citations? Are you summarizing those sources in your own words or merely copying and

pasting? Note that Wikipedia has rules against plagiarism, and all of the university guidelines about plagiarism apply even when writing on Wikipedia.

- **Organization:** Are your submissions logically organized? Do they fit within the scheme of the Wikipedia page as it currently stands?

Word Reduction Options

Media: You can reduce the number of words you need to contribute to mainspace by finding and adding media to the page. The following are the values for each kind of media:

- **Original Media:** if you create something yourself—a photo, an illustration, etc.—this is worth a reduction of **1000 characters**.
- **Media from elsewhere:** if you pull media from elsewhere on the web—a logo, a photo, etc.—this is worth a reduction of **500 characters**. Note that this media is subject to restrictions and must be labeled in a particular way. Please discuss this with me if you're interested.
- **Media from elsewhere on Wikipedia:** if you find media that's already on Wikipedia that would work on the Camden page, this is worth **250 characters**.

Maintenance: There is a variety of maintenance that could be performed on a Wikipedia page: reorganizations, link-checking and other activities. Feel free to propose something to me and word reductions will be assigned on an ad hoc basis.

At a minimum, no matter how many other activities you perform, you must contribute 7,000 polished characters to Wikipedia mainspace.

Please send me an email during Week 9 showing how you're accounting for your work. As an example:

7000 characters in mainspace
1000 characters, two original pictures
9000 characters total.

Advice

You've already done much of the work for this submission. The trick now is just to put it all together into something that's presentable to the public. As always, remember that this isn't a paper for a class: this is Camden's public face to the world. You are, literally, writing for an audience of millions. Don't let this intimidate you: use it as motivation to say what needs to be said about Camden.