**Project Plan: The Big Pitch**

**Purpose**: This exercise will allow you to practice collaboration while also using the major elements of rhetoric (considering all sides of our issue; communicating with an intended audience; using ethos, logos, and/or pathos; etc.).

**Overview:** You have been assigned a topic for the final research project of the semester. A few other classmates have been assigned the same topic. You will form a subject research group with those students so that you can discuss your findings and questions with one another. However, each of you will produce your own researched argument essay.



The **required** parts of the assignment are as follows, though not necessarily in this order: a working thesis, an outline, a rough draft, and a final draft. **Optional** assignment parts include a working bibliography and a second rough draft. In today’s class activity, you will gather in your subject groups and discuss what you believe will be the best schedule for this project. Yes, YOU will determine the project schedule. But this is, after all, a course in rhetoric, so ensure that you use your critical thinking skills to design that schedule and to pitch that schedule to the class.

**Time:** Two class periods.

1. In the first class, you will read and discuss the instructions and confer with your group.
2. In the second class, you will be given one more opportunity to confer with you group and then we will then you will pitch the class.
   * Pitches should be approximately 5 minutes each.
   * Any time remaining in the second class will be dedicated to determining which schedule or combination of schedules best meets our needs.

**Tasks**:

1. **Assign group roles**. Determine who will take notes, who will speak for the group when presenting the pitch to the class, and who will keep the time or organize the discussion so that every issue is addressed.
2. **Open the syllabus in Canvas**. Have the schedule portion of the syllabus on hand for your discussion.
3. **Discuss the elements!** Be respectful of one another. Don’t speak while someone else is speaking. Don’t belittle another student’s suggestions. Approach this discussion as a critical thinker—you may have your own preferences and ideas, but keep an open mind about the preferences and ideas of others. The following questions will help you to organize your discussion:
   1. What might you gain by submitting a working bibliography or second draft?
   2. What might be a drawback of requiring a working bibliography or second draft.
   3. What might be a drawback of *not* requiring a working bibliography or second draft?
4. **Discuss the schedule**! The following questions will help you to organize your discussion:
   1. How are the parts of the assignment related to one another? (e.g., does it make sense to submit the working bibliography before or after the working thesis?)
   2. How much time will it take to complete each part of the assignment?
   3. What aspects of students’ personal schedules need to be considered? (e.g., work schedules, big assignments due in other classes, childcare concerns)
   4. On what date and time of day should each part of the assignment be submitted?
   5. Should students be allowed to submit work after the due date?
      * NOTE: The final draft may not be submitted after the due date.
   6. If students can submit late work, what, if any, consequences should there be?
   7. How will the proposed schedule impact the professor? (e.g., can the professor reasonably grade four parts of the project if those parts have the same due date?)
5. On the basis of your discussion, determine a schedule and any associated rules (such as a late policy) for the research assignment.
6. Working closely with your group speaker, craft a pitch to be delivered to the class and the professor. The pitch should be explanatory AND persuasive.

**Criteria**: To receive a completion grade on this assignment, you must do the following:

1. Actively engage in respectful discussion with your group. (If you are on your phone or half asleep, you cannot engage in discussion.)
2. Ensure that every aspect of the assignment is addressed in your proposed schedule. That is, you must determine a due date or due dates for the working thesis, working bibliography, outline, rough draft, final draft, and any of the optional assignment if necessary.
3. Pitch the schedule to the class by not only explaining the details of the schedule, but by using rhetoric to persuade your audience that your schedule is the best for the class. Your pitch does not have to “win” to be considered complete and effective.