

## Threshold Concept: DH is About an Ecology with Audiences

### WRITING 121 DOC MCGRAIL Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”) Assignment Sheet

TOPIC: Use your researched position paper/cause

DRAFT DUE	PEER FEEDBACK	REVISION DUE
Sunday March 8 (Grace period Monday March 9)	Online peer reviews as assigned in Moodle. Complete by Wednesday March 11 at Midnight	Sunday March 16 when you post your website to the Advocacy Website Gallery. (Make FAQs one of your links)

#### WHAT GENRE?

FAQs are an informative genre. You need to anticipate the kinds of questions that your first-time viewer will ask about your cause, about you and the organization you support, about where the money comes from, where the money goes, etc. Your ethos will come from your research and from the clarity and succinctness of your answers. On Monday we will brainstorm together the kinds of questions that get asked of causes, plans of action and advocacy groups. Use that brainstorm to develop your list.

#### WHAT IS THE RHETORICAL SITUATION FOR THIS WORK?

- **Purpose:** Distill what you learned from doing research and writing about your cause into a set of 5-10 questions that your site visitors will want answers for.
  1. Use a conversational style that will appeal to your audiences.
  2. FAQs can be used to break down resistance from your audience. Many times audiences for FAQs will begin with a skeptical question. If you have anticipated this question and answered it clearly and succinctly, you can answer their concerns.
- **Audience:** Your classmates and the Lane County public—imagine you would post your website for the Google search engine. You may keep your site private for this class, but you should write as if it is public.
- **Rhetorical appeals:** Establish your credibility by referring to your sources of info, support your answers with data and direct answers. Brevity is a genre convention of FAQs so if you have complex answers then link to relevant pages for more information.
- **Modes and media:** Your mode is written text and your medium will be the Web when it’s revised and posted to your advocacy website.
- **HOW CAN YOU LEARN HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR FAQs?** We will work on this in class. Key features of FAQs are:
  - Know which key words your audience will be using and stick to those key words when you write your FAQs.
  - Remember the 80/20 rule: 80% of your viewers’ questions can be answered by 20% of your knowledge about the subject.
  - Use simple, basic questions so that many different kinds of viewers will recognize *their* question.

- Test it out! Check with your friends and peers to see if they can come up with other important FAQs that you might not have thought of.
- One of the best ways to learn how to write FAQs is to read find excellent ones and use them as models. Here are some:
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/faqs.html>
  - <http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/en-us/nonprofits/faq/>
  - <https://www2.ucar.edu/climate/faq>
- **DO I NEED AN AUTHOR'S STATEMENT?** Yes, write a paragraph about how you chose your questions and how you answered them. Talk about what you thought was successful or unsuccessful and why.