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# Final MA Portfolio

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FINAL MASTER'S PORTFOLIO

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A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of  
Bowling Green State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in the field of English  
with a specialization in English Teaching

March 2, 2018

Dr. Lee Nickoson, First Reader  
Dr. Bill Albertini, Second Reader

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### Analytical Narrative

When I first began my masters' journey at BGSU I was majoring in school counseling. After completing two courses, I realized that my true love was in the English classroom, rather than an office setting. I came to this realization because I was not enjoying the one on one time, rules and paperwork aspects behind the counseling degree. I felt more at home discussing issues through literature in a large discussion setting than in a counseling environment. However, I still felt like I incorporated a lot of the counseling skills and theories into my classroom every day, which is why I included paper four, School Counselor's Role in Duty to Protect, to show that my minor focus is still on ensuring students are safe and cared for, while the major focus remains on strengthening their English skills. The assignment was to find a current topic and complete more analytical research over it. While the topic was current in counseling, I believe it is also current in any classroom setting. Overall, my final masters' portfolio showcases the projects I felt I would utilize in my current or future classrooms, and therefore would be best suited to spend time revising and adding new insight.

To begin, the first project, Analytical Writing Project and Research, was selected because it was almost a precursor for projects two and three in ENG 6200. The project was assigned to allow us time to research what skills and concepts were working well in English classrooms, and then create a new teaching unit based off that research. I worked off research I had completed for ENG6040 which was more personal and conducted at my local school district, North Baltimore High School. I tied that previous research to current trends in the academic world today. I received a lot of valuable feedback from my original professor, Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, about this new assignment, had the opportunity to teach this unit to students and reflect on it, and still did not feel the unit was quite up to par. I had to go back to this first project before revising

the following two to ensure I was tying all of my teachings to valuable research and theories that have worked in classrooms before. Moreover, it allowed me to look back at some of my own research within my district setting and see how this could tie to a broader setting, in case I ever try to move teaching positions.

The second, Major Assessment Design: Critical Thinking Unit, and third, Assessment Plan Rationale, came from ENG 6200 as well. They were different from the first because they had more direct ties to the teaching process. Therefore, with project two specifically, I began by reflecting on what went well vs. what went wrong when teaching the unit to my students. I did realize that Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, the original professor to look at my work, was right when she stated how I needed to make goals and standards more accessible and outlined for my students. Furthermore, she encouraged me to make up a few handouts that detailed the particular steps, which you will find in the revised version as well. All of this has increased my learning in various ways because it allowed me to delve deeper into the little specifics of teaching English and analysis that I was missing in my classroom before. I felt as though these added on to choice one because they took those now honed in critical thinking skills and applied them back to English standards.

As for project three, ever since my undergraduate years I have felt that assessment is one of my weak areas. I am never sure if I am adequately gauging how well my students are learning and retaining content, vs. how well they are simply repeating memorized facts that they may forget a week later. I have tried to work on this within my masters' courses whenever I can because I know how important it can be to ensure students are actually learning and retaining what a teacher expects from them, especially for my seniors who are transitioning to college the next year. When I originally wrote the assessment design plan I had never had a class complete a

true portfolio assessment before. I tried it out with a few different classes of students this year, and I think the students and I both were amazed by the results. I have always known that students do not spend the time to go back and edit their own papers as much as I would have liked; however, this allowed the students to learn that as well. As a result of this, I created self-editing papers and measures for them to try on their own in preparation for college next year. Therefore, after teaching this one time through, I actually added the self-editing rubric and markings to the grading scale as part of their portfolio, so the importance was highlighted even more.

Project four then, does not align as well with the other three in terms of content. However, I feel it is the most substantive research project because it is more outside the box and about current happenings in the educational and psychological world. On a personal level, this work shows my ability to still create research projects and papers, much like I expect of my students. The other three, while still grounded in substantive research, are more reflective in nature. Project two, specifically, has a strong tie to demonstrating how I plan for classes and a typical teaching unit's structure, whereas project four solely relies on substantive research for its worth rather than what a student would be expected to learn in my classroom.

These papers showcase the goals I had in pursuing a masters' in English with a specialization in teaching, which were firstmost to be able to continue teaching dual enrollment writing courses. However, after I completed the 18 hours required for that certification, I found that I was learning many more valuable skills that I could use in all of my class preps, so I decided to continue on with the entire masters' degree. Throughout the classwork, I learned various theories and skills that I can apply to literature and writing, from specific theories like feminist theory and humanist to skill sets I had never considered from Gallagher, Flower & Hayes, Micchiche, and so much more. The theories have helped shape how I teach literature

within my classroom, primarily in discussions with my students. I learned that I was strongly teaching my students to look at books through a historical or humanist lens, and disregarding all others. I never realized I was doing this, however. After the realization, I have now tried to open their mindsets much larger, specifically when dealing with the classics like *The Great Gatsby*. I have tried to get them to think more critically and analytically, from any viewpoint they want to consider: is New Criticism and close reading worthwhile on classics? Was Daisy used to show a roundabout way to feminist theory? etc.

Moving more into the skill sets I learned during my masters' program, perhaps the most helpful writing skills came in the idea of having students use the terms: claim, evidence, and interpretation when trying to detail their thesis, like Gallagher promotes. This is shown in week 4 of my project two. Furthermore, I learned various other skill sets, such as the freethinking process from Flower & Hayes that allows my students to be okay with struggling in the early stages of the writing process, but still find ways to overcome these struggles. All of these methods tied together have ultimately shaped my teaching experience and the learning experience for my students in so many beneficial ways.

In the future I will use what I have learned during my masters' program to make even more beneficial changes to my courses that I am already teaching. I hope to also add more dual enrollment courses in the future. right now I am teaching English 11 and English 12 (both college preparatory and regular), College Readiness II, and dual enrollment GSW1110 and 1120. Hopefully within the next few years I can add a dual enrollment literature course, and perhaps after more certification, a communications courses as well. If I do not teach this at the high school level, then I would have interest in teaching at the collegiate level. If not next year, within the next three, I also have interest in pursuing further education, specifically in the realm of

communication and/or rhetoric studies. Overall, I found my time in the masters' program valuable for my future career and academic endeavors.



**PAPER 1: Analytical Writing Project and Research**

Dear Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz, **(REVISED)**

For this assignment, I took a complete new vision of the previous research I had done and applied it to something I could use at my real-world career. In the past, the paper was to serve a requirement for learning new ways to research a topic we were interested in. However, since I was not required to ever actually apply the research, and I completed it during the summer months, I had little motivation to apply it at the time.

This project, however, gave me a good reason to focus on a new rhetorical situation and actually apply the research to my College Readiness II class, which consists of 11 seniors, and hopefully in the future my English 12 class as well. I began by completing some more research on the topic at hand: writing analytically and the best ways to teach it, so my purpose became how to teach my students to be better analytical thinkers, which will hopefully transfer into their writing by the end of the whole unit. Analytical thinkers should be able to look at information, take away key points from it, but also then add to the conversation with their own unique insight and analysis. Currently, my students can read and take away information, but they are lacking in the area of making the sources talk (synthesis) and adding their own analysis of the information they have found.

I chose a powerpoint as my forum and created one out of the research I had acquired because this seems to always be my next step before teaching something new. Even if I don't actually show the powerpoint to my students, I like the way it is laid out, and it's an easy way to catch up any students who are absent.

I wrote to this rhetorical situation by ensuring that I was giving multiple different examples of critical thinking, broken down steps, and mini activities in the powerpoint. This way the multiple different learning styles in that class could hopefully catch on to the different points being made, whether through explanation, steps, or examples.

I learned a lot along the way. I did some of the mini activities myself and realized how often I am not suspending my own judgment or asking new questions. I know I seek out patterns because I seem to do that in all parts of my life, but the other steps can be a little more tricky at times.

I guess you should know that I've never really prided myself on being a good critical thinker, so I'm very nervous to try to teach that skill to multiple other students. In the context of my current classroom, I do not feel like I am giving them enough strategies to help them write analytically as I should be. I'm able to teach them how to do argumentative papers, and summaries are great, but not so much on the analytical spectrum.

The critical issues focused on are toward the beginning of the powerpoint; it's this idea we've been discussing in our current class that students can find facts and get the mechanics down, but they can't think for themselves. They can't add new ideas to the facts already presented. It's very relevant to seniors getting ready to embark on their collegiate journey where they will be expected to do this on a daily basis. I've talked with numerous university professors over the past few years who say this is the one skill lacking when transitioning from high school to college.

I would appreciate any feedback you have for me in terms of inconsistencies that you might see within the powerpoint or areas that need further clarification. I feel like sometimes when I'm

dealing with new information I tend to either oversimplify or not explain it well enough. I never get it exactly right the first time.

I would also love any additional strategies, activities, or ideas you have that would further help my students learn how to think critically. I hope this project allows my students to meet my purpose by the end of the whole unit.

With gratitude,

Stefanie A. Lauer

## **5 Steps to Critical Thinking and Analytical Writing**

*\*Handout - explains main overview of the powerpoint teaching and ideas\**

Step 1: Suspend All Judgment

Step 2: Define Significant Parts and How They're Related

Step 3: Make the Implicit Explicit

Step 4: Look for Patterns

Step 5: Keep Reformulating Questions and Explanations

Trace impressions, reactions, sudden thoughts, moods, etc. back to their probable causes. Then, try to analyze these responses using specific sensory details

1. Your associations have to be within the context.
2. Use your personal reactions to explore what the subject means, but take care not to interpret farther than details will support.
3. Because the tendency to transfer meanings from your own life onto a subject can lead you to ignore the details of the subject itself, you need always to be asking yourself: "What other explanations might plausibly account for this same pattern of detail?"

Reflective Narrative: Analytical Writing Research

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Summer Semester 2016

### Reflective Narrative: Analytical Writing Research

Teacher research can be defined in various formats. First of all, Ruth Ray would seem to define it as “systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers” or “action research” (1993, p. 49). Before I began this class, I always thought of teacher research as a concept where teachers sought out new information to better their own teaching. I thought it as an individual concept, that is, teachers would seek out information on their own from various formats online and use the bits and pieces that best collaborated with what they were already doing. However, after this class, I realize now how broad of a concept teacher research really is and how vastly it could help improve multiple classrooms at once. I realize now that teacher research is not something that needs to be done by solely one person without specific outside input; rather, teacher research is the idea that multiple teachers, theorists, and ideas can collaborate together on one topic to come up with multiple new strategies and notions that would better the teacher’s style. This new philosophy of teacher research is how I would want to practice it in the future because I feel like it enables me to not only learn the ideas I’m seeking out, but it also enables me to learn particulars on other related frustrations teachers may be having and concepts they have tried that have already proven successful or not.

With this particular class in mind, the topic I chose to most pursue new research over was analytical writing. I came into this research project with a strong basis in understanding what analytical writing is and how it should look in the end; however, I struggled when it came to best practices for teaching it. I think that my students are often hesitant to write text that is not modeled directly after something they are given in class. It was interesting to work with outside teachers on this project to learn some of their similar frustrations and new practices that work for them. It was also interesting to work with my district’s 9/10 English teacher, Mallory Huffman,

seeing as how she has all the same students, just for two years prior to them entering my room. She responded in multiple interview pieces that she does a lot of modeling with the students, and they are also hesitant in her room to break away from that style that she gives them. She also questions them a lot on what they think, but she finds they have confidence issues at times with expressing themselves. I see the same issues within my own classroom, and it seems that others, like the other eight that responded to my survey, have similar frustrations when it comes to “taking the training wheels” away from the students and requiring them to write analytically on their own.

I believe this graduate class allowed me to follow the ideals of Ruth Ray in numerous way. Ray states there are three purposes to graduate research: “to introduce students to the existing knowledge of the field; to offer theoretical perspectives for interpreting the ideas and generating more knowledge; and to make available approaches for knowledge making at the personal, local, and global levels” (p. 139). Following these research ideals, I think that the survey component opened my eyes to the fact that many other teachers have similar frustrations when it comes to my topic, and yet still, even more had alternative strategies I could be putting in place to help ease some of these frustrations. Secondly, the interview segment allowed me to generate even more knowledge and gain answers to many of the questions I was left with after looking at my survey results. Now, after finding some personal and local benefit in the knowledge acquired, I believe it is up to me to take on that third component and find new knowledge at global levels.

To do so, I plan on not only learning more about strategies suggested to me through the surveys and interviews (Notice and Note; the Teaching Channel; chop, blend, digest; SOAPStone; Joliffe’s Diagram; TIQA, and Peter Elbow’s believing game), but I also plan to

look at outside material that has been suggested to me from past mentors and current university professors (They Say, I Say by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, Writing Analytically by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen, and numerous journal articles such as “Teaching the Analytical Life” by Brian Jackson). After I conduct this research and garner new knowledge, I will try out at least three new strategies in my classroom next year. I will conduct pre and post writing assessments through the use of rubrics with my students and try to determine which strategy proved most effective. I want to be the type of researcher that not only gains new knowledge, but actually puts that knowledge to practice to determine what is best.

Before I began this, I, as a researcher, was someone who knew I had vast amounts of knowledge at my fingertips through the use of the internet. Now, I realize, that actually having conversations with other educators, conducting surveys and interviews, and following through with information gathered, will open me up to even more best practices that I can incorporate in my classroom.



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**PAPER 2: Major Assessment Design: Critical Thinking Unit****Writer's Memo (REVISED)**

Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz,

My audience will consist of my College Readiness II elective course, which is 11 high school seniors, all of similar ethnic backgrounds, but differing when it comes to economical backgrounds, as well as writing and reading skill levels. The class meets once a week for 43 minutes for the entire year.

The purpose of my project is based around the idea that students need to gain better critical thinking skills in order to succeed in college and beyond. By the end of the project, students will be expected to work more independently than in the past, stretch their thought processes farther, and have a better understanding of analysis. This class does not follow a specific set of Ohio standards, seeing as how it is an elective that is supposed to bridge the gap from high school to college that many college freshmen face. The course was created after talking with various college faculty about what they see college freshmen lacking. These skills were then compared to the Ohio Common Core standards, and assessment was done to determine what students need to learn to master high school standards vs. what they need to know entering college as a freshman. One of the major areas of weakness was critical thinking and analytical skills. When it comes to analysis, most English 12 Common Core Standards, focus on analyzing literature. The standards are changing next year, and there is still little improvement when it comes to the area of analysis and critical thinking. I am ultimately trying to take students away from simply analyzing literature, and allow them to learn critical thinking skills (analysis and evaluation) within the real world and for future college courses.

The Common Core Standards we will still follow throughout are: Conventions of Standard English, Knowledge of Language, and Vocabulary Acquisition and Use, as well as Production and Distribution of Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, and Range of Writing. We will also be using Carlgren's suggestions for critical thinking standards students must possess for college and the workforce. They are listed below on page 12.

The main goal is that my students will create new texts from their writing instead of following a simple format they have been given or simply paraphrasing information from multiple sources like they have in the past. Instead, I would like for my students to experience a deeper awareness of how to embed quotations within their writing by analyzing the quote they have chosen, enable them to come up with new ideas to add to the already credible facts, etc.

I am interested in further exploring the theoretical discussions on how to properly embed quotations, the place that analysis holds in the Common Core standards and at the collegiate level, and ways to expand students' thinking. Carlgren argues that problem solving, critical thinking, communication, and decision making should be taught in tandem and throughout multiple different subjects. However, she also understands there is not a huge emphasis on any of these skills being taught together when we look at the current standards (63). I would like to further explore why this is the case and how we can combat this while still maintaining the integrity of our curriculum in alignment with current and future standards.

As for the timeline, this is the first assignment the students will do in class where they are consciously gathering their thoughts and trying to think outside the box. For the most part, all of my seniors seem to want to have direction at all times and want assignments laid out for them. In previous courses, they have only had to analyze literature, nothing too pertinent to their real lives. While this assignment will still have structure, it will be the first step in making them

lifelong learners on their own. After this assignment, they will be given more freedom in different assignments such as 20Time projects, etc. where they have to determine their own timelines, thoughts, research, etc.

I have learned through this project that I have lost a lot of the critical thinking skills I relied on while I was in college. This has made me a little bit sad because I feel like it is hard for me to teach these skills to students when I am not using them all that often myself. In order to combat this, I am trying to do some outside projects during my free time that will help me polish and hone these skills again.

I would be curious to learn how much value you place on analysis and evaluation of facts within your students' writings. Also, I would like to know any additional strategies you think I could implement or replace within the project.

After doing some research, I would be interested to learn if there were other high school teachers trying to teach these same skills to their students, and if so, how it is going for them. I would also be interested in finding some sort of pre and posttest for critical thinking skills that I could administer with the students. I had hoped to find this in the Sarigoz article since I was about assessment of their skills, but there was only a broad pretest. I could use this for both, but I'm afraid since it's just a self-evaluation students might lie because by the end of the unit they think they know the "correct" answer, even if they have not mastered the skill. I know there are other ones I could buy like Cornell CT Test Level X at <http://www.criticalthinking.com/cornell-critical-thinking-test-level-x.html> but I am more interested in trying to create something I can tailor to my students.

Thank you for your time,

Stefanie A. Lauer

**Major Assignment Description:**

For the first time in my classroom, you are going to be asked to stretch your thoughts farther than ever before. No, we are not going to trace green and white like in *The Great Gatsby*, although you all know that is my favorite thing to make you do. Instead, you are going to learn to think outside the box and come up with your own analysis and evaluation for each fact or opinion thrown your way. Thinking outside of the box essentially means that you are trying to look at everything through a new lens that allows you to see deeper and perhaps more than you ever have before. you have been in these classes with the same peers for many years, but what happens when you look beyond the everyday and try to see more? Or, you have perhaps practiced in the Woodruff Building, or gone there for different school activities, but have you ever actually tried to look at the details, see if any patterns emerge, etc.?

I hope through this unit we will have fun expanding our mindsets; instead of teaching you *what* to think, I hope to teach you *how* to think.

As you all know, I am a big proponent of giving each of you your own voice, while still being mindful of the voices around you. This unit will allow us to grow our voices into sounds that are more mature and unique than ever before.

To begin, we will take a trip to the Woodruff Building tomorrow. Bring your coats and something to write on out there. <sup>1</sup>

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As we move through this unit, you will be adding on to your critical thinking and analytical

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<sup>1</sup> I didn't want to give too much away to the students in the first description of the unit because after talking with my mentor from my bachelor's at The University of Findlay, Dr. Christine Denecker, she told me one of the best ways to begin teaching critical thinking is to keep an element of surprise. I should allow them to first assess how they think before trying to make them delve deeper. That is why this part has two sections to describe the assignment.

writing skills. These are deemed as important for college and beyond. “Unfortunately for some students, this instruction (or requirement) comes too late. As universities establish these skill sets as a requirement in their courses, students without these skills find themselves increasingly disadvantaged. These disadvantaged students will find no reprieve in the workforce as employers look for similar skills” (Carlgren, 2013, p. 68). Therefore, my hope is you will take this unit, the homework, writings, and the readings associated with it seriously.

The culminating project will be a written assignment. You will be graded more on the basis of being able to come up with new claims and interpretations, rather than the emphasis being put on reiterating evidence and following the correct format of a paper.

**Daily Schedule:**

<b>WEEK 1</b>
<p>DAY 1 - Take pretest over critical thinking skills found Sarigoz's article<sup>2</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go to Woodruff building and write down impressions</li> <li>- Come back in and discuss - try to get rid of all "judgment" words (preknowledge required of connotative ones)</li> <li>- begin defining what critical thinking is/areas of life where you have/will use it</li> </ul>
<p>DAY 2 - Go over the standards we'll be working on during this unit to try to give them a clearer picture of our goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-begin powerpoint<sup>3</sup> slides 1-16 (discussion of what critical thinking is and areas where we're already using it)<sup>4</sup></li> <li>-<u>Homework</u>:- go somewhere like a coffee shop and write down all thoughts, then decide which are judgments and which are impartial</li> </ul>
<p>DAY 3 - powerpoint slides 17-33 (discussion of the 5 steps to walk through the critical thinking process)<sup>5</sup></p> <p><u>Homework</u>: find a picture in a magazine and answer: What is this a picture of? Keep answering the question in different ways, letting your answers grow in length as you identify and begin to interpret the significance of telling details.</p>
<p>DAY 4 - -powerpoint slides 34-61 (mini activities where we are analyzing pictures in class, working through the 5 steps and beyond)<sup>6</sup></p>
<p>DAY 5 - Start with analyzing a classroom desk - ask questions like "Consider its context: With what things can this object be associated? Of what system(s) is it a part? How is it different than other models/types/styles? Is it part of a pattern? Are there other things like it?"</p> <p>"Ask why: Why is this object structured/used/built as it is?"</p>

<sup>2</sup> Pages 5318-5319 - 21 questions

<sup>3</sup> The entire powerpoint is based off of information found in *Writing Analytically* by David Rosenwasser & Jill Stephen. It is also based off past conversations with numerous high school teachers and collegiate professors who were trying to determine how to best close the gap between high school and entering college.

It collectly covers standards A.K 1-6.

<sup>4</sup> Sarigoz describes critical thinking as "reasoning, analyzing, problem solving, reading comprehension, scientific thinking, creative thinking, judgment and deciding accurately" (5315). Since most students have some of these categories mastered, our main focus will be on analyzing, with reasoning, problem solving, and judgment tied in.

<sup>5</sup> These were developed in conjunction with conversations with Dr. Christine Denecker and *Writing Analytically* by Rosenwasser & Stephen (2003).

<sup>6</sup> Falkner (2011) advocates that it is imperative we take "students' choices in entertainment seriously" in order to build upon their analytical skills, before requiring them to analyze a text that might not interest them as much. I have designed the powerpoint based off images that should evoke some emotion within the students, from their interests I know about to pictures of their peers, to try to work in this interest factor. Later, we will move from images to texts about popular culture.



“Reflect on this sign’s significance: What does this object reveal about our cultural ideology/values/beliefs/fears/desires/wishes/regrets/accomplishments/etc.?” (Falkner 46).

Discuss difference between cultural practices/developments/objects (Falkner 47).

Analyze popular culture found on social media and in the news <sup>7</sup>

powerpoint slide 62<sup>8</sup>

Homework: Respond to “the ultimate goal of this assignment is to consider a ‘cultural practice’ or ‘cultural development’ (or a single ‘cultural object’ that is a part of a ‘cultural practice/development’) and explain what it reveals about our culture/society’s values, morals, fears, insecurities, desires, wishes, hopes, aspirations, needs, expectations, idiosyncrasies, strengths, weaknesses, and/or regrets. You may consider practices, developments, or objects in politics, technology, fashion, film, literature, social interactions, sports, education, the workplace, speech, theater, art, or some other area of your choosing and consider its significance” (Falkner 47).<sup>910</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Falkner (2011) uses information from *Signs of Life in the USA: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers*, to promote that signs in our society have deeper meanings associated with them, from “fashion trends, consumer products, technological innovations [to] television programming - because, they argue, an analysis of popular culture reveals pervasive, often invisible, ideological views that shape our society. In other words, cultural studies instructors ask students to critically analyze all manner of cultural practices, developments, and consumer products in much the same way that they’ analyze more traditional academic texts, such as novels” (45).

<sup>8</sup> Since this unit is unlike any we have done in my room before, I wanted to ensure we were creating a “safe, trusting, and risk-taking environment” like Carlgren (70) states is needed in order for any skills to be learned. This is why we started the week off slow before tying into a writing assignment, with not a lot of independent work. I wanted them to converse with me and each other to work through their questions and uncertainties before setting them out on their own.

<sup>9</sup> “Analyzing popular culture lends authenticity to the practice of analysis” (Falkner 49).

<sup>10</sup> I’m hopeful that through this they will look for patterns and come up with a larger claim that is their own, not one they found in a source

<b>WEEK 2</b>
DAY 1 - Read: “The New Greatest Generation: Why Millennials Will Saved Us All” by Joel Stein from <i>Time Magazine</i> <sup>11</sup> article and analyze by allowing them to first write down their reflection on their own (they are used to this type of paper) then work through the 5 steps to make their reflection go even further - do this in small groups <sup>12</sup>
DAY 2 - Go over the process for writing a dialectic essay. <sup>13</sup> Have students find three sources/create Works Cited page - must be scholarly journal articles  <u>Homework:</u> create a sample outline of what their paper will look like
DAY 3 -Begin writing dialectic essay <sup>14</sup>
DAY 4 - Finish writing of dialectic essay
DAY 5 - Peer edit to pick out ANY inherent and hidden bias <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Main focus during small group time on Standards: Attitude Outcomes

<sup>12</sup> This is where we begin tying in popular culture even further by analyzing it and the effects it has on their generation.

<sup>13</sup> Students are used to writing purely informative or argumentative because of the way our English classes and standards are set up. A dialectic essay allows them to show ALL sides without choosing one - this will help them accomplish step 1, which is suspending all judgment.

<sup>14</sup> Standards A.S. 3 and 5

<sup>15</sup> Standard A.K. 4

<b>WEEK 3</b>
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DAY 1 - Play Mao (card game that plays much like Uno, only students are not given the rules ahead of time - they must learn them as they break them. Also, they are not allowed to ask questions and therefore must redirect their communication skills to gain more knowledge)<sup>16</sup>

Homework: Read “Head in the (Instagrammed) Clouds” by Isabel H. Evans and respond to it critically.<sup>17</sup> In this case you will be asked to think From Topic to Issue to Question, which Stancliff & Groggin argue allows students to leave “the unproductive and inhibiting effects of binary thinking... [and be] challenged to pursue high-interest, motivating questions that they craft” (32).

“Use a more detailed map for navigating a world of interests and concerns:

Decide the topic: subject in which we are interested

Issue: situation that has become the subject of discussion and possibly disagreement

Question: specific focus of our curiosity, confusion search for knowledge” (30).

Explain how you decided on each and your own thoughts on them.

DAY 2 - Discuss homework and new traits learned.

-Discuss how in the past during this unit they have created dialectic essays in which they showed all sides from someone else, creating a logical well-rounded argument. Now, they must combine their voices to the argument, making it more analytical and evaluative.

-Look at templates from *They Say, I Say* book to discuss ways to professionally enter in these conversations

-Work through a sample dialectic together, then allow them to add their own voices to theirs.

Homework: Finish adding analysis to the essay

DAY 3 -Break into partners and create a future scenario/problem they may encounter at work for each other. They will create this into a case study. Then, give the problem to their partner and have the person try to solve the problem based off what knowledge they currently have working through the 5 steps.

-Afterward, have them do research and again try to solve.<sup>18</sup> This time they are working backwards - starting with their own voice and adding in the voices of others.

-By the end they should be thinking about such factors as: their position and decision; what

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<sup>16</sup> Carlgren asserts that the four premises of “problem solving, critical thinking, communication, and decision making” must be taught in conjunction with each other (69). Therefore, this quick game allows students to use all four in a new way, while still incorporating an activity of interest to them. The normal time spent in the room on reading/writing then becomes homework, since the game took up instructional time today.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2013/7/19/social-media-evans/> Thanks to Jessicah Lawrence for the suggestion!

<sup>18</sup> Chowning et al. argues that critical thinking skills are best showcased in science based practices and through situations such as case studies. Students are essentially creating hypothetical case studies for each other and then being challenged to look at them from fresh lenses instead of judging and becoming emotional right away. They must come up with a solution on their own before seeking out additional information that may help. This covers all standards under the skills outcome column.

facts support it; what missing information could be used to make it better; who will be impacted by the decision and how; main ethical considerations; strengths and weaknesses of alternate solutions<sup>19</sup>

DAY 4 - Discuss the statement from *They Say, I Say*: “To make an impact as a writer, you need to do more than make statements that are logical, well supported, and consistent. You must also find a way of entering a conversation with others’ views - with something ‘they say.’ In fact, if your own argument doesn’t identify the ‘they say’ that you’re responding to, then it probably won’t make sense” (4).

-Go over embedding quotations even further and ways to come up with own claims.

DAY 5 - Go over the idea of wrestling with coming up with a new claim that has never been made before. Use the assignment: Submit a paper In which you tell me what the issue, reasons/evidence , and conclusion are for the attached essay “Digital Distractions.” Like most writing by most humans, the writing is not especially coherent, i.e., it is not clearly trying to make a particular point. I want you to wrestle with a very typical article. What are the issue and argument here?

-This paper is not designed to have a single fill-in-the-blank kind of answer. Instead, I will be evaluating your reasoning for each claim you make. HINT, AS IN MAJOR HINT: Definitions are crucial to any attempt to say “I found X.” What is this X thing you claim to have found?

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/01/26/study-use-devices-class-nonclass-purposes-rise>

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<sup>19</sup> (Chowning et al. 3)

<b>WEEK 4</b>
<p>DAY 1 -Review the short paper they have created and what it means to develop our own new claims that have never been used before.</p> <p>-Talk about Claim - Evidence - Interpretation and the place this has in college.</p> <p>-Look at listing of possible paper topics with handout “Paper Topics”</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> choose topic by tomorrow</p>
<p>DAY 2 -Look at rubric and assignment sheet for the major writing assignment.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>-Discuss with students that while critical thinking is not only utilized for research papers, this is a good way to showcase the skills they’ve learned throughout this unit, especially since critical thinking can tie so closely to communication<sup>21</sup></p> <p>-Work through the 5 steps of critical thinking for their chosen topic.</p> <p><u>Homework:</u> Develop own claims about chosen topic BEFORE finding sources</p>
<p>DAY 3 -Discuss different perspectives they could write from: rhetorical/informational/social<sup>22</sup></p> <p>Find sources, create Works Cited - remind them they can always add sources later</p>
<p>DAY 4 - Talk about Flower &amp; Hayes Heuristic Strategy for Analytical Writing<sup>23</sup></p> <p>Create own schedule for what will be done when on the paper<sup>24</sup></p>
<p>DAY 5 - continue writing</p>

<sup>20</sup> Chowning et al. states “research suggests that students need experience and practice justifying their claims, recognizing and addressing counter-arguments, and learning about elements that contribute to a strong justification” (1). The rubric and assignment seeks to address these areas.

<sup>21</sup> Carlgren

<sup>22</sup> Use handout “Adapted from ‘Writing for Readers’ by Barry M. Kroll” created from Kroll’s piece

<sup>23</sup> Handout created for students to follow titled “Adapted from

<sup>24</sup> I have found in the past students tend to procrastinate less if they have a strict schedule to follow. However, when I give the schedule if it is too lax they will procrastinate where they can, and if it is too quick for them, they get frustrated and stop often before they even begin part of it. Therefore, I like allowing them the time to create a schedule, review it with me or a peer, and see if they can stick to what they have created for themselves.

**WEEK 5**

DAY 1 - 5 = writing

Must conference with me a minimum of two times during this week to assess where they are at  
- I will not “correct” anything, but will guide them back to the 5 steps and ask them questions to try to further claim - evidence - interpretation and analysis where necessary

<b>WEEK 6</b>
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<p>DAY 1 -Peer and self-evaluation, rubric marking, self-reflection<sup>25</sup></p>
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<p>-Students are going to evaluate themselves and how well they think they did, then a peer<sup>26</sup> while I mark their paper based on the rubric.</p>
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<p>DAY 2 - Today students will assess whether their self and peer evaluations match with the rubric I have evaluated them over.<sup>27</sup> We will have time to discuss where there are discrepancies and why we think these exist. They will also work on polishing their paper where needed.</p>
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<p>DAY 3 -5 - polishing of papers, conferencing where needed, tying up all loose ends <sup>28</sup></p>
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<p><sup>29</sup></p>
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<sup>25</sup> Carlgren determined these to be the best types of assessment when it comes to the critical thinking skills base (70).

<sup>26</sup> Kroll also believes it's important for the classroom to be "a place where writers can cooperate and interact" (180). I usually like for them to have something down on paper first.

<sup>27</sup> Bruce argues "we look at what we've written and do some math- we add, we subtract, we substitute, we rearrange" (33). I want students to be able to self-evaluate more and work on this idea more on their own.

<sup>28</sup> It's always difficult for me when I teach a new unit to understand what concepts students will catch onto and which ones they'll struggle with. I feel like during these days I may have to reteach certain concepts and so I have left room for that.

<sup>29</sup> Look into creating a digital storytelling unit after this one is finished. Reference Yang & Wu's article for ideas.

**Standards Followed/Assessed:**

Some emphasis still placed on Common Core Standards: Conventions of Standard English, Knowledge of Language, and Vocabulary Acquisition and Use, as well as Production and Distribution of Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, and Range of Writing.

I chose these standards because I feel like if I give them to the students ahead of time, they will be able to better understand what skills and knowledge they are supposed to be acquiring throughout the unit. Also, I did various research, and found these to be closest aligned to the conversations I've had with various college professors and what they are expecting of incoming freshmen. Since my College Readiness II class does not have a specific set of standards, I thought these were a nice fit after my research.

**More emphasis placed on Skill Set of Critical Thinking Skills than Just Common Core****English Standards:**

*“Knowledge Outcomes: (Students will be able to)*

A.K.1. Define the difference between fact and inference.

A.K 2. Derive criteria for which to judge a problem or predicament.

A.K. 3. List the elements of thought associated with critical thinking.

A.K 4. Identify inherent and hidden bias in an argument.

A.K 5. Identify faults in thinking due to oversimplifying or over generalizing issues or problems.

A.K 6. Identify and state the purpose of thinking.

*Skill Outcomes: (Students will be able to)*

A.S. 1. Utilize background knowledge to solve a problem or predicament.

A.S. 2. Apply evidence to solve a problem or predicament.

A.S. 3. Express an argument that is logical, clear, and concise.



A.S. 4. Derive and model a process by which to critically analyze, think, and solve a problem or predicament that involves a reasonable, logical, and relevant thinking strategy.

A.S. 5. Explore alternative options and methods before drawing a conclusion.

A.S. 6. Illustrate and explore the consequences and implications following the solution of a problem or issue.

A.S. 7. Model, display, or perform the ability to think critically through verbal, written, and physical means.

*Attitudes Outcomes: (Students will)*

A.A. 1. Believe that it is possible for themselves to solve problems with a reasonable level of confidence.

A.A. 2. Have confidence that they are able to ascertain information needed to help themselves think critically about a problem or issue.

A.A. 3. Respect the diverse nature of thinking and problem solving that allows for others' opinions and arguments to be taken into account without discrimination" (Carlgren 74-75).

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**PAPER 3: Assessment Plan Rationale****Writer's Memo (REVISED)**

Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz,

I would like for you to know that one of my biggest struggles in teaching is still ensuring that I have proper assessments for all the ranges of students I teach. This is the one area I did not feel I was adequately prepared in when I completed my undergraduate work. For my English courses I teach, they are combined honors (college preparatory) and regular during the same class period. This means I have to design different assignments, readings, and rubrics to assess all students. In the past, I have made an extra “exemplary” category on most rubrics and encouraged all to achieve this; however, honors students would be marked off if they did not achieve that, whereas regular could score one step lower on the rubric and receive the same grade. For this particular audience of students, they are all striving to reach the “exemplary” area, so I know it does not pertain as much, but it is something I always keep in the back of my mind because of my other audiences.

As for the process of this assignment, I had never really researched theories behind the assessment I was designing; I had solely researched similar assessments and modeled my own off of ones I found online. I think researching the theories was helpful because it allowed me to become more confident in designing a completely new assessment protocol that I have never utilized in my classroom before. As for developing it, I do have to admit: I went back and forth multiple times with the categories I had chosen. I did not want to have too many categories, for fear of overwhelming the students or requiring them to focus on too many skill sets all at the same time, therefore not really mastering any. I learned a lot about why portfolios are useful and in what future settings my students might be required to use them. I would like to further

explore the grading scales that other teachers use for portfolios. It was difficult to find information on this, perhaps because all teachers use different point systems for grading.

I don't think that any of my pedagogical goals really changed pertaining to my original M.A.D. Perhaps there is now more emphasis on self reflection than there was before. However, this is not a distinct change in goals.

Overall, I feel as though portfolios were the right choice, especially all the research I read on them. I hope my students take a lot away from not only the unit but the assessment criteria as well.

Thank you for your time,

Stefanie Lauer

### **Portfolio -**

You will organize your work throughout this unit in a portfolio. Each piece included will be a different assignment throughout the unit. Before you put it in the portfolio you should take in all

comments you've been given and edit and polish your work. Doing this will help you trace how well you are honing the new critical thinking skills you're learning.

Table of Contents -

- I. Critical Thinking Reflection Rubric
- II. Proposal
- III. Notes
  - A. Critical Thinking Pretest
  - B. Copy of powerpoint with your notes over it
- IV. Mini Writings
  - A. "Coffee Shop" Thoughts
  - B. Magazine Picture
  - C. Classroom Desk Writing
  - D. Popular Culture Thoughts
  - E. Reflection over Time article
  - F. Reflection over "Head in the (Instagrammed) Clouds" article
  - G. Future Problem Writing
  - H. "Digital Distraction" Writing
- V. Global Writings
  - A. Dialectic Essay
  - B. Final Paper

VI. Final Reflection

**Grading Point Scale -**

Critical Thinking Reflection Rubric /20

Notes Included /5

Mini Writings /20

Global Writings (and all components) /35

Self-Editing Rubric & Marks /5

Final Reflection /15

Previous research suggests that students are not learning nearly enough critical thinking skills within the high school classroom. Thirty one percent are not ready for employment upon graduation because of this deficit (Butler 721). It is difficult to know how exactly how to measure how many skills a student has and has learned. According to research, the Halpern Critical Thinking Assessment allows teachers to assess where a student begins and ends within a critical thinking base unit (722). Therefore, this is the number one reason I have chosen it as the first page of their portfolio. This assessment also allows for students to know how their skills will translate into real world outcomes instead of just in a classroom setting (723). As with all studies and assessments the HCTA has its limitations and drawbacks(728). Therefore, I designed the rest of the portfolio to try and fill out of some of the gaps. For example, students' proposals allow students to give their research real world meaning while creatively tying that research to the critical thinking skills they've developed (Pegram 18-19). Combining all of these different styles of assessment into one portfolio will allow us to see and track the students' critical thinking skills as they move through the course.

This particular course, College Readiness II, has no set standards linked to it. While I try to base some units off English standards where I feel there can still be growth, the other units I try to base off their futures. Many students over the years do express interest in going into the health field when furthering their education, so I was pleased to see holistic assessments such as portfolios are often used within the medical field as well. These portfolios often consist of "checklists for direct observation, self and peer assessment, giving feedback to students," as well as corrections on written work (Elizondo-Montemayor 401). Since students do not use portfolios in any other setting in our district having experience with this type of assessment will surely help them in the future regardless of their major or career.



Key learning outcomes for the students consist of 1.) gaining critical thinking skills, 2.) learning how to accurately utilize a portfolio assessment, and 3.) monitoring self progress while making corrections throughout the unit. I knew this unit would have far more rigor within it than the students were used to. I did not want this to just turn into a “harder is better unit”; instead, I wanted it to challenge students while still allowing them collaboration, feedback, questioning, and self reflection (Younger 126-127). The daily activities allow for the students to achieve learning outcome one, however learning outcome three will be best achieved by tying it to this holistic approach for assessment. It is really is only through the proper use of the portfolio that students can achieve outcomes two and three.

According to Heinrech, Habron, Johnson, & Goralnik, the only way to truly learn critical thinking skills is through the use of scaffolded activities that allow students to keep building on their foundation throughout the entire unit (373). Since College Readiness II is a large class it only makes sense that some students will be able to move on before others are ready. This is another reason I like the portfolio system because it allows those that are not quite ready to move on more time with editing procedures on previous writings. Many times a student will get a rough draft back from me and only correct the basic grammatical conventions I have marked as wrong. They then turn it in for a final grade without really spending any more time or thought on their writing. However, these portfolios will not be accepted unless students truly spend time on the comments, not corrections, that I have given them. This allows for better individualized scaffolding within a large classroom setting (386).

When deciding what type of assessment to use my first thought was a basic rubric because students seem to understand their grade, and I feel I have been objective when this type of assessment was used. Throughout this course, I have learned a lot about the teaching of

writing. I have used many activities that I developed based off articles we read, such as the multimodal projects found in Shipka's article. It was not until our week we spent on assessments that I truly began to understand the importance behind the grading procedures associated with student writing. All that I was taught during my undergraduate courses was primarily the use of rubrics. Therefore, it was nice to have new insights given to me through this course, the readings, and the projects I completed. Without this, I would have stayed in my rubric mindset and not been using best practices when it came to varying student assessments. I'm so glad to know and recognize this now.

Students are so used to completing research papers for me and being graded off a rubric, but the more theories I read about I realized "creative solutions and thinking skills are needed to adjust to changes in communication and to society's demands" (Pegram 18). Creative solutions must start within the classroom. Therefore, the more I thought about it the more I realized this was a new type of unit they had never experienced before, and therefore it would be a good teachable moment to introduce this new type of assessment as well. Students need to know their work has meaning and this includes the way they assess themselves (18).

Along with creative solutions, it is apparent that students want some power and responsibilities within the classroom (Murray 118). Murray states that students have four primary responsibilities, or freedoms, within the classroom. These include: perception of their topic, creativity in the search for information, finding audiences for their writing, and finding their own form for their writing (119-120). In comparison, teachers are responsible for providing a safe writing environment, giving deadlines, allowing for failure, and providing comments, not corrections (120-121). While this unit does not necessarily allow students pick their own writing topic every single time it does allow the other freedoms. Moreso, it allows the teacher to meet

their responsibilities through the portfolio assessment. Each writing will either be conferenced over or commented on and then students will be expected to fix that writing before placing it in the portfolio. This allows for failure on a first draft, while still giving hope the student can master the writing before the portfolio deadline. Teachers and students share one responsibility in this new age of composition, and according to Murray, that responsibility is publication (122). Therefore, these portfolios can be shared with other classmates during the end of the unit so their audience broadens and that shared responsibility is achieved.

Looking at other current research Kim and Yazdian advocate that portfolio assessment is useful for three primary reasons. I already understood the first reason which was demonstration of student growth and progress over time (222). When I thought of portfolios in the past I always thought this was the primary reason they were used. It was interesting to read ways they can be used for communication and collaboration, such as during parent teacher conferences, with peers, and to ensure key learning objectives are being met (222-223). The one that shocked me the most, however, was learning about all the ways portfolios can transform teaching (223). This was the first time in my six years of teaching that I was able to think of an assessment as more than just a grade that I would need to justify to a student. I now realize portfolios allow me to take my pedagogical knowledge and showcase it in a new way that is easier for students to understand (223).

One concern I had in choosing this assessment is that I might be tasking students to learn too many new concepts all at the same time. While I do want to achieve rigor, as Younger advocates for, I still want my students' number one focus to be honing the critical thinking skills, like learning outcome one suggests. I want students to understand the basics of a portfolio but I hope to stress the portfolio is simply assessing them and will only help with certain critical

thinking skills, not all the ones we are trying to tackle (Elizondo-Montemayor 402). Even with this concern, I still feel the portfolio is the best choice because most classroom assessments for critical thinking only require students to answer simple questions or prompts. While this allows for some analysis of skills learned it does not allow students to spend the time truly needed for self reflection. It is only through this time spent on self reflection that students will convert their critical thinking skills to long term memory (Angelo 6-7). Furthermore, portfolios allow students to “make [their] metacognitive monitoring explicit and overt” (Butler 721), which is something not often done in a high school setting.

Overall, the research helped me gain confidence in my choice of portfolio assessment. I believe with the use of the portfolio I will be able to truly track what critical thinking skills the students are learning and which ones we should spend more time on. Also, I was able to add a new key learning outcome to this unit just by selecting this method of assessment. Hopefully, the students will truly self reflect and get as much out of this assessment tool as I will.

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**PAPER 4: School Counselors' Role in Duty to Protect (REVISED)**

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### Abstract

This paper explores the school counselors' role in duty to protect as seen through ethical and legal dilemmas. The legal aspect is more prominently focused on, seeing as how this is the way that would more professionally affect a school counselor if they chose the wrong action. The ethical dilemmas are still mentioned, considering a lot of times decisions that counselors have to make require both sides to be looked at. Multiple scholarly journals, legal journals, synopsis on court cases, Ohio Revised Codes (ORC), and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) codes are used to analyze this role. Based on the numerous qualitative and quantitative data reviewed, it was evident that no clear law or ethical code defines every aspect of duty to protect; however, developing rapport with as many students as possible in a school setting will allow for the best outcome in all situations.

School counselors are faced with legal and ethical dilemmas in multiple situations; the most common and challenging ones often involve “student confidentiality, dual relationship with faculty, parental rights, and acting on information of student danger to themselves or others” (Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 195). When faced with an ethical dilemma, school counselors turn to the ASCA codes which were developed for situations when no choice seems completely right, yet there are certain courses of action that may be better than another. The legal dilemmas pose an even bigger threat to the counselor than the ethical, seeing as how if the counselor chooses the wrong path, they could lose their license or be sued. Many would argue some of the worst dilemmas for school counselors deal with student confidentiality, specifically in regard to when they must act on information of student danger to themselves or others because then the school counselor is not only faced with the legal and ethical dilemma, they are also entrusted to protect an entire entity of people from imminent harm.

As of late, few studies have been conducted to determine the dilemmas experienced by professional school counselors; however, one from 2006 showed that 45% of the 92 counselors surveyed responded that information of danger to self or others was among the most challenging dilemmas experienced, and 33% indicated it was the most common dilemma they faced. When adding in the fact they would need to break student confidentiality to report, this percentage for it becoming a dilemma for them rose dramatically (Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 198). There is a very complex nature that exists in the counseling world when it comes to the idea of respecting a minor, or student’s confidentiality, and still involving the parent in the counseling. Minors have the right to privileged communication, and there is a lot of ambiguity that comes into play with this right when parents get involved, or when duty to warn becomes a factor in the counseling



relationship. According to the Ohio Revised Code 2317.02(G)(1) there are exceptions to this right, with one being when there is clear and present danger to the client or someone else.

Since the code allows for duty to warn as an exception to privileged communication, some may say the counselor has even more responsibility brought upon them to ensure safety of not only their client, but others involved with their client as well. Duty to warn was first established with the *Tarasoff v. The Regents of the University of California* case in 1974, and two years later it went one step further, becoming duty to protect (Berger & Berger, 2009, p. 2). Duty to warn is clarified as having the counselor verbally tell the police or intended victim of foreseeable violence, whereas duty to protect is clarified as the counselor “determining that his or her patient presents a serious danger of violence to another and an obligation to use reasonable care to protect the intended victim against danger (Granich, 2014, p. 2). Either way, the counselor must take precautions such as informing the police or the actual person(s) in order to protect them (Berger & Berger, 2009, p. 2). Others state that the precautions range from least to most disruptive, and the choices should be as simple as “obtaining a promise from your client not to harm anyone else,” or as complicated as “having the client involuntarily committed to a psychiatric facility” (Remley & Herlihy, 2014, p. 188). For school counselors, the chain of reporting can be somewhat different. They are required to inform parents or guardians and also decide whether they should report it to an administrative superior, like the school principal (Remley & Herhily, 2014, p. 230). Where it gets tricky, is when the counselor is responsible for determining that the danger is present. How can a counselor, who maybe meets with a student once a week, truly know if they will act on harming another, even though they may have not specifically come out and said that?

It is clear to see then why, from the previous study mentioned, those counselors ranked duty to protect as the most challenging dilemma they would encounter. They also stated that: “Although the resolution of these situations is usually clear-cut due to legal issues of mandatory reporting, duty to protect, and concerns for school safety these situations are usually highly charged emotionally and can be challenging to deal with for that reason” (Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 200). Working in a high school, I know how “highly charged” many students’ emotions can be on a daily basis. As a future school counselor, I have difficulty imagining myself in a situation that would make me as highly charged emotionally as some of the students. The one situation I could see me becoming that way would be when students confess they are harming themselves or plan on harming another. At this point, I cannot imagine being held responsible for knowing the student was going to harm another, without them ever fully bringing that up in a session. This proves difficult for other counselors as well because they ultimately want to do what is best for their client, and they do not want to lose the trust of their client. All counselors know that “establishing trust between counselor and client is critically important in ensuring the success of the entire counseling process” (Lazovsky, 2008. p. 335). By breaking confidentiality, the client is more likely to trust them less, and in a high school, this means many students would not want to go to the counselor who “tattles” on something the student has never even directly stated because the counselor does not know who directly is being threatened, or in some cases the client could be bluffing or blowing off steam. However, after many court cases have come to light after Tarasoff, it is imperative counselors act, not only for the safety of others, but for their professional life as well.

Many may not understand the whole dilemma because they believe that since there has been such a vast number of court cases that have had major attention brought to them on this

issue, it is nice to have the laws to help determine the best course of action. The ethical codes and decision making model will of course prove helpful as well, but when something is written in law, it seems the decision may be a little easier to make. However, even though laws have been created and continue to develop over the years, the majority of them still have unclear rules.

The ethical standards date back to the Roman Hippocratic Oath, where doctors and mental health professionals were required to always maintain confidentiality. Now, after numerous court cases such as *Tarasoff* and *Jaffee v. Redmond*, there are some exceptions found in state and federal laws. Even with these exceptions, sometimes counselors are still found liable for breaching confidentiality (NCSL Staff Research, 2010, p. 457). Therefore, if the threat is found to not be pertinent according to a counselor, but the client acts anyway, they could still be sued for negligence or malpractice like in the *Hutchinson v. Patel* case. Even though the Louisiana court ordered that “the plaintiff’s claim was not covered by the Louisiana Medical Malpractice Act,” they still had to go through the long drawn out process for not predicting harm (Almason, 1997, p. 486).

Since the *Tarasoff* and *Hutchinson* cases, many others have come to light that have required school counselors act on duty to protect. In *Lipari v. Sears, Roebuck & Co.* of 1980, the federal court upheld a decision that stated the psychotherapist’s duty was not only to warn known victims, but also to warn and protect unknown, yet readily identifiable ones also (Remley & Herhily, 2014, p. 190). A similar scenario was found two other times, once with *Hedlund v. Superior Court of Orange County*, and also with *Jablonski by Pahls v. United States*. In *Hedlund*, the court initially said the therapist committed professional negligence rather than ordinary. Even though the patient had never made claims against the son harmed in the case, he was considered “both a foreseeable and identifiable victim of an assault upon his mother, and therefore the

therapists owed him a duty” (Small, 1985, p. 289). With *Jablonski by Pahls v. United States* when “psychiatrists negligently failed to obtain Jablonski’s prior records, failed to record warnings by the police concerning their patient, and failed to warn the victim” (Small, 1985, p. 286). *Petersen v. State* in 1983 went one step further stating that the counselor could also be held liable for persons who are “unintentionally injured by a patient” (Remley & Herhily, 2014, p. 190). This came into play when a patient was on drugs and ran a red light, injuring another. Even more than that, counselors could be held professionally responsible for damages of property from a patient, like in the *Peck v. Counseling Service of Addison County Inc.* case (p. 190).

After all of these cases, it is clear to see how courts require a lot of therapists when it comes to warning all forms of victims. Yet, it is also clear to see that the courts only “provided minimal guidelines defining the scope of foreseeable injury for which psychotherapists may be liable” (Small, 1985, p. 291). “It is evident that consistency in the law is necessary,” but it is not always given, especially since the *Tarasoff* case. The only part that is clear is: “that no court decision in the last generation has succeeded in so raising the anxieties of mental health professionals [as that of *Tarasoff II*]” (Almason, 1997, p. 493). “Succinct and specific language is needed to replace the ambiguity which existed”, (Small, 1985, p. 294) yet even 40 years after the original *Tarasoff* case, this is still missing.

So how then do school counselors, or any counselor for that matter, predict imminent danger from a client? The first way would be for the counselor to learn as much as they can about the client (Remley & Herlihy, 2014, p. 188). Many think school counselors should not have dual relationships of any kind with students, and while I agree for the most part on this, I think sometimes leading a club or organization at a small school district would allow for the counselor to develop better rapport with clients and to see them outside of sometimes tense, or

emotion filled sessions. This would also allow for a counselor to learn more about the student and to determine if they have violent tendencies, more than just sitting in a room across a desk from them.

If violent tendencies are found, that is when the duty to protect comes in and all intended victims must be warned, according to law. Again though, this could prove difficult in a high school setting, seeing as how many students must be in class with each other for multiple periods in one day. What if it is a relationship disagreement among teenagers and during therapy the boyfriend threatens his ex-girlfriend, yet they must remain in classes together no matter what? Will that boy get the therapy he requires if a school counselor enacts duty to protect too soon and warns the ex-girlfriend and her family, causing the boy to be ostracized in school? Would that just make him want to harm her more? Or would it be more beneficial to let him have a few more sessions, the whole time hoping and praying that he will not actually act on his threat?

There is no easy answer; this is where the ethical dilemmas come into play. Many scenarios such as that “showed that ethical dilemmas are frequently related to legal issues, and often do not easily fit into one category” (Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 198). The laws and vast research state that when these situations are encountered, “counselors do have to inform parents or guardians of potential harm to their children or others” and there are ways to make it easier, such as having the children tell their parents themselves, telling parents with the children present, or at minimum, informing the child before telling the parents” (Remley & Herhily, 2014, p. 230). Yet none of these suggestions, or others found in research, really states how to allow that child to keep faith in that counseling relationship, avoid bullying at school, and ultimately get the help they require and deserve.

“Ethical decision making is a daily, ongoing practice for school counselors, and it involves constant vigilance and commitment to serving the best interest of the student” (Bodenhorn, 2006, p. 201). According to the ASCA codes, the limits of confidentiality must be explained clearly and thoroughly, which could prove helpful when breaches of confidentiality are necessary. Yet, the codes also state in A.2.c the counselors must “recognize the complicated nature of confidentiality in schools and consider each case in context... Serious and foreseeable harm is different for each minor in schools and is defined by students’ developmental and chronological age, the setting, parental rights and the nature of the harm” (2010). Therefore, the codes appear as unclear as the law, with knowing the student and having rapport being essential in all cases. Many counselors believe the best way to serve the best interest of the student is to maintain confidentiality at all costs. However, with the growing trend of school violence in this country, this is something that is sure to change.

Today, “school counselors serve as key personnel in schools’ crisis response team” (Daniels et. al, 2007, p.482). Yet not all of them are adequately prepared in order to do so. If a counselor can catch the violence before it occurs and go through the duty to protect steps, then the entire school district is obviously better off. This sometimes happens when counselors are able to have active intervention and assess the situation before it happens through counseling or even rumors in the school (p. 485). Therefore, it is vital that a school counselor knows their clients well and tries at all costs to protect their well being, as well as all other staff and student well being in the school. They must take rumors seriously and always assess school conditions, as well as continue to be updated on crisis intervention training and never behave in a way that could escalate any situation (p. 486). However, when a school counselor does not or is unable to predict harm, they still have a lot of responsibility after the harm occurs. This is different from

many other counseling situations because other counselors may not know the intended victims at all, and therefore, have no real obligation to them after the matter happens. However, in a school setting, a counselor has more roles than many would imagine.

To begin, if harm like a school shooting were to not be predicted and therefore occur, a school counselor could potentially be the one that has to attempt to negotiate with the hostage taker or shooter. They would do so by trying to buy some time, trying to find out what the shooter wants, and ultimately trying to dissuade them until further, better trained help arrives (Daniels et. al, 2007, p. 483). After the shooting were to occur, a school counselor must respond in numerous ways. They still must have active intervention, which could be meeting with students and parents, providing resources for all involved, and coordinating efforts of community mental health providers or bringing in extra counselors. A majority of the efforts will require communicating with other health professionals to make sure everything is being done that needs to be. When situations as dire as these occur, it is not just the rapport, or relationship, with student aspect that is important for a school counselor. They must also rely on community relationships, training of local law enforcements, and prior conditions within the school that had been set up to make sure students felt safe (p. 485-486).

Hopefully drastic situations like a school shooting do not occur during a school counselor's career, but it is still something they must be trained to handle in case it did. It is also one of the major reasons duty to protect is so important for counselors of all ages and settings because it legally gives counselors the right to break privileged communication if they think someone could become violent, even if they have not specifically said they will. The amount of violence within a school ranges on a continuum from milder behaviors to worse: teasing, name calling, bullying, intimidation, harassment, physical, etc, and all can have lasting effects on the

person committing or being harmed by the violence. “Students who are both victimized and perpetuate bullying are often hyperactive, have attention problems, and feel less accepted by their teachers and peers” (Bradshaw, O’Brennan, & Sawyer, 2008, p. 12). These can be warning signs for counselors, but it is also something to address because students need to feel safe, and that is one of the primary goals of a counselor within the school setting.

One of the best ways to predict violence is to “stay current with regard to violence risk assessment knowledge” because this helps the school counselor “make informed decisions as to the risk level of a particular individual student” (Bernes & Bardick, 2007, p. 420). One particular assessment that could be utilized would be the SAVRY, which helps counselors decide whether violence will really occur based on historical, social/contextual, individual, and protective risk factors. It is similar to past assessments counselors have been trained in, in regards to suicide assessments. Concurrently, according to Borum & Reddy, the violence assessments like SAVRY “revolves around whether the student is on a pathway toward a violent act and if so how fast he or she is moving and where could one intervene” (Bernes & Bardick, 2007, p. 423). Using tools like this, and a few others that are currently available, along with “thorough documentation and professional consultation” have proven to be the most helpful in deciding whether duty to protect exists in a school setting (p. 425).

Once duty to protect is there, more tools exist for school counselors than just warning potential victims of harm. There are many new techniques and strategies available, and each counselor has to find which one would work best for them, their students, and the school setting they are at. One that I find intriguing is the idea of positive psychology and character strengths. It is an application based counseling method that has a goal of making sure youths are not “merely surviving in the face of adversity, but flourishing and thriving” as well (Park & Peterson, 2008,



p. 90). It works by teaching and promoting character strengths for all students, then focusing on the positives of life rather than problem-focused approaches, like have been used for much of the past. While research is still being conducted to completely explain and examine this new approach, it does appear promising for the future of counseling and duty to protect.

However even with many advances, there is still much ambiguity that needs to be addressed in terms of how school counselors can best serve all populations, from their own client to those the client may be intending to harm, according to previous court cases and ethical codes. A very unclear issue for me is in cases like *Bellah v. Greenson*, where parents tried to sue a psychiatrist for failing to warn them of their daughter's suicidal tendencies, yet the court ruled in the counselor's favor. To me, if there is a duty to protect unidentified victims, how is there not a duty to warn parents, who take care of the child outside of school when suicide would most likely occur? Every life is important, and any time a school counselor is able to save one, that should be the utmost goal. Yes, "the therapeutic relationship could be compromised if therapists revealed that their patients manifested suicidal tendencies" (Small, 1985, p. 285) but if there is an ongoing log of this happening and being talked about in therapy, at what point must it be brought to other's attentions before it is too late? Why is this not part of the law for counselors as well? Inconsistencies and ambiguities within the law and ethical codes will unfortunately continue to exist for a long time. It will be up to the school counselors and their training to determine the best course of action for all involved. One item that is clear, is that the ASCA codes exhibit how important it is that school counselors always "develop relationships with students as a means of assuring their academic, social, and career success" (Daniels et. al, 2007, p. 487). Now, more than ever, it is vital school counselors go above and beyond that, always staying current with legal cases as well. They should continue their training and professional development whenever

possible and always seek out ways to help those they counsel, while still managing to take care of themselves and their personal lives. Counseling is a difficult task, where no one right answer is there for any case, or student, involved. However, with all the new advancements in assessments, codes, laws, and training, hopefully counseling will continue on its best path yet and those who need to seek out school counselors can get the help and service they deserve.

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