For this assignment, you will research and write about an issue or question related to academic writing. Begin by reading through your writer’s notebook and the drafts of your major papers, looking for questions and problems concerning writing that interest you. Some of these questions or problems could be good starting points for this assignment. When you’ve settled on an area of investigation and a research question, you should plan to conduct both library and field research to collect and analyze data. Once you’ve done the research, your data should help you to answer or to think through the research question you’ve chosen.

Proposal:

When you have settled on an area of investigation and possible topic / research question, write a proposal explaining what your plans are for researching and writing. In your proposal, you should attempt to answer the following questions: What kinds of research will you need to conduct in order to collect information on your topic? What library or internet sources do you plan to use, and how will they help you with analyzing your topic? What kinds of field research (observation, interviews, artifact collection, etc) might you conduct? What challenges do you expect with your project, and how will you handle them?

Draft 1:

Write what you know about the culture of writing in a particular academic community OR about a particular problem or issue related to writing. Include research to show what conversation you are entering and how you are in dialog with others on your topic. Use APA style for citations. Consider this a “discovery” draft in which you think through the various questions surrounding your topic.

Draft 2:

Your topic should be clear and this draft focused on thinking through or answering a particular question about writing that your research suggested to you. State a claim that the rest of your draft supports. Include all relevant field and library research material that helps you think through your topic.

Draft 3:

Write this draft for your readers. What do we need to know in order to follow your ideas? Give enough background information from primary and/or secondary sources for your reader to understand the issue / problem under consideration, and make sure you include references to specific texts / artifacts/ quotations that show your reader how you’ve arrived at your conclusions.

Draft 4:

In addition to what’s included for draft three, draft four should be well edited and properly documented.