

MEMORANDIUM

To: Dr. Lesh

From: Anna Bateh

Date: 3 April 2026

Subject: Context Memo for Major Revision

This memo explains the revisions I made to my Field Narrative, “The World We Make.” I originally wrote this narrative in my sophomore year for ENGL 4180. I chose this piece because it reflects the work I have done throughout the PPW major. A large amount of my work in PPW has focused on Auburn, Auburn students, or the university itself, so this project felt like a strong example of how my writing has developed. Through revising this piece, I reconsidered the original rhetorical situation, applied concepts from this course, and aligned my writing with the goals and values of PPW.

The original assignment asked me to create a field narrative that explored waste management and sustainability practices on Auburn’s campus. Specifically, the assignment required that I:

- Set the scene for my inquiry in a clear and compelling way
- Incorporate scholarship on rhetoric and ecology
- Analyze Auburn's sustainability policies
- Include ethnographic observations
- Connect policy to student behavior
- Provide suggestions for improvement

While my original submission addressed many of these components, the prompt and professors' feedback encouraged me to deepen my analysis and improve clarity. In particular, the feedback highlighted opportunities to strengthen how I used rhetorical and ecological theory. It also encouraged me to refine my narrative. My professor suggested that I “find ways to continue developing and refining your prose” so that my ideas are clearly communicated. This pushed me to revise my argument, structure, and purpose.

One of the most important revisions I made was shifting my tone from general to personal and observational. In my original paper, I relied on phrases such as “one may assume,” which created distance between me and the subject. In my revision, I replaced this with first-person observations, such as describing my own habits and relationship with technology in paragraph two. This shift in tone reflects what I have learned in PPW: writing is about participating within a rhetorical situation. By including my own perspective, I strengthened both my voice and credibility.

I also made intentional choices in how I presented my research and observations. In the original version, I included the full names of the students I interviewed. In the revised version, I removed

those names and wrote “one student explained” and “another shared.” This was a deliberate rhetorical decision. Rather than focusing on individual identities, I wanted to emphasize that these responses represent a broader pattern in student behavior. Field narrative writing is about identifying trends within a community, rather than documenting single experiences.

In addition, I improved the clarity and organization of my argument by strengthening connections among key ideas throughout the paper. The original draft, specifically my discussion of technology, felt general and disconnected from my main argument. In the revised version, I connect technology to student behavior, attention, and interaction with sustainability messaging. This made my argument more cohesive and reflects my growth in understanding how to guide my reader through a claim.

Furthermore, I strengthened the relationship between Auburn’s sustainability policies and how they function. While my original paper described a source-separated recycling system, my revision clearly explains how this is challenging for students who are moving through campus. I added specific examples, such as students throwing away multiple items at once without sorting them, to reflect the ethnographic focus required in the assignment. This bridged the gap between policy and action, a key component of the rubric.

My revisions were also shaped by a stronger understanding of audience and communication, which are central concepts in PPW. In the revised version, I argue that Auburn’s Office of Sustainability is not lacking information but failing to effectively communicate information in ways that reach students. I expanded this idea by suggesting communication methods that align with student habits, such as email, Instagram, and campus posters. This demonstrates my understanding that communication is effective when it meets the audience where they are.

More broadly, this revision reflects how I have grown as a writer since my sophomore year. Through my work in PPW, I have learned that strong writing can be clear, direct, and personal while remaining analytical. I now understand that there is strength in my own perspective alongside theory and research to create ideas. My work in PPW has focused on Auburn and its community. I have developed a stronger understanding of writing within real contexts, where audience and environment directly shape how the message is received.

Overall, this revision is recognizable as a Field Narrative, but it now reflects a stronger understanding of rhetorical situation, audience, and genre. The narrative reflects how my approach to writing has changed. I no longer view writing as completing an assignment, but as a way to analyze real situations and communicate ideas that can influence how people think and act. This revision combines personal observation, research, and rhetorical analysis to align with the goals of PPW.

The original version of this assignment is included for reference.