

Discourse in your field report

Mission: You are to become an anthropologist and to investigate the communication patterns of your future discipline/profession. However, you are to adopt an “etic” position, that is the position of an outsider, rather than an “emic” position, that of insider. Like an anthropologist studying tribes, you will observe members of your future tribe of professionals, interview some of the mature members of the tribe, and analyze representative documents from the tribe’s archives. Your goal is to write a report for an audience of fellow anthropologists interested in the nuanced differences of communication practices among various academic and professional tribes.

You know from the beginning that there is a difference in the communication practices of the academics and the practitioners, so part of your goal is to determine how these practices differ. You also want to map, in a broad but descriptive manner, the totality of disciplinary and professional discourse practices, but to also look carefully at one written artifact from the tribe. You will need to check your syllabus to see when this paper is due, and you will need to develop a Gantt chart or a project plan to guide your research and writing.

The report should follow an empirical research report pattern:

- **Letter of Transmittal:** (or cover page) explains to the one who receives the report when it was commissioned and what it contains, etc.
- **Title page:** contains the report’s name, the author’s name, the author’s affiliation, the date
- **Table of Contents:** lists the major sections/headings of the report and the page numbers
- **Abstract:** summarizes the whole report
- **Introduction:** states the purpose of research, the problem motivating the research, and the scope of the research. The introduction should also preview the report’s sections. Sometimes an extended introduction will have a literature review that summarizes pertinent literature on the subject.
- **Methods:** recounts the research process you went through.
- **Results and Discussion:** discusses your findings. This section is the biggest section of the report. It should be in a classification pattern, dividing the field of discourse into its various categories and describing the practices within each. In one of these categories, you are to analyze a written document from the tribe’s archives.
- **Conclusion:** summarizes the report and explains what you learned from the research project.
- **References:** lists any sources you summarized, quoted, or used in other ways in your report.
- **Appendix:** attached primary document used in your analysis above (the one you analyzed in the Results and Discussion section).