

POST-OBSERVATION FOLLOW-UP

Conversation and Comments

PMC Member Observing: Kara Rush	Observation Date: Thurs. Feb. 26, 2026
Instructor: Paul Blom Murphey Hall, Room 111, 9:30am-10:45am	Course Number: ENGL 105, Business Writing and Rhetoric, Section 231 (19 students on the roster)

Part I: Strengths

Notable Strengths: List several areas in which the instructor excelled.

Paul did a fantastic job fitting a large amount of lecturing, workshoping, and activities within a small span of time without it feeling overwhelming. His classroom activities were useful and engaging, and his use of music transitions helped keep students on task.

Part II: Goals

Goals: Set a few goals or list a few areas for improvement. For each item, list a step the instructor will take in order to achieve that goal or address that area.

Paul's main goal moving forward was to work on finalizing the instructions and logistics of the final last large project assignment for this course (the Unit 3 Project), which will ask students to potentially interview business leaders of the Triangle Area (Chapel Hill, Raleigh, Durham) to get a better sense of local entrepreneurship. We also discussed grading and strategies to keep students engaged (both with the instructor and with each other).

Today's class focused on preparing students for the second step in the [Unit 2 Project, Feeder 2.2, a market analysis and accompanying business pitch](#). The overall topic for the day was slide design accessibility and a workshop on their rough drafts of Feeder 2.2.

Part III: Additional Comments (Optional)

Please list any additional comments about the observation, class, or instructor not captured in the boxes above that you would like added to this form.

This was a fantastic classroom to observe--I learned a lot!

Course website: <https://engl105businesswritingandrhetoric.wordpress.com/>

Lesson plan for the day: [link](#)

Part IV: Observation Log

Time	Observation
9:30am	Prior to class: Paul has the day's lesson plan on the screen at the front of the room for all to see. He greets students as they arrive, checking off attendance and answering individual questions. He plays quiet instrumental versions of pop songs through the classroom speakers to fill the silence and hopefully encourage students to chat as they wait for class to begin. He reminds students to open Canvas and the day's lesson plan while they wait for class to begin. At 9:30, he stops the music, begins recording the class session via Zoom (to share with students after class), closes the door, and greets the class. Announcements: Encouragement for students to vote in upcoming elections (no matter their political leanings), rehashing of what they've been doing, what they'll do today, what was due today. Clarifying/Reminding Feeder 2.2 Expectations: Asking the class: What is a gap in the market? How can we improve/address that gap or fill that need? Reminder: Feeder 2.2 is a market analysis plus a business pitch, which will contain insights from your market analysis in order to pitch a new product or service. Paul has a document on the screen of everyone's topics, common questions, and reminders in bullet points regarding the expectations. What will be due: market analysis (with citations and References list), pitch script, and slides from the pitch. In class, everyone will deliver their pitch to the class (imagine your classmates as potential investors); 60-90 seconds. Later today, you'll get peer feedback on your market analysis. First, we'll discuss how to design an effective presentation slide deck. (They discussed best practices for oral communication and presentation strategies during the previous class.) Designing Presentation Slides: Paul goes over UNC library resources for designing and delivering a presentation, showing them various websites and links on the screen up front. Paul tells students they should have no more than three slides for their pitch; stick to your allotted time. They've previously discussed citations basics and Paul reminds them of the logic and responsibility behind citations in general. Images can be difficult to cite. Paul leads a discussion on how to cite an image via call-and-response to the class using an example image on the screen. Who created this image? Who's the "author"? If an

	image doesn't have a title, you can create a brief descriptive title for it. Use the date of the image/article creation. What's the medium of this image (such as digital graphic, photograph, etc.)? What's the title of the larger source in which this image appears? On a Word doc on the screen, Paul types the full bibliographic citation of the image using all of these little pieces, explaining the logic behind the citation.
9:45am	Other best practices for slide design: Paul reminds them of their discussion of document design from earlier in the semester when they were working on resume formatting. He then lists other best practices, adding them to the Word doc on the screen: Writing for the average reader on your slides: Use headings, "you-centered" language, active voice (more concise, effective, engaging, clear), short sections, and short sentences. Discussion of why to use closed captions if you ever play a video or clip for an audience: accessibility for people hard-of-hearing, seated in odd areas of the room, or ESL audience members. How to use color schemes for accessibility: how do these colors align with your rhetorical purposes? Consider also color blindness or people with poor eyesight. More accessibility strategies: describing the slide as you go along just in case people can't see either because of poor eyesight or a bad location in the room. All of the above prioritize equitable use, flexibility in use; they're simple and intuitive but effective guidelines.
9:50am	Transitions to a group activity evaluating ineffective slides: Student working groups are pre-arranged for each unit to save time and create consistent working groups. Each group is assigned a few ineffective slides to discuss, evaluate, and suggest improvements, so students can learn to design their own presentation slides effectively. Each group will type brief responses to their images into the shared Word doc that is on the screen but also accessible to the students via Canvas. As the students work in their groups, Paul resumes playing the same music he played earlier prior to class.
9:56am	Most groups seem to have finished. Paul gathers the class's attention. Each group shares what they discussed with the rest of the class. After each group's responses, Paul expands slightly on their response, elaborating and ensuring everyone else caught the key elements mentioned. After all groups have shared their responses, Paul goes over a few extra images to draw attention to issues of poor image quality, watermarks, and distracting content (other potential pitfalls when choosing images for slides).

	• The groups' responses indicate that they are understanding the concepts and best practices and breaking down these seemingly intuitive concepts (making the intuitive explicit).
10:12am	Workshop on Feeder 2.2: Paul transitions from this discussion to a workshop on the rough drafts of their Feeder 2.2, their market analysis. Rough drafts were due for homework prior to class today (posted to the Canvas discussion board, so students can easily access each other's drafts in order to provide feedback). Paul reminds the students of the best practices for peer workshops, which they originally discussed early in the semester. (At this point in the semester, they have held several in-class peer workshops, so the students are used to the general process.) Paul reminds them of the most important concerns for this particular assignment. Focus on these for the workshop (he reads some reminders from the Word doc on the screen). • Within your working groups, partner up and discuss your concerns with your draft, the kind of feedback you're looking for. • Look over your partner's market analysis first to provide them with feedback. • Think about their research question and rationale. • Do they have at least three credible sources? Are these sources summarized and actually useful? • Is everything cited? Check their References list at the end. • What suggestions do you have about your partner's next steps? Give them actionable advice. Consider also suggestions regarding how they can present the material, what seems most important to take from their market analysis and use in their pitch. • If your partner also posted a rough draft script for their pitch, use any extra time to discuss that script and give them feedback. • You might even give them suggestions about their potential slides.
10:15am	Everyone has chosen a partner. As they begin working in partners, the shift to workshopping is again signaled by quiet music Paul plays through the classroom speakers. Students are quietly chatting about their drafts and their concerns. Then they begin reading each other's drafts and typing feedback to each other. Paul walks around the classroom during the workshop to check in with students, solicit and answer questions, walk people through ideas, etc.
10:25am	Paul reminds the students of the time and that they have about fifteen minutes left to finish the workshop. He reminds them where they should be in the process of workshopping and to pace themselves accordingly so they can prioritize the most important aspects of their partner's work.
10:30am	Students have been workshopping for about fifteen minutes, only occasionally chatting with each other, mostly focused on reading and typing feedback. Paul asks all students to pause in their reading/typing and to take a few minutes to chat with their partners about their feedback thus far.

	All of the students begin talking to each other about what they're noticing so far in each other's drafts, and they sum up the suggestions that they've been writing. After about three minutes, most of the conversations die out as students resume reading/typing. • This tactic of forcing a pause gives the students a break from reading and typing. It also ensures that the students don't just provide written feedback to each other but that they also speak with each other in real time. It also brings more energy back into the room.
10:38am	Paul reminds students that there's only two minutes left for the workshop, so it's time to start finalizing their work, saving it, and uploading the draft with their feedback as a reply to their partners' homework post on Canvas.
10:40am	Homework and Next Steps: Paul announces that there's only five minutes left in class, which is always allotted to discuss homework and next steps. Students should have replied to their partners' original homework posts with their feedback. If you want to provide further feedback or continue discussing your draft with your classmates, you are free to do so outside of class via the Canvas discussion board. Announcements for upcoming classes: After everyone has delivered their pitch to the class, students will vote for the four best pitches. These four students will be team leaders; you'll then rank your choices for the team you most wish to join. These will be the teams for your final project in Unit 2, a team business pitch based on your team leader's suggested new product or service. Homework: • At the beginning of the semester, each student was randomly assigned one week of the semester for which they are to write a reflection about the week's materials and activities. They write these reflections and post them to the Canvas class discussion board. With their permission, Paul then publishes them online to the course blog. Paul reminds the two students whose posts are due prior to next Tuesday's class. Revise and finalize all Feeder 2.2 materials, due prior to next Tuesday's class. • Come to class prepared to deliver your pitch. Reminder: If you haven't already done so, post your written feedback from today's workshop to your partner before you leave. Reminder: Paul has office hours right after this class from 11:00am-12:30pm. Feel free to also email with questions as needed.
10:45am	Paul dismisses the class. Students pack up and leave, saying goodbye as they leave. Paul lingers to answer individual student questions as he closes documents on the classroom computer and shuts everything down.