

ENGL 105 – Unit 3

Arguing in Business: Recommendation Report

Communities	Genres	Author Roles	Purposes	Audiences
-Consulting -Marketing/advertising -Market research & analysis -Other assorted industries	Recommendation report; also need familiarity with primary and secondary business research (such as market analyses and SWOT analyses)	Business consultant for a local business, company, or other organization	To argue for a specific course of action to help your client maintain current success, avoid potential pitfalls, and increase revenue	Your client: the business executives who have hired you for advice (plus other business leaders in similar circumstances)
Values/ Expectations				
-Accurate reporting, analysis, and citations combined with original insights -A clear argument for specific, actionable steps moving forward -Clear, precise, and persuasive language -Professional, poised, and respectful demeanor in all interview contexts				

Overview

For our third unit, you will conduct primary research, interviewing a local business leader of your choice in order to gain unique insights from that person's perspective and experiences. You will then synthesize these insights with secondary research on the relevant industry and market. You will develop your own research question around the challenges faced in that market, and you will use your primary and secondary research to answer your research question, ultimately providing recommendations for that business (and businesses facing similar challenges).

The following is a summation of your rhetorical context for this unit: A local business, company, or other organization (such as a non-profit organization) would like to know if their decisions are consistent with their company brand and mission and what your recommendations are to accrue more customers, clients, etc. They have hired you as a consultant to investigate their practices and to write a **recommendation report**, arguing for a specific course of action to maintain their current success, avoid potential pitfalls, and increase their revenue. To create this report, you'll interview your client and combine their insights and information with your own secondary research.

This unit allows you to craft your own research question and conduct secondary research, but it also gives you the opportunity to do something new: to go out into the field and conduct your own primary research (via interviews). You'll then synthesize your primary and secondary research and determine an answer to your research question, which you will provide as a thesis or argument (in the form of a recommendation to your client).

This unit allows us to explore familiar genres such as market analyses as well as new genres such as SWOT analyses, and it also affords us the opportunity to discuss strategies for crafting arguments and supporting them with claims and evidence in professional contexts.

Feeder 3.1 is a Preliminary Research Worksheet designed to help you organize your ideas.

You'll conduct preliminary research and will identify the local business leader you wish to interview, a bit of contextual information about them, etc. The worksheet then asks you to begin conducting a bit more thorough secondary research on the individual's business, industry, and market, eventually developing your own research question (RQ) as well as some potential interview questions for you to ask. The goal here is to justify why this individual is worthy of further inquiry (and could use your assistance) and to prepare you to eventually interview them. Feeder 3.1 is worth 5% of your final course grade.

- Tues. March 24: Brainstorm UP3 topics (the person you wish to interview) in class (Canvas discussion post)
- Thurs. March 26: Feeder 3.1 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
- Tues. March 31: Feeder 3.1 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

Feeder 3.2 is your detailed interview notes from interviewing your chosen interview subject (your client).

This primary research will form the foundation of your work moving forward. Your detailed notes should contain most, if not all, questions you asked as well as the responses from your interview subject (summarized, paraphrased, and when appropriate, directly quoted). They should be written and organized in a way that will make sense to an outside reader. They should contain appropriate annotations from you in which you identify key responses from your interview subject or begin to tie ideas together. In order to stay on track, you'll need to conduct your interview in time to have a rough draft of your notes ready to submit for our in-class workshop and a final draft ready to submit when it's due. Feeder 3.2 is worth 5% of your final course grade.

- Thurs. April 9: Feeder 3.2 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
- Tues. April 14: Feeder 3.2 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

Unit Project 3 is your complete recommendation report, in which you synthesize information from your primary and secondary research. You'll use the insights gained from interviewing your client, combined with outside research, to answer your research question, thus presenting recommendations for your client, arguing for a specific course of action to help them maintain their current success, avoid potential pitfalls, and increase their revenue. Unit Project 3 is worth 15% of your final course grade.

- Thurs. April 16: Time in class to continue working on UP3
- Tues. April 21: UP3 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
- Thurs. April 23: UP3 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

More detailed instructions for each feeder and your unit project, including grading rubrics, etc., will be shared with you via Canvas>Files>Unit 3 and will be discussed in class. Always remember to refer to the specific instructions and guidelines listed in this document and other accompanying assignment instructions, including grading rubrics, as well as any additional resources, samples, or models we discuss in class.

Additional Resources: You might also find the following resource from the UNC Libraries helpful: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/engl105i-business/unit-2>. It doesn't perfectly align with our project, but it overlaps productively.

Citation Info: In Unit 2, we used APA (American Psychological Association) citation format. In general, APA is one of the most commonly used citation formats for writing in business. However, **for all of our work in this unit, we will be using the Modern Language Association (MLA) 9th edition citation format.** MLA is another commonly used citation format in business and across disciplines, so I want you to get familiar with this citation format and to learn how to adjust from one citation format to another.

Your primary source of information on MLA 9th edition citation format should be the UNC Libraries. See the following pages:

- UNC Libraries: [“Why We Cite”](#)
- UNC Libraries, [MLA 9th ed.](#):
 - [“Sample References Page”](#)
 - [“In-Text Citations”](#)
 - [“Print Sources”](#)
 - [“Online Sources”](#)
- See also **“MLA Works Cited Sample”** (Canvas>Files>Unit 3) for tips on using this citation format, especially tips for citing interview content and various forms of media appropriately.
- See also the following two brief videos from the UNC Writing Center: [“Why We Cite”](#) and [“How We Cite.”](#)

Feeder 3.1 Instructions: Preliminary Research Worksheet

First, make sure you've read through the Unit 3 Assignment Prompt which gives you a clear overview of the entire project for this unit.

Your first step is to identify a local business leader you wish to interview. (For the purposes of this assignment, that individual can be in the UNC/Chapel Hill area or in your own hometown.)

When choosing an individual to interview, remember that you will eventually adopt the fictional role of “consultant” for this person’s business, company, or organization, and you will imagine them as your “client,” someone who has hired you seeking your advice. Is there a specific industry or business in which you are interested? I am willing to maintain a pretty wide definition of “business leader” for this assignment. Your interview subject doesn’t have to be a CEO or President. Are there businesses, companies, non-profit organizations, or other business-related organizations that draw your interest? Perhaps even a business-focused student organization at UNC? You could even consider an officer of a local or student organization who performs a business-related role, even if that club or organization isn’t inherently business-related (such as the Business Manager for a university literary magazine).

Or consider what businesses you visit on a regular basis. Take a walk down Franklin Street and look around. See also the [Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce](#) for some ideas. Or consider various campus student organizations via [HeelLife UNC](#).

You’ll eventually (for Feeder 3.2) interview this person in real-time, ideally in person, although a phone call or Zoom call can suffice. As needed, you might also end up eventually conducting a brief follow-up interview to clarify some information, ask further questions, etc.

This person needs to be someone to whom you can actually gain access. You’ll have to interview them in time to submit detailed notes as your Feeder 3.2 rough draft for class on Thurs. April 9. The final draft of those notes will be due Tues. April 14. Consider these logistics as you select your interview subject.

This should be an individual involved in a business and industry in which you are interested. You’ll adopt the role of a consultant and will imagine your interview subject as your client, the business leader who has hired you to seek your advice. **However, you’re not ready to interview this person just yet. (You should, however, go ahead and contact this person to schedule your interview.)**

Any good research project begins with preliminary research: light, somewhat superficial research on a potential topic. The information gathered here prepares you to conduct further, more focused and detailed research, the actual information that will inform your work throughout.

Feeder 3.1 is a Preliminary Research Worksheet designed to help you organize your ideas.

You’ll conduct preliminary research and will identify the local business leader you wish to interview, a bit of contextual information about them, etc. The worksheet then asks you to begin conducting a bit more thorough secondary research on the individual’s business, industry, and market, eventually developing your own research question (RQ) as well as some potential interview questions for you

to ask. The goal here is to justify why this individual is worthy of further inquiry (and could use your assistance) and to prepare you to eventually interview them (which you'll do for Feeder 3.2).

When conducting secondary research, the most useful sources will probably be scholarly sources such as sources you'll find in the various business-related databases you can access through the UNC Libraries. These include (but are not limited to) recent news and company profiles at Business Source Complete, Hoover, or IBISWorld Industry Reports, etc. Keep in mind the various databases and research resources we've previously discussed in class. You might also find the following resource from the UNC Libraries helpful: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/engl105i-business/unit-2>. It doesn't perfectly align with our project, but it overlaps productively. **For our work in this unit, all outside sources should be cited in [MLA 9th edition citation format](#).**

The actual worksheet you'll complete is titled “Feeder 3.1 – Preliminary Research Worksheet” (Canvas>Files>Unit 3). It contains seven questions, but some of those questions contain smaller sub-questions. Answer all questions completely, clearly, and accurately. Please make sure your answers in that worksheet are easy to identify, clearly (and correctly) numbered, etc.

Successful worksheets will:

- Display considerable investment in the revision process.
- Contain questions that are all answered in a complete and accurate manner.
- Properly cite (in MLA 9th edition citation format) all outside sources used.
- Exhibit the student's overall critical engagement and thorough research around the chosen individual (the person you intend to interview), along with their company, industry, and target market.
- Exhibit the student's preparedness to conduct an interview with their interview subject.

Here's the timeline for Feeder 3.1:

- Tues. March 24: Brainstorm UP3 topics (the person you wish to interview) in class (Canvas discussion post)
- Thurs. March 26: Feeder 3.1 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
- Tues. March 31: Feeder 3.1 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

Grading Rubric for Feeder 3.1: Preliminary Research Worksheet

The final grade for Feeder 3.1 will be worth 5% of the student's final course grade.

	10	7	4	1
Question 1	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Question 2	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.

Question 3	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Question 4	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Question 5 (worth double: 20, 14, 8, or 2 points)	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Question 6	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Question 7	Answered completely, accurately, and appropriately.	Some information is lacking or inaccurate.	The response is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Little to no response to the question.
Writing Style	Worksheet features varied and sophisticated sentence structure and diction that is professional, clear, and accessible for someone unfamiliar with this individual, company, or industry.	Worksheet uses some repetitive diction, overly simplistic language or sentence structures but mostly maintains a professional and objective tone.	Worksheet occasionally lapses into overly casual, colloquial discourse or subjective claims. Writing appears erratic, and some sentences are hard to follow.	Major lapses into casual discourse or little attempt to maintain objectivity. Diction is highly repetitive, and syntax is confusing or highly inappropriate.
Grammar and Mechanics	Worksheet is free from typographical errors as well as spelling and grammar mistakes.	A few surface errors but none so consistent that they obscure the student-author's meaning.	Repeated surface errors.	No sign of editing or revision.
Total: /100				

Feeder 3.1: Preliminary Research Worksheet

Directions: Before completing this worksheet, read through the Unit 3 Assignment Prompt as well as the specific instructions for Feeder 3.1. Those instructions provide more detailed information (and a grading rubric) to guide you as you complete this worksheet.

Begin your project by conducting some preliminary research about your interview subject (the person you intend to interview). This worksheet is designed to help you organize your ideas before you move forward, preparing you to eventually conduct your interview for Feeder 3.2.

Complete the following worksheet using complete sentences (except for Q1). There are seven questions total, but many questions contain multiple smaller sub-questions, etc. Don't overlook any questions or sub-questions. (Questions 5 is worth double.) Please make sure your answers are easy to identify, clearly (and correctly) numbered, etc.

1. Basic info about your interview subject:

- a. Their full name, their preferred name, and their pronouns:
- b. Approximate age:
- c. The name of their current business, company, or other organization (such as a non-profit organization):
- d. Current job title/role:
- e. Very briefly: what does this person do, and what does their business do?
- f. Where is this business located (the city and state is sufficient)?
- g. A working url (web link) for this person's profile and/or their company:
- h. The larger industry into which you'd categorize their company:
- i. How well do you know this person? (Intimately? Somewhat close? Only in formal contexts like work or school? Practically a stranger?) Explain your connection to this person:

2. In a thorough paragraph, answer the following questions: Why do you want to interview this person in particular? What prior assumptions do you have about this person or their business role or their business or industry? What do you hope to learn about this person or their business or their industry?

3. Visit the company website to get a sense of their brand, mission, ethos, products/services etc.

- a. **In a thorough paragraph, answer the following questions:** What are the stated missions/values of this company? The company ethos? (Think about the kind of work you did for your case study for Feeder 2.1. You had to consider a "company narrative" for that company. What kind of "company narrative" does **this** company have?) Consider also: how does the company's values/goals relate to their larger industry and/or their target market?

- b. The source above (the company website) will be important for your work moving forward. Write a full bibliographic citation for this source in [MLA 9th edition citation format](#).
4. Name **a few** potential challenges a company like this one might face. These can be short-term or long-term but should be relevant now or soon in the future (rather than past challenges that might no longer be relevant, although some past challenges might return and you could argue they would still be potentially relevant). **Explain your reasoning in a brief paragraph.**
5. **(Worth double.)** Conduct secondary research related to this company/business and the larger industry into which it falls. Consider also its target market (as well as opportunities for growth, etc.). Keep in mind the kind of work you did for Feeder 2.2 when creating a market analysis. You might also consider approaching this business in terms of a SWOT analysis (examining its **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats**). For assistance in conducting a SWOT analysis, see “SWOT Analysis Guides” at Canvas>Files>Unit 3.

The most useful sources will probably be scholarly sources such as sources you’ll find in the various business-related databases you can access through the UNC Libraries. These include (but are not limited to) recent news and company profiles at Business Source Complete, Hoover, or IBISWorld Industry Reports, etc. Keep in mind the various databases and research resources we’ve previously discussed in class.

- a. **List at least three secondary sources** that might be useful for your work moving forward. Provide full bibliographic citations for each of these sources in [MLA 9th edition citation format](#). (As part of your answer here, you **cannot** repeat the company website referenced above in Q3.)
 - b. **For each citation, write at least two sentences** explaining how that source could be helpful in your work moving forward. These might help you prepare for your interview or as you design interview questions. They might also be helpful in filling in the gaps as you eventually compose a final recommendation report for UP3. (After all, your client—the person you’re interviewing—doesn’t know everything. You’ll need to consult outside sources to fill in these gaps, provide context, etc.) Be specific in terms of the kind of information each source provides and why it is potentially useful to your project.
6. **Develop a research question (RQ) and rationale:** Every strong argument begins with a productive research question (RQ). Revisit our discussion of research questions (RQs) and the “Research Questions Handout” (Canvas>Files>Helpful Handouts and Resources). Write a tentative research question (RQ) to guide/frame your work moving forward.

Alongside your RQ, write a brief rationale (a few sentences) explaining the reasoning behind this research question. (As you craft your RQ, you might find it helpful to return to your initial curiosity in Q2 above.)

Your RQ will probably begin as something as seemingly simple as “What potential challenges does this company face in the near future?” Or “How can this company survive/overcome major challenges such as _____ in the near future?”

Remember, this RQ will change as you gather more information throughout the entire unit, but you should begin with something here. During the rest of your work in this unit, remember to return to and revise your RQ as needed. (Eventually, your goal with your primary and secondary research will be to answer this RQ, recommending specific steps for this company as they move forward.)

Another way to approach your RQ: Based on your research so far, you could ask about a potential **opportunity** or **discrepancy** or **problem** in terms of the company’s brand, market, business decisions, or current trajectory.

7. **Prepare interview questions:** When you sit down with your client (your interview subject), you can’t just start the interview by asking “the big question” (your RQ). You need to break that big question into smaller steps, smaller questions that will give you detailed pieces of the larger puzzle. (Your interview subject might not be fully aware of challenges, problems, etc. You need to investigate carefully to put everything together for them. That’s why they hired you.)

Write a careful list of potential substantive interview questions (at least six). Write them exactly as you would ask them. Not sure where to start? Imagine yourself sitting in front of this person. How do you start the conversation? Begin with the honest questions that drove you to this person in the first place. What are you curious about? What do you want to know? What information do you need in order to better understand this company and its industry and market? What information do you need in order to get a grasp of the bigger picture so you can eventually offer potential solutions or recommendations? Start by brainstorming a list of as many questions as possible. Take that long list and start organizing your questions into groupings or categories (questions and sub-questions). This could help you find a focus in your interview overall.

Also, consider the information you already know based on their company website and the secondary research you’ve conducted so far. You can use that information to help develop questions or guide your inquiry.

There are 7 questions total. Don’t overlook any questions or sub-questions. Please be sure to proofread your work and ensure that your answers are easy to identify, clearly (and correctly) numbered, etc.

Feeder 3.2 Instructions: Detailed Interview Notes

First, make sure you've read through the Unit 3 Assignment Prompt which gives you a clear overview of the entire project for this unit.

In Feeder 3.1, you conducted background information on your interview subject (your client), their business, their target market, and the larger industry. You also developed a targeted research question (RQ) to frame all of your work moving forward. You also began brainstorming a list of potential interview questions. The purpose was to prepare you to actually conduct your primary research: sitting down with your client and conducting a consultation interview.

Feeder 3.2 is your detailed interview notes from interviewing your chosen interview subject (your client). This primary research will form the foundation of your work moving forward. Your detailed notes should contain most, if not all, questions you asked as well as the responses from your interview subject (summarized, paraphrased, and when appropriate, directly quoted). They should be written and organized in a way that will make sense to an outside reader. They should contain appropriate annotations from you in which you identify key responses from your interview subject or begin to tie ideas together.

When you sit down with your client (your interview subject), you can't just start the interview by asking "the big question" (your RQ). You need to break that big question into smaller steps, smaller questions that will give you detailed pieces of the larger puzzle. Your interview subject might not be fully aware of challenges, problems, solutions, etc. You need to investigate carefully to put everything together for them. That's why they hired you. Your client has vital insight to offer, but they don't know everything.

Schedule your interview: If you haven't already, contact the person you intend to interview and schedule the interview. You should aim to complete the interview by April 9 so you can submit your detailed interview notes for Feeder 3.2. The interview should be synchronous (in real time), ideally in person, although a Zoom call or phone call could also work.

Finalize your interview questions: Remember that you're adopting the role of a consultant and will imagine your interview subject as your client, the business leader who has hired you to seek your advice. Start with your tentative interview questions from Feeder 3.1 (Q7). Adjust and/or reorganize those questions as needed; revise, rephrase, add, remove, reorder, etc. Consider our in-class discussions regarding best practices for conducting a research interview.

Think about what you've learned during your outside research thus far. What questions arise, especially in terms of potential problems, challenges, discrepancies, or opportunities for growth? You should design your interview to provide you with enough info to clearly answer your RQ. The content you collect from this interview will be the foundation of your work moving forward. You'll eventually combine these insights with outside secondary research to craft your UP3, a complete recommendation report, arguing for specific steps your client should take moving forward.

Conduct your interview: Even if you know this person well, you should treat this as a professional interaction. Be poised, well-prepared, adaptable, and respectful. Even if you disagree with the values or opinions of your interview subject, you must be respectful of all individuals involved at all times. Remember to thank them for their time and effort. Give them information about how this information will be used, next steps, etc. (and a potential follow-up interview). The overall length of your interview will vary depending on the responses from your client, but it will most likely take 20-30 minutes. Not everything said in this interview will necessarily be helpful or important, but that's the nature of research: you collect as much data or info as possible and find the most relevant or useful information to include and discuss.

Privacy/permission is a vital aspect of this interview. At the start of your interview, discuss the privacy concerns of your interview subject openly and honestly. Get permission to share the interview anonymously (and disguising all identifying info), under a pseudonym (disguising all identifying info), or under their full name (with no need to disguise identifying info). Inform your interview subject that this document will be shared with your instructor and with your classmates as a draft to workshop in class. Discuss with them also how this info will be eventually used for your UP3 recommendation report. When you submit your final draft of UP3, you'll be asked about publication permissions for this document; do you have permission to share this content on our course website? **You must respect all privacy concerns of all individuals involved.** Remember that this might involve disguising any identifying information related to your interview subject.

After the interview, remember to follow up with your interview subject, at the very least, to thank them again for their time, assistance, and insight.

Clean up and annotate your notes: Once you've conducted a thorough interview with your interview subject, type up and organize your interview notes so they'll make sense to an outside reader who has no familiarity with this person, their business, etc. Add your own commentary as needed (annotating your notes with your own comments).

Your detailed notes should contain most, if not all, questions you asked during the interview as well as the responses from your interview subject (summarized, paraphrased, and when appropriate, directly quoted). If you are directly quoting their response, be sure to place those words inside quotation marks (to indicate a direct quotation).

Your notes should contain appropriate annotations from you in which you identify key responses from your interview subject or begin to tie ideas together. Identify the most interesting or productive bits of content and/or show me how you plan to use this content for your UP3 recommendation report. How does a response to a particular question connect to some other outside or secondary source you've already found, etc.?

If you reference any secondary sources in your notes, be sure to include appropriate in-text/parenthetical citations for those outside sources and a complete Works Cited list at the end of your notes (all in MLA 9th edition citation format).

Your detailed notes should begin with two items:

- A disclaimer about the privacy concerns/permission setting for your interview subject.
- Your current research question (RQ) that frames all of your work, alongside a brief rationale (at least a few sentences), explaining or justifying your RQ.

Conduct a brief follow-up interview as needed: As you collect and revisit your data, you might realize you need more information. As needed, you might end up eventually conducting a brief follow-up interview to clarify some information, ask further questions, etc. This could help you as you complete Feeder 3.2 and/or as you work on your final UP3 recommendation report. You should have already informed your interview subject of this possibility.

Successful interview notes will:

- Display considerable investment in the revision process
- Begin with a statement regarding the privacy concerns/permission of your interview subject
- Provide the current iteration of the student's guiding research question (RQ), accompanied by a brief rationale of a few sentences, explaining that RQ
- Exhibit the student's preparedness for this interview with their interview subject
- Contain carefully crafted, thoughtful, respectful, and productive questions designed to generate useful insight and info
- Contain responses from the interview subject that are productive and insightful (summarized, paraphrased, and appropriately quoted)
- Contain appropriate and productive annotations from the student, identifying key content and insights from the interview subject and tying various ideas or concepts together as preparation for a final recommendation report
- Successfully exhibit the student's preparedness to begin forming an argument (via recommendation) for next steps moving forward, etc.
- Properly cite (in MLA 9th edition citation format) any outside sources referenced (as needed)

Here's the timeline for Feeder 3.2:

- Thurs. April 9: Feeder 3.2 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
 - **Note:** In extreme extenuating circumstances, if you're unable to complete an interview prior to Thurs. April 9, you can submit as your rough draft a **highly detailed** plan for your interview. (If this is the case, you should contact me first.) At that point, you should already have a commitment from your interviewee as to how and when you will conduct your interview. Your detailed plan should include a complete list of your planned questions and follow-up questions. You should also explain how you will be able to complete your interview and submit your final draft of Feeder 3.2 prior to class on Tues. April 14 (the due date for the final draft of Feeder 3.2).
- Tues. April 14: Feeder 3.2 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

Grading Rubric for Feeder 3.2: Detailed Interview Notes

The final grade for Feeder 3.2 will be worth 5% of the student's final course grade.

	10	7	4	1
Research Question with Rationale	Research question is appropriately phrased, open-ended, has a debatable answer, and expands on prior knowledge, attempting to contribute to the larger discourse on this topic. It is accompanied by a logical rationale explaining the reasoning behind the research question.	Research question poses an intriguing question with a debatable answer but does so in confusing or unclear language. Rationale is a bit lacking, or its connection to the research question is a bit unclear.	Research question makes more of an observation rather than a debatable claim or question. Rationale is very lacking, or its connection to the research question is hard to follow.	Interview notes do not include a research question guiding the work, or the research question is totally unintelligible. Almost no attempt to rationalize or explain the research question.
Privacy Statement	Interview notes begin with a statement regarding the privacy wishes of the interview subject (anonymous, pseudonymous, or full name). Any identifying info throughout the notes is disguised as needed.	Interview notes begin with a statement regarding the privacy wishes of the interview subject but is presented somewhat unclearly. Some (but not all) identifying info throughout the notes is disguised as needed.	Privacy concerns of the interview subject are only briefly addressed. Identifying info that should be disguised is not sufficiently disguised to protect the interview subject's privacy.	Interview notes do not contain any statement regarding the privacy wishes of the interview subject.
Interview Content (x4: 4, 16, 28, or 40 points)	The student has crafted and asked appropriate, thoughtful, and productive questions and follow-up questions. These generated useful insights and information from the interview subject, which cumulatively address the overall research question (RQ).	Some aspects of the interview are lacking or inappropriate. The student could have asked more productive questions or follow-up questions to generate new insights and info.	The interview feels incomplete, significantly lacking in addressing the overall research question. The responses from the interview subject feel insufficient to help the student create a recommendation report.	The interview questions are inappropriate and counter-productive, leading to almost no new insights or info.
Annotations	Interview notes are accompanied by thorough annotations in which the student identifies the most	Interview notes are accompanied by annotations, but some are lacking, insufficient, or	Annotations are cursory at best and do not provide enough information for the reader to understand.	Almost no effort at annotating the interview notes.

	important info, how various ideas connect or tie together, how info relates to outside sources, etc. These annotations exhibit the student's preparedness to use the info from this interview to begin constructing a recommendation report.	unclear. Or some key content is not sufficiently identified or explained as connected.		
Organization	The interview notes (the order of questions and follow-up questions) are well-organized with a logical and explicit pattern.	Interview notes are mostly well-organized, but some questions seem out of order or repetitive.	Interview notes are very confusingly organized and do not reflect an overall organizational pattern.	Interview notes are organized so confusingly that it impedes the student-author's purpose.
Writing Style	Interview notes (questions and summation/paraphrasing of responses) feature varied and sophisticated sentence structure and diction that is professional, clear, and accessible for someone unfamiliar with this individual, company, or industry.	Interview notes use some repetitive diction, overly simplistic language or sentence structures but mostly maintains a professional and objective tone.	Interview notes occasionally lapse into overly casual, colloquial discourse or subjective claims. Writing appears erratic, and some sentences are hard to follow.	Major lapses into casual discourse or little attempt to maintain objectivity. Diction is highly repetitive, and syntax is confusing or highly inappropriate.
Grammar and Mechanics	Interview notes are free from typographical errors as well as spelling and grammar mistakes.	A few surface errors but none so consistent that they obscure the student-author's meaning.	Repeated surface errors.	No sign of editing or revision.
Total: /100				

UP3: Final Recommendation Report

First, make sure you've read through the Unit 3 Assignment Prompt which gives you a clear overview of the entire project for this unit.

Now that you've consulted with your client via an in-depth interview, it's time to synthesize your primary research (your interview) with secondary research. These outside sources from your secondary research could provide useful background information, context, comparisons with other companies, or could help justify your methods and suggestions moving forward. Be sure to appropriately cite all sources (both your secondary sources and the interview itself) via appropriate MLA in-text/parenthetical citations and a complete Works Cited list at the end of your report.

In addition to the interview you conducted, **you must incorporate at least three other sources into your report**, although you are encouraged to incorporate as many sources as needed to provide useful background information, etc. What other information do you need to include to provide further insight, to back up or justify your claims? One such source will almost certainly be the website for the company you are discussing (your client's company). Revisit the secondary research you conducted during Feeder 3.1, and consider conducting further secondary research as needed.

Again, you'll use the insights gained from interviewing your client, combined with outside research, to answer your research question. The answer to your research question will form the overall thesis of your report: recommendations for your client, arguing for a specific course of action to help them maintain their current success, avoid potential pitfalls, and increase their revenue, etc.

Remember that although you've interviewed one person at your client company, your audience includes more than this sole individual. Your audience includes all the members of leadership at that company (and potentially, other business leaders facing similar circumstances).

In order to be complete and comprehensive, **your report should be 1,200 to 1,600 words total**, not including the title page or your MLA Works Cited list. You are welcome to (but not required to) include visuals/graphics in the report to help illustrate your points, data, etc. If you use a visual from an outside source, be sure to accompany it with an appropriate in-text citation for that source. If you create your own data visualization, be sure to cite the source of the data being represented.

Privacy and publication permission: It's vital to consider the privacy concerns of your interview subject. If they wish to remain anonymous or be presented under a pseudonym, you must indicate that, must respect their wishes, and disguise all other identifying information throughout your report. The title page of your report should include a statement regarding your interviewee's privacy wishes. It must also include a statement regarding whether you want this report to be kept private, published to our course website anonymously (without your name), or published to our course website with your name (first name and last initial). Consult with your client to get their permission regarding whether or not this report can be published to our course website as well.

Model Recommendation Reports (Canvas>Files>Unit 3):

- "Model Report – Dukes Restaurant Consulting Report (DMR Consulting)," a real-world example we will examine in class (although not a perfect example of your own UP3)
- "Sample UP3 Recommendation Report" (A & B), rough templates to help you format and organize your own UP3

A successful report will contain the following sections, clearly labeled (in this order):

- **Title Page:** Include title of the report (a descriptive, engaging title), the name(s) of your client, their job title, name of their company, your name, the date of submission, a statement regarding the privacy wishes of your client, and a statement regarding the publication permission for your report (whether or not this can be published to the course website). Make sure the privacy statement and publication permission match or make sense together.
- **Executive Summary:** A brief summary of the entire report: the purpose of the report as well as a general analysis of the client's needs and your proposed responses to those needs (main challenges/problems and main recommendations).
- **Introduction:** Background information on the company and its overall narrative and ethos; background information on the larger industry, the market, etc.
- **Situation Analysis and Problem Description:** An analysis of the current context for the company, including a brief SWOT analysis (the strengths and weaknesses of the company as well as their current opportunities and threats). Consider the competitive landscape, the current economic/political climate, trends in the market, etc. Based on this analysis, identify the most significant problems/challenges (or opportunities) facing this company.
- **Recommendations and Action Plan:** After analyzing the company's current situation and potential problems (or opportunities), you will provide your client with a few different key recommendations for their company. Divide your recommendations under separate headings if they address different business needs. **Each recommendation should include:**
 - A description of the recommendation.
 - A rationale and explanation for the recommendation, including foreseeable benefits: how it will help the client meet their goals (overcome a challenge or leverage an opportunity mentioned in the previous section).
 - An action plan describing the steps the client needs to take to implement that recommendation. The best action plans will also briefly analyze and estimate the cost factors involved, should the client decide to implement the recommendations. The best action plans will also briefly describe how the company will regularly assess whether or not their actions are being implemented effectively.
- **Conclusion:** Tie everything together, briefly remind your reader of the main points from the report, and **gesture towards the larger implications of the report.** (Why is this important? What are the potential dangers of failing to follow your recommendations? What are the potential benefits moving forward if your client follows these recommendations? How could other business leaders in a similar context also benefit from such recommendations?)
- **Works Cited:** Complete Works Cited list of all outside sources used in the report, in MLA 9th edition citation format. This includes all secondary sources used (including visuals) as well as citing any interviews conducted and referenced in the report. See also "MLA Works Cited Sample" (Canvas>Files>Unit 3).
- **(Optional) Appendix/Appendices** – Include further instructions, details, samples, glossaries, illustrations, and diagrams as needed.

Here's the timeline for Unit Project 3:

- Thurs. April 16: Time in class to continue working on UP3
- Tues. April 21: UP3 rough draft due for class (Canvas discussion post)
- Thurs. April 23: UP3 final draft due for a grade prior to class (Canvas>Assignments)

Grading Rubric for Unit Project 3: Recommendation Report

The final grade for Unit Project 3 will be worth 15% of the student's final course grade.

	10	7	4	1
Title Page & Executive Summary	Title page includes all pertinent content, including a statement regarding privacy and publication permission. Executive summary is a comprehensive summation of the core elements of the report overall, especially a list of the key recommendations to be made.	A few minor elements are missing from the title page. Executive summary overlooks one (or a few) important elements of the overall report.	A major element is missing from the title page. Executive summary is significantly lacking in its summation of the overall report.	Major elements are missing from the title page, or the report lacks a title page at all. Executive summary completely fails to adequately represent the overall report.
Introduction	Introduction provides basic information regarding the company being discussed, the larger industry of which it is a part, and the overall market.	Introduction is lacking some detail or specificity in terms of basic background information.	Introduction is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand the basics of the company.	Almost no attempt to provide background info on the company.
Situation Analysis and Problem Description	This section thoroughly examines the current context for the company, including a SWOT analysis. It clearly identifies key problems (or opportunities) for the company in the near future and why those are important.	Some information about the company's current context is offered, but it is confusingly organized or summarized strangely. Description of current problems (or opportunities) is a bit unclear or not convincing.	This section is cursory at best and does not provide enough information for the reader to understand the significance of the company's current context and their potential problems (or opportunities).	Almost no attempt to examine the company's current context and their potential problems (or opportunities).
Recommendations and Action Plan	Report provides specific recommendations for the client to overcome challenges (or leverage opportunities). Each recommendation is specific, justified, and clearly explained, accompanied by detailed action plans to implement those recommendations.	Recommendations and action plan are a bit lacking in specificity, especially in terms of how to justify these actions, why they're beneficial, or how to implement them.	Recommendations and action plan are a significantly lacking in specificity, especially in terms of how to justify these actions, why they're beneficial, or how to implement them.	The recommendations offered are vague, with almost no attempt to justify them or explain how to implement them.
Conclusion	Conclusion clearly & definitively answers the "so what"/ "who cares"	Conclusion makes some effort to point to broader	Conclusion mostly just repeats	Almost no attempt to tie all points together or

	questions, indicating the significance or larger implications of the report's overall argument.	implications of the report.	information already stated.	consider larger implications via an appropriate conclusion.
Organization & Document Design	Report is organized with a logical and explicit pattern. The document is designed and formatted in a way that is easy to navigate and looks professional.	Report is mostly well-organized, but some sections or paragraphs seem out of order or repetitive. Some minor problems with the overall document design.	Report is very confusingly organized and does not reflect an overall organizational pattern. Significant problems with the overall document design.	Report is organized so confusingly that it impedes the student-author's purpose. Almost no consideration given to the overall document design.
Paragraph Structure	Each paragraph contains an analytical topic sentence that makes one central claim and then provides evidence and analysis to support this claim. Each paragraph flows well.	Paragraphs are mostly well structured with a few slip-ups; some paragraphs either do not contain adequate flow, are missing a topic or ending sentence, or do not analyze their evidence.	A few paragraphs attempt to do too much or do not advance one specific claim. Paragraphs do not contain logical flow of information.	Paragraphs are highly unorganized and very difficult to follow; paragraphs do not advance any claim at all.
Writing Style	Report features varied and sophisticated sentence structure and diction.	Report uses some repetitive diction, simplistic language or sentence structures but mostly maintains a professional and objective tone.	Report occasionally lapses into casual, colloquial discourse or subjective claims. Writing appears erratic, and some sentences are hard to follow.	Major lapses into casual discourse or little attempt to maintain objectivity. Diction is highly repetitive, and syntax is confusing.
Citations	A coherent citation system (MLA 9 th edition) is used consistently throughout; Works Cited page is complete and formatted accurately.	A citation system is systematically used with some lapses in providing required bibliographical information; Works Cited does not include all sources cited in body of text.	It is very difficult to tell if a single citation style has been adopted throughout. Citations are erratic, and/or Works Cited is incomplete.	No effort at citing sources accurately and consistently is made.
Grammar & Mechanics	Report is free from typographical errors as well as spelling and grammar mistakes.	A few surface errors but none so consistent that they obscure the student-author's meaning.	Repeated surface errors.	No sign of editing or revision.
Total: /100				