PREFACE FOR INSTRUCTORS

Having taught composition and research writing for more than twenty years, we both noticed two major drawbacks when choosing textbooks to use for a course teaching freshmen how to write research papers: inadequate coverage of the skills needed for research in the world today (with its unprecedented proliferation of information), and the high cost to students of having to buy multiple texts for the class.

The first issue we wanted to address is the proliferation of information. Most texts focus on the skills needed to find academic information. There is so much more to modern-day research, however, that we were always left wanting when reading most textbooks. We wanted a text that would address how to cope with the vast amounts of information—both academic and mundane—from diverse media faced by our students, as well as the skills to uncover pertinent materials in their own research and, perhaps more importantly, to evaluate and qualify the sources they find.

The other issue we wanted to address was the cost to students of having to buy a number of textbooks to cover MLA/APA format, research tips, punctuation and grammar rules, and an anthology of readings. Aside from the cost of buying multiple texts, these books were also invariably guided by differing pedagogies and voices, and it was frustrating and time consuming trying to blend these divergent books into a cohesive whole in our classes.

We wrote *Navigating America: Information Competency and Research for the Twenty-First Century* to overcome these drawbacks and to give a focused and guided approach to the different types of materials found in the study of popular culture—and to do this in a voice that students will find friendly and accessible.

FOCUS ON INFORMATION COMPETENCY

With a constant stream of information hitting us all at every moment, learning how to find information is no longer the primary concern of college and university students in research classes. Indeed, finding information is virtually unavoidable, whether we are listening to our favorite radio stations driving to school or work, sitting in our living rooms with our remote controls, checking email and text messages on our "smart phones," or surfing the Net on our Wi-Fi laptops as we sip espresso in a neighborhood

coffee shop. The real challenge is developing the ability to critically assess the information we receive in this steady barrage, and this is particularly important for today's students as they prepare to take their places in the modern world. Students must learn how to distinguish between dependable sources of information and attractive but shallow or inaccurate sources as they navigate through tangled webs of material.

The concept of information competency, also known as information literacy, is not new. Eighteenth-century mathematician and philosopher Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat, the Marquis de Condorcet, believed that every man and woman should become educated so that "they will be able to govern themselves according to their own knowledge; they will no longer be limited to a mechanical knowledge of the procedures of the arts or of professional routine; they will no longer depend for every trivial piece of business, every insignificant matter of instruction on clever men who rule over them in virtue of their necessary superiority." Condorcet believed that only through the competent mastery of information could human beings achieve a truly free and democratic society.

Two hundred years later, this idea is more important than it has ever been. Too many of us depend for our understanding of the vital issues of our day on the people who have the power to control information. Control of information can take many forms; it can mean limiting our access to certain types of information and flooding us with other types, leaving most of us in this intoxicatingly complex "Information Age" feeling rather bewildered and overwhelmed. In the nineties, author David Shenk coined the term "data smog" to describe the effect information overload can have on us, as too much and too many kinds of information come at us too quickly to be properly assimilated, creating confusion and anxiety instead of mastery and clarity. Information competency provides the way to see through this smog to the truths it obscures.

Many textbooks date themselves by neglecting to acknowledge the importance to our students of ideas gleaned from television, film, the Internet, advertising, the news media, and corporate and political advertising and propaganda. *Navigating America* is different, however. It helps train students to be competent in examining all types of information, not just traditional academic sources. (Even though television shows and films quickly fade from fashion, scholarly articles demonstrating effective modes of analysis will help students to critically evaluate the cultural impact of what is most current for them.) This emphasis on information competency is integrated throughout *Navigating America,* as the overview we provide ahead describes.

ALL-IN-ONE APPROACH

In addition to an overarching emphasis on information competency, *Navigating America* is designed to meet students' needs and budgets by serving as an all-purpose textbook for a research paper class. Typically, students in such a class have to buy a research and documentation guide, a thematic reader, and frequently a punctuation and grammar text, as well. Our book provides all three, as well as a section on identifying common logical fallacies and other errors in reasoning.

This all-in-one approach is not merely a time or cost saver, however; it is crucial to the content of this text. *Navigating America* is divided into three interconnected sections. The organization is logical but not prescriptive—we know from our own

experiences that instructors assign sections of textbooks in the order that best suits their own purposes and teaching styles. We designed the sections to be as self-contained as possible and included clear references within chapters to related material in other chapters to allow teachers to use a "menu" approach when creating their own course plans. Following is a brief discussion of the goals and pedagogy of each section, as well as a snapshot of the contents in each chapter.

Section One (Chapters 1–10) covers research and writing skills, including active and critical reading; the basics of information competency (both academic and mass media); finding and narrowing paper topics; the writing process; essay structure; integrating sources into writing; forming and evaluating arguments; recognizing and avoiding plagiarism; and a guide to style, grammar, and punctuation.

- **Student Introduction.** In this, we discuss the importance of research and explain what information competency is, listing and describing its components, with an emphasis on critical thinking skills. We present arguments for the importance of critiquing popular culture, and we finish with a description of how students will use the three interconnected sections of the book.

- **Chapter 1: Finding a Topic.** We approach the problem of understanding assignments and finding a research paper topic with a number of student-friendly suggestions that break the task into manageable pieces and address different thinking and learning styles.

- **Chapter 2: Conducting Traditional Academic Research.** We offer practical examples of how to conduct traditional academic research with the technical information students will need to use libraries, as well as less-traditional sources for information, including conducting students' own field research. Our examples are chosen to help them to recognize that academic research isn't about hoops they have to jump through to please professors, but a way of finding accurate, in-depth information about issues fundamentally important to their own lives and futures.

- **Chapter 3: Conducting Other Types of Research.** We move on to an exploration of how to do research in the areas students commonly encounter in their day-to-day lives, exploring the skills needed for critically searching through mundane systems, such as the general Internet, print media, and television and radio. Although much of the material discussed in this chapter is nonscholarly and not intended for many types of academic paper, it still has a place in students' lives because this is the sort of information that they routinely consume, and they need to know how to evaluate it. (Also, some of these media may become the subjects they investigate and analyze in an academic paper.)

- **Chapter 4: Evaluating Sources and Reading Critically.** We show students how to objectively evaluate the reliability of the types of sources covered in both of the previous chapters and how to engage in ongoing evaluations through critical reading skills. Skills such as finding main ideas; questioning, outlining, and annotating sources; SASE; double-entry note taking; and writing the rhetorical précis are covered. The chapter includes samples of a student's work: an annotated article, a double-entry journal, and a rhetorical précis.

■ **Chapter 5: Understanding Argument and Persuasion.** We discuss methods of evaluating arguments, elaborating on critical reading and evaluation skills that pertain specifically to argument and persuasion. This chapter shows students how to distinguish among and dissect different types of argument, as well as how they can argue logically and persuasively in their own writing, stressing the importance of keeping their audience in mind. We explain *ethos, logos,* and *pathos* and their importance for readers and writers, we demonstrate the Toulmin Method as a tool for analyzing other people's arguments and for constructing logical arguments and persuasive essays, and we also demonstrate the stages of the audience-based Rogerian Argument method. We finish with a discussion of how to identify common logical fallacies and other errors in reasoning, including suspect rhetorical devices.

■ **Chapter 6: Navigating the Writing Process.** We help students to better understand their own idiosyncratic writing processes and how to figure out if they are primarily kinesthetic, auditory, or visual learners (or how they combine the different approaches). Understanding how their own brains work can help students who have been frustrated because they have been trying to force themselves into writing practices that don't suit their own particular needs and strengths. We cover the elements of the writing process they most need in college: prewriting, note taking (including traditional note cards and electronic "e-cards," with samples for both types), research proposals, outlines, drafting, and revision and editing (including a discussion of the differences between the two and a checklist for each). Writing is recursive and often chaotic on the surface; our approach stresses the benefits of completing all the steps, no matter what the order, depending on individual students' needs and personal styles. The order in which we present these steps is also useful for any students who want to follow a linear approach because they enjoy a stronger sense of structure.

■ **Chapter 7: Organizing the Essay.** We look at how to "build" essays, including research papers, addressing not only the organizational structure of the essay, but also issues of tone, audience, and voice. We discuss the rhetorical modes of writing and how they work in concert, and we demonstrate through graphic representations how the modes are suited to different writing situations.

■ **Chapter 8: Integrating Sources into Writing.** We explain how to use information from sources within papers and the different levels of thought exhibited through summary, synthesis, and critical thought. We show how and when to write summaries and paraphrases, how to integrate quotations, and how to introduce sources to the audience, and we provide suggestions on how to integrate source information with the students' own ideas.

■ **Chapter 9: Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism.** We define and explain plagiarism, covering the different kinds (both deliberate and accidental), using a passage from George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language" to illustrate the various types of plagiarism and to demonstrate strategies for effectively and honestly using a source's words and ideas.

■ **Chapter 10: Improving Style, Punctuation, and Grammar.** We avoid jargon and complicated explanations in favor of explanations and examples that fit student needs and levels of understanding (not those of professional grammarians). A punctuation pattern sheet and a numbered list identifying and explaining twenty-five common student errors, including examples and corrections, precede the guidelines and can be used by instructors as quick references in their notes on student papers. We realize that many instructors in classes at this level do not have the time nor inclination to cover basic style, punctuation, and grammar, so we have made the guidelines as "student-friendly" as possible for those students who want to review the material on their own. A web address at the end of the chapter directs them to online exercises. The website is not password protected and can be used by students who purchased used copies of the textbook.

Section Two (Chapters 11–14) thoroughly but accessibly explains and gives examples of MLA and APA format and provides sample annotated student papers in each style.

■ **Chapter 11: Formatting the MLA-Style Paper.** We explain the basic format of an MLA-style paper, giving guidelines for the general appearance, titles, headers, tables, appendixes, and so on. It ends with a sample paper annotated to help the student recognize the necessary features of a properly formatted paper.

■ **Chapter 12: Creating MLA-Style Parenthetical Citations.** We cover when to use in-text citations and how to create them for a variety of sources, showing a wide range of examples to address every situation a student is likely to encounter.

■ **Chapter 13: Preparing the MLA List of Works Cited.** We explain how to organize lists of bibliographic entries, including lists of works cited, works consulted, and annotated bibliographies. We show how to create works-cited entries following the **2009 MLA guidelines,** which clarify the publication media of sources used for individual entries and greatly simplify the entries for Internet and database sources. The chapter begins with a directory of items to guide students to the explanations and examples they need for works-cited entries for sources ranging from books and journal articles to podcasts and YouTube clips. We realize that more and more software programs designed to format works-cited entries are being designed, but there are many variables to how citations are formed, and software will not identify and adjust to all the circumstances that influence an entry's proper format. Building these skills will help students in other areas of their lives, giving them practice in using manuals, making logical generalizations, and paying attention to detail.

■ **Chapter 14: Using APA Style.** We discuss the differences between APA and MLA papers and format, cover APA-style parenthetical in-text citations and reference lists, providing numerous examples to cover traditional and nontraditional sources. The chapter ends with an annotated sample student APA paper on a topic that students cover in a psychology class.

Section Three (Chapters 15–22) is an anthology of readings tying varied topics related to popular culture to a discussion of information competency. The selections demonstrate a variety of reading levels and tones, and the topics were selected with students' needs and interests in mind. These selections encourage them to think critically about issues important in their own lives. The breadth of the selections allows instructors a variety of ways to tailor a semester, and the chapters are designed to stand alone, so their order can easily be varied. (See the sample syllabi in the online instructor's manual.) This also means that instructors can use *Navigating America* for numerous semesters without monotony.

Chapter 15: Introduction to Anthology of Readings
Chapter 16: Television
Chapter 17: Film
Chapter 18: The Internet
Chapter 19: Advertising
Chapter 20: Media Multinationals
Chapter 21: News Media
Chapter 22: Corporate America

MODEL PAPER INTEGRATION

Because all this material is presented in one book, we are able to make connections between the research methods and the actual articles themselves. To strengthen these connections, the model MLA student research paper (on a topic related to corporations and the media) is integrated throughout the entire text as we discuss writing as a comprehensive process. This integration allows students to see the entire writing process unfold before them, from prewriting to a final draft. In Section One, students learn all the steps of the writing process, from prewriting and note taking to outlining and organizing first and final drafts. Every example from each of these steps of writing comes from the sample MLA paper. Many of the articles and books cited in the model paper are included in the anthology section, so the students can get a better idea of the context of the original passages that are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. The finished paper is annotated and presented in Chapter 11, which covers MLA formatting. Students will find the annotations helpful when formatting their own papers.

ANTHOLOGY OF READINGS

The final section of this book is an anthology of readings. Its contents focus on a popular culture theme, dealing with everything from television and film to the Internet and media ownership. However, it maintains the focus on information competency. Through the anthology section, students will learn how to better navigate the world around them and become competent not just with academic information, but with the types of information that they deal with constantly in their own lives.

The anthology of readings provides several key components to *Navigating America:*

- Chapters covering popular issues such as TV, film, the Internet (including MySpace, YouTube, and many other popular Internet topics), advertising, media ownership, news media, and corporate America.

- A thorough apparatus for each reading. The questions are flexible, so instructors can use them as presented or use some of them for in-class "quick writes," class discussions, and group work.

  - Prereading Questions: These questions are intended to be completed before the students read a given article, and they encourage an informed, focused reading of the piece. They should help students develop key components of effective reading practices—learning how to make predictions about texts and how to relate subject matter to their own ideas, experiences, and previous readings to get the most out of a selection.

  - Journal Topics: The process of reading and writing in conjunction is the best practice to improve any writer's skills. However, the constraints of strict essay prompts and students' worries about being marked wrong often hamper the creative process. The journal topics in *Navigating America* are designed as a means for students to write on topics they've just read about with no worries or penalties. They provide a chance for free writing, as they are designed to elicit "gut responses" to the readings rather than a strict dissection of content.

  - Questions for Critical Thought: These questions are intended to make students dig beneath the surfaces of the articles and to relate the information and ideas they contain to the real world. They are designed in part to encourage students to critique the strength of information and argumentation that the authors present. This is one of the best ways to generate critical thought. A key component to information competency is the ability to critically assess arguments; these questions help students practice that component. They typically include quotations and direct references to the reading to help students practice the crucial skills of evaluating specific arguments and of incorporating outside material into their own arguments. These questions are also designed to be useful in small-group discussions. Students learn best when they take an active part in learning and when they can share insights and ideas with each other.

  - Suggestions for Personal Research: After each reading selection, there are suggestions for students to conduct research in a variety of modes and settings, including the library, the Internet, television shows or movies, and their own field surveys. These questions are designed to help give students practice at following up on arguments with their own research and verifying the accuracy of information presented. They also may suggest research on specific issues and events related to themes raised in the various articles.

  - Multicultural Issues: Because many of these readings deal directly with the popular culture of the United States, these questions give students from other

countries a chance to consider how these arguments apply to their own countries and backgrounds or to their new country, as well as encouraging students who grew up in the United States to look at issues from other perspectives, including those of other Americans of different backgrounds and ethnicities. Becoming competent in information and the media of the United States will be much easier if there are assignments generated with foreign students in mind.

- ■ Vocabulary Terms: For students, a key factor in learning how to generate quality writing is expanding their vocabularies. The more challenging vocabulary terms from each article are highlighted in the lists that follow the questions. Also included in the vocabulary portion of the apparatus are occasional terms that we define for the students, titled "Terms for Clarification." These terms are often "insider" terms from certain media and disciplines, academic terms, foreign terms, and major historical figures.

- ■ Interconnected Readings: In some chapters, there are paired readings designed to engage students in critical thought and spark class debate. These paired readings take different stands on the issues presented.

Navigating America was created to serve a research class's needs in one textbook. Its unifying focus on information competency will help students make intelligent decisions not only about what to quote, paraphrase, or summarize in a research paper, but also about how to avoid plagiarism and what ideas and evidence to trust in the world at large. *Navigating America* engages students. Every chapter and reading will get them closer to one overall objective: the ability to distinguish the different levels of reliability and relevance of the competing sources of information they consume. Students will study cultural and technological phenomena they find interesting, such as television and the Net, but in doing so, they'll learn to understand, interpret, and evaluate our information-driven world.

Students do not remain within the ivory tower their whole lives, and the ultimate test of a good text and a great course is what they carry with them when they leave the confines of the classroom. This book helps show them the research and documentation skills they need for the academic realm, but it also shows them the "real-life" relevance of information they find using traditional academic methods and how to master skills needed in the world outside of academia. Our younger students have inherited a very different world from the one most of their professors came of age in, and there are few tools out there to help them figure out how to interpret the data being hurled at them. *Navigating America* helps show them how to get to the truth behind all the information they encounter every day, no matter what the source is. At the same time, it is entertaining and provocative.

SUPPLEMENTS

For the Student

Online Learning Center: Powered by Catalyst 2.0, the Premier Online Tool for Writing and Research, the OLC offers new interactive writing tutors for different rhetorical patterns; tutorials on avoiding plagiarism and evaluating

sources; more than 4,500 grammar exercises with personalized feedback for each response; Bibliomaker software for MLA, APA, Chicago, and CSE styles of documentation; and much more. Delivered in a state-of-the-art course management system featuring online peer-review utilities, a grade book, and communications tools, Catalyst 2.0 is available free with the *Navigating America* OLC. The OLC also includes additional material on plagiarism and documentation.

Navigating America **Student Website:** This website offers students additional study tips and exercises with keys on MLA and APA format and style, punctuation, and grammar, including exercises tailored to the needs of ESL and ESOL students.

For the Instructor:

Online Learning Center: The password-protected instructor version of the *Navigating America* Online Learning Center includes access to all student materials, as well as an instructor's manual and access to the instructor version of Catalyst 2.0.

Instructor's Manual: The electronic instructor's manual, available for download from the password-protected instructor OLC, guides instructors through *Navigating America* via teaching tips; sample syllabi demonstrating several ways the text can be used in both quarter and semester systems; and additional learning materials, such as exercises on MLA and APA format and style, punctuation, and grammar, including exercises tailored to the needs of ESL and ESOL students. (Exercises in the instructor's manual differ from the exercises with keys that students have online access to, so they can be assigned as homework or used as classroom exercises.)

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