

Assignment: Contributing to Wikipedia

ITI 220, Spring 2009

Overview:

1. Become a Wikipedia editor and contribute by creating a new topic or modifying an existing article. Your edit does not need to be extensive, but it must be substantive and non-trivial.
2. In the eCompanion dropbox, submit a report on your editing experience and any responses to your posting(s) for the following 7 days.
3. For **extra class credit of up to 3 points**: Reflect according to the guidelines below on how successful Wikipedia editorial policies are at ensuring the reliability of Wikipedia articles (step 3 below).

Due Dates:

Create a username and select a topic: Tue, March 24.

Complete your Wikipedia edit: Thursday, March 26.

Final report submitted: Thursday, April 2.

Picking a topic: The best way to do this is to work on a topic that you know something about. If you have a hobby or special interest, look into that. Other possibilities include writing about your hometown, high school, or about Rutgers. For example, you could write an article about one of your professors, an athlete, or a sports team. You can use other tools (e.g., library search) to research your topic.

Some Wikipedia webpages that will help you get started:

Overview. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About>

How to contribute to Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Contributing_to_Wikipedia

Wikipedia FAQs. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:FAQ>,

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:FAQ/Editing>

Requested articles: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Requested_articles

Stub categories: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Stub_categories

Clean-up (e.g., grammar) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Cleanup>

Instructions for report:

1. Include the text of any and all postings you make to Wikipedia, along with any responses you get, whether from the system or from other people, for the week following your edit. You may do this by cutting and pasting.
2. Provide a step-by-step description of your actions on the Wikipedia site from signing up to finishing your edit. What new information you had to learn in order to make your edit? What were the hardest parts to figure out?
3. **[EXTRA CREDIT]** Reflect (2-3 pages) on your editing experience.

- a. In what ways was it easy or hard to contribute to Wikipedia?
- b. In what ways do Wikipedia policies contribute to or create problems for the reliability and quality of Wikipedia?
- c. How do the strengths and limitations of Wikipedia compare to those of a standard encyclopedia?
- d. Are you likely to edit additional Wikipedia entries in the future? Why, or why not?