Delta State University  
SOC 421/521 COD 521 Sustainable Development  
Fall Semester 2008

Collaborative Learning Group Assignment  
Letters to the Editor

Twice during the semester, a news article will be distributed which provides some details on an event in Bolivar County. Each group must respond to this by creating a set of letters to the editor of a local newspaper, stating your group’s perspective on the event. Each group member will write one letter in response to each article, and then comment on one letter from each of the other groups. As a whole, the group will prepare a set of Talking Points that will guide each of the letters and comments.

Prior to writing the letters the group should work together to craft a set of “Talking Points” upon which the letters will be based. Your Talking Points should be a list of things your group believes, and points you think it is important to stress in the public arena, that represent your position on the issue. You should have at least five, but no more than ten, Talking Points for your group. You will submit the Talking Points after you submit the drafts to your letters.

The letters should be addressed to the Editor and should be written in a persuasive fashion. They should be one to two pages long. You can include resources in the community to help you prepare these letters: for example, if you want to speak to people who might have your same perspective and ask them how they would view an event such as the one in the article, you can do that and then quote the subjects in your letters.

Submit the Letters and Talking Points on Blackboard according to the schedule.

Once all of the Letters to the Editor have been posted, you should read all of the letters and then prepare a rebuttal to one letter from each of the other CLGs. Your rebuttal should highlight the points made in the letter, and provide a counterpoint based on the position of your own group. Your rebuttal should identify the letter you are responding to, for example by stating in the first sentence that the letter replies to the letter by Ms. X. Your rebuttal also should be prepared in a professional manner; that is, you are rebutting the ideas in the letter, not the person who wrote the letter. Each individual should prepare three rebuttals, one that rebuts the position in one letter from each of the other CLGs. You should post your rebuttals (listed as “Comments on the Letters”) on the website by Oct. 10 for the first letter and Dec. 3 for the second letter.
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Dates to Remember:

*Letter to the Editor 1:*

Sep. 5, News Article 1 posted
Sep. 12, Draft of Letter 1 due (one per student)
Sep. 19, Talking Points 1 due (one per group)
Sep. 26, Final version of Letter 1 due (one per student)
Oct. 10, Comments on Letter 1 due (three per student)

*Letter to the Editor 2:*

Oct. 24, News Article 2 posted
Oct. 31, Draft of Letter 2 due (one per student)
Nov. 7, Talking Points 2 due (one per group)
Nov. 14, Final version of Letter 2 due (one per student)
Dec. 3, Comments on Letter 2 due (three per student)