

# Multimedia Essay #1

CODE 120: Research Team 1



## Telling a Systems Story, Audience=Classmates

**Rough Draft:** Week 5, bring a paper copy to class to workshop

**Due Date:** Week 6, by end of day

**Submission Information:** Submit as a page on your ePortfolio and include in menu for class

**Length:** 1,000-1,500 words

## Assignment Summary

According to Donella Meadows, a system is “an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something” (Qtd. in Stoh 16). What that system achieves may be good, bad, or a mix. In *Systems Thinking for Social Change*, David Peter Stroh defines systems thinking as “the ability to understand these interconnections in such a way as to achieve a desired purpose. One of the benefits of systems thinking is that it helps people understand the purpose the system is accomplishing,” (16-17) so they can make meaningful, informed changes..

For your first multimedia essay, you will tell a systems story about a system related to our topic you have experienced first hand. Choose a system you or people in your surrounding community are a part of. Stroh describes telling a systems story as revealing the parts of an iceberg that are not viewable from the ocean’s surface (**see Ch. 3 in Stroh**). Seeing what is underneath can be hard if you are part of the iceberg. In your story, tell us how the system has played a role in your own life and your experience within that community, then create some distance to reveal the parts of the iceberg that are under the water.

## Objective

To practice applying the skills of systems thinking using your own knowledge and experience as a baseline and to practice the skills of multimedia writing.

## Components of Your Story

In addition to telling the story from your own perspective, you will need to reveal the greater complexity of the system using terms and concepts from *Systems Thinking for Social Change*.

1. **Events:** explain how a particular event or problem took shape in relationship to the system; maybe there was a flood, or a significant increase in underage drinking, for example
2. **Trends/Patterns:** what can you identify that might have preceded the events, have occurred continually, or have shaped the event?
3. **System Structure:** explain what variables may have shaped the event, thinking particularly about interrelationships. These might include pressures, policies, power dynamics, and perceptions. Consider the following factors:
  - a. Define variables, or forces of pressure at play in the system (see nouns on p. 40)
  - b. Explain verbs, or causal relationships that increase or decrease in other variables?

- c. Detail time delays that influence how we understand the system's variables and causal linkages?

## What is a Multimedia Essay?

A multimedia essay, which you are also using in CODE 121, integrates text, image, video, and audio, to tell a complex story. The pieces interweave to inform one another. Choose the location for media in the essay carefully, talk about them in the text, and **caption them**. Media that might help you better explain your analysis of the system might include:

- Images, recordings, or videos that relate to the topic
- Illustrations you've developed to help understand the system
- Links to websites that help elaborate on the system in a local context

## Finding Open Source Images and Citing Them

If you search for images online, make sure you have the license to share them. The “tools” feature in Google Images allows you to narrow your search to images with a Creative Commons license. As an SIUE student, you have access to Adobe Stock; create an account through Creative Cloud using your Microsoft login. Cite media with required permissions in the caption.

## Grading Rubric

Criteria	A Proficient Essay will...	A Developing Essay Will...	An Essay Still in Need of Work Will...
<b>Length/ Formatting</b>	Include at least five media components; 1,000 to 1,500 words in length	Include at least five media components; 1,000 to 1,500 words in length	Not include enough media components or be shorter than 1,000 words
<b>Organization</b>	Use paragraphs and structure ideas within them for impact	Use paragraphs but structure, transitions, or ordering need work	Not have paragraphs
<b>Grammar/ Style</b>	Be relatively free of grammatical errors; experiment with style	Have several grammatical errors, or basic style issues	Have significant grammatical errors and stylistic issues
<b>Multimedia Inclusion</b>	Use media and text to inform one another; order adds to meaning	Include media but could do more to integrate with text	Not have enough media or they do not relate well to the text
<b>Storytelling</b>	Tell a compelling story about personal ties to system	Tells a story but could reflect more on ties to system	Tells brief outline of story without reflecting on ties to system
<b>System Analysis</b>	Uses terminology and concepts from Stroh to provide a nuanced story about system's interconnections	Uses some terminology and concepts from Stroh to explain system's interconnections	Does not use terminology from Stroh or analyze interconnections in the system