

Any UMKC faculty member, department, school, or college may submit a Reading Packet to the RooWriter and are urged to do so to ensure that we offer students a choice of diverse topics. Ideally, students will find a Reading Packet of interest to them and relevant to their studies.

A RooWriter Reading Packet

- will actually be a web page on the RooWriter web site with a list of URLs and instructions for download.
 - must be submitted online (see below) and will be approved by the RooWriter Coordinator.
 - may be posted to the RooWriter web site at any time during the calendar year.
 - will not remain posted on the RooWriter web site for longer than approximately one calendar year. (After a Reading Packet has been taken down, it may be updated (URLs and prompts) and resubmitted after 6 months.)
 - will only be taken down from the RooWriter web site on one of two dates, February 15 or September 15.
 - may not be posted immediately upon being approved depending on the number and categories of currently posted Reading Packets.
 - will not be posted until at least two RooWriter Evaluators are certified to evaluate essays based on it.
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Submitting a RooWriter Reading Packet online

You may submit a proposed Reading Packet online as follows: Log in to <https://net3.umkc.edu/intapps/RooWriter> and from the left-hand menu, click on “Reading Packet Upload.”

The information you are asked to provide is listed below, as well as our recommendations, and constraints to observe.

The RooWriter Coordinator is available to consult during any stage of the Reading Packet creation. The RooWriter Coordinator may edit the title, essay prompts, or “works cited” page as needed for clarity.

Source Ideas

Academic journals; credible blogs, magazines, and newspapers; scholarly or professional newsletters; infographics . . .

Copyright Notes

Because of copyright constraints, we are unable to accept submissions of print documents as readings. Reading Packets must be compiled from materials freely available on the web, or in UMKC’s licensed databases <http://laurel.iso.missouri.edu/search~s3/j> , available through the UMKC libraries. View the library guide for creating RooWriter Reading Packets at <http://libguides.library.umkc.edu/roowriter> .

What to provide for a RooWriter Reading Packet

Submit this information through the RooWriter “**Reading Packet Upload**” web page (see above).

1. Reading Packet

- A short, descriptive title for your Reading Packet.
- A list of 5-7 durable URLs linking to the material you have selected.
- Select 5-7 articles or documents, a total of 25-35 pages (or page equivalents). If a section of a long source is comprehensible on its own, it can be assigned.
- Focus on a pertinent concept, problem, or issue that allows for multiple essay prompts and requires complex student responses.
- Include scholarly and popular sources; avoid commercial domains unless they provide valid primary sources.
- Seek material at a content and reading level appropriate for a sophomore in any discipline (less than 90 credit hours earned), and for any trained RooWriter Evaluator.
- For help finding and creating durable URLs, view the RooWriter library guide at <http://libguides.library.umkc.edu/roowriter> .
- Provide downloading/printing instructions for each article or document.

2. List of Essay Prompts

- Include 5-10 short essay prompts for the Reading Packet (see the last page for prompt suggestions).
- Students will be assigned randomly 1 of the essay prompts when they start writing essays and are required to use at least 3 of the Reading Packet texts in their essays, so prompts should not address single readings.
- Prompts should be varied enough so that the same essay cannot be used to answer more than one prompt.

3. Citation Information

- Specify one citation format (style) for your Reading Packet, either MLA or APA.
- Include a “works cited” list of all the articles in your Reading Packet exactly as students should write them. This information will only be seen by RooWriter Evaluators when they assess essays based on your Reading Packet.

4. Contact Person for your Reading Packet

Essay Prompt Suggestions

- Ask students to evaluate the arguments about a topic and how those arguments are made instead of taking a pro/con stance or reducing an issue to a binary (good/bad, right/wrong, etc.).
 - Example: “Compare the arguments of guns-rights activists to the arguments of gun-control advocates. How does each group establish its credibility, use evidence, and evoke emotion in readers or observers? Which group is more persuasive?”
 - Use verbs that encourage students to do more than summarize, such as “analyze,” “ascertain,” “contrast,” “determine,” “differentiate,” “distinguish,” “examine,” “explain,” “explore,” “evaluate,” “formulate,” “integrate,” “interpret,” and “synthesize.”
 - Pose open-ended questions.
 - Example: “Drawing on the diverse viewpoints provided by the Reading Packet, how should the United States respond to the conflict in Syria?”
 - Phrase the prompt so that it requires complex responses.
 - Example: “How do assumptions about homelessness affect public perceptions and public response to people without homes in Kansas City?”
 - Construct prompts that ask students to consider different aspects of an issue.
 - Example: “What are the costs, benefits, and unforeseen consequences of digital piracy?”
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Reading Packets about Local Social or Community Issues

Many UMKC students want to solve social and community problems. We propose tapping into their interest and enthusiasm as an example of “crowdsourcing,” motivated by the following selected statements:

UMKC Mission Statement:

“. . . collaborate in urban issues . . .”

UMKC Vision Statement:

“UMKC . . . characterized by . . . active engagement with its city and region.”

Strategic Plan, Goal 3, Advance Urban Engagement:

“Integrate students . . . into the Kansas City community.”

Implementation Plan, Goal 3, Long Term Strategies:

“Incorporate urban engagement into the General Education Curriculum.”

Some Reading Packets may address current social, political, or cultural problems or challenges of the local community and of an urban university like UMKC. (This is language from the new General Education model implemented in Fall 2013.) If a student chooses any one of these Reading Packets, his or her RooWriter essay could contribute ideas about solving those problems or responding to those challenges.

The RooWriter website will ask students who choose a social or community Reading Packet to respond to the following statement before they begin writing their essays:

I authorize my RooWriter essay on this Reading Packet to be forwarded to [an appropriate entity, such as the UMKC Office of Community and Public Affairs, the author of the Reading Packet, etc.] as a contribution toward the challenges posed in the Reading Packet materials. I understand that if my ideas are used I will be informed, and my name and RooWriter essay will be referenced. [Whether or not you make this authorization will have no effect on the evaluation of your essay.]
[Yes, I Agree] [No, I Decline]
