

Overview of Assignments

Blog Posts

- 1 description post
- 1 magazine short post
- 1 argument post
- 1 creative imitation post

In Short A Journal Project

By Individual (8-11 pages)

- 1 description paper (1-2 pages)
- 1 close reading primary text analysis paper (4-5 pages)
- 1 close reading secondary text analysis paper (3-4 pages)

- 1 project reflection paragraph
- 1 self-evaluation
- 1 group evaluation

By Group Issue (23-44 pages) but (4-7 pages)*

- 1 group authored introduction (3-5 pages)*
- 1 reference paper (1-2 pages)*
- 1 work cited page
- 1 annotated bibliography for further readings*
- 1 project reflection section
- 1 creative piece
- 5-6 primary text with description papers
- 2-3 primary text analysis paper
- 2-3 secondary text analysis paper

* The only new pieces. The other pieces should happen as a result of curating and revising what your members have already written.

Assignment Descriptions Below

Blog Posts

Each student will submit at least four blog posts. 1 description posts, 1 magazine short, 1 argument posts, and 1 creative imitation post. You will be divided into blog groups. You are responsible for posting the week that your group is assigned to blog. Please note that some weeks have more than one group posting. All blogs must be posted by 12pm the Sunday before the week your group is scheduled to blog. No exceptions. If you have weekly religious obligations or work or some other commitment that keeps you from posting on the weekend, you are responsible for getting your post in ahead of time. Blog posts may reference each other. **All blog posts must be a minimum of 150 words and a maximum of 300 words. Your posts should be clear and grammatically sound.**

You must do the 5 expected posts, but you are invited to post as often as you like. Especially for people who are reluctant to speak in class, posting well-thought out blog posts is a good way to boost your participation grade.

Description Posts

You have to do at least one description post, but you will end up using the skills in this post throughout the class. I am looking for your ability to clearly describe one of the assigned texts for that week. A description is like a summary, but it is slightly more in depth. In a summary it might be enough to describe a super bowl commercial as “This is a Budweiser commercial that involves a bunch of animals running from a storm and then taking shelter in a boat stocked with plenty of ice-cold Budweisers.” This summary is pretty good, but in a description I want you to pay attention to what the commercial’s central claim is; what’s its message and what’s its premise? And what are the main ways it goes about conveying that message. A good description post will at least 1) identify the type of text (i.e. scholarly article, news clip, etc), 2) provide a general content or plot summary like the one I provide with the Budweiser example, 3) articulate the piece’s central claim and/or main goal, and 4) explain the primary (2-3) ways in which the author goes about achieving that goal.

A great description post will also relay all this information in a way that sets us up for a particular conversation. Remember ultimately you will want to be able to use this description writing in the service of building an argument. The best description post will do the above, but it will be careful to include details that also set us up for the angle the author will want us to consider. Because there will be a fair amount of description shorts in the final project, you should aim to practice this skill. Pick a theme, topic, idea that interests you in this text (what you would want to write about in a paper). You should title your post as such, and then you should give the description in such a way that makes us ready to pay attention to that theme or idea. You don’t need and shouldn’t have a stated argument, but I should be able to see in the way you describe the text how it might lend itself to a conversation on your theme.

Argumentative Posts

In this post you should posit an original claim based on your interpretation about one of the texts we have read. Your argument should be based in the text, meaning it should be argument that can be supported by citing and discussing specific aspects of the text (not just the content but also the form). In class we will have talked about different argument strategies (about logos, ethos, pathos, premise, and logical fallacies). Your argument should appeal to logos. You should understand the premise on which you base your argument. That premise should be logical and true. You should avoid logical fallacies. You can refer to the list of fallacies we went over in class. It is not necessary for you to actually walk us through the details of the argument. Meaning you might not actually quote any of the text in

this post. You should however articulate the argument clearly, and you should provide 1-3 sentences explaining how you would go about taking your readers through that argument.

Creative Imitation Post

There is no better way to explore how a text works or how an argument is structured than to try to imitate it. In this post, you should take some text (any medium you wish) and imitate its formal elements. You are not copying the contents. You are imitating the form.

For example if you are imitating a poem that opens with a metaphor, then you should open with a metaphor. If that poem unfolds that metaphor over four five syllable lines, then you should try to unfold your metaphor over four five syllable lines. The poem you're copying may be about dying young in its content, but you could be writing about brief friendships or small everyday victories. The content is different, but the form is similar. **HOWEVER** form and content work together. There's a reason why short lines helped that author convey some aspect of what it means to die young. You need to understand what is this particular formal element doing, so when you imitate it, you should be aware of the effect that that decision happens. Because you are not writing the same poem (or making the same video, etc) you may not really be able to use all the formal elements or you may need to add something. You may have to break form in order to express something distinct to your content.

I hope this post is fun, but regardless of whether you find it fun, I expect you take it seriously. If you line breaks for a poem or indentations that you can't make happen in word press, then you should do it in a word document, save it as a pdf, and upload that pdf as a media document. Because of time, I don't expect for you to make a whole music video or a whole short one act (unless you want to or are already working on it), but you might shoot 10-20 seconds of an imitation video.

In Short | Journal Project

At the end of the course, your writing cluster will produce an issue of our class journal “In Short” There will be four to five students per group. Each student will be responsible for 4 single authored entries. The group will produce at least 3 group authored pieces. The single authored papers will be due throughout the semester so that you may have ample time to receive feedback from me, the class, and most importantly your group. **IMPORTANT:** You are expected to revise the single–authored texts for the issue. Everyone in your group will be graded on the final project, so just as you are counting on your group members to submit the best work possible, they are also counting on you to submit the best work possible.

Each student is responsible for submitting (throughout semester and as part of whole assignment):

1 description paper (1-2 pages)

1 close reading **primary text** analysis paper (3-4 pages)

1 close reading **secondary text** analysis paper (4 pages) with work cited (at least three entries).

A content reflection paragraph to be included in the issue (1 paragraph).

A project self-evaluation paper to be submitted to professor. (1-2 pages)

The Group Evaluation Worksheet

Each issue must have:

A group-authored introduction (3-5 pages)

A work cited page that provides complete and accurately formatted citations for every source consulted in any part of the issue.

An Annotated Bibliography for Further readings. (Must have at least 8 entries)

3-6 primary texts (each accompanied with a description paper)

2-3 cb primary text analysis papers

2-3 cb secondary text analysis paper

1- reference paper (1-2 pages)

An author reflection section (1 paragraph from each author)

A mid-project conference with the Editor in Chief (Me)

A group presentation of your issue.

Description Paper (1-2 pages)

This paper is an extension of the description post assignment. You may elaborate upon your post (the ideal) or write on a different text. Either way the basic rules of a good description for the post apply to this paper except, here you should elaborate more. I expect your description to be thorough, clear, and focused towards the theme of your issue. This last part is especially important. I should be able to see how in the way your description is drafted it speaks to the themes and arguments presented in the thesis. It will not be something you explicitly state, but it will be something the description sets us up to see especially when the whole issue is put together.

Grading Rubrics

Thoroughness

Do I know what genre this text is? Do I have a sense of it's contents and main formal elements? Do I understand what this text's central aim is? Do I have a sense of the logic, pathos, and ethical appeals its making?

Angle

Has this description been relayed in a way that situates the text well within the theme of the group's theme or exploratory question? Does the description speak to (challenge, enhance, compliment, etc.) the other pieces in the issue?

Language

Do you use clear, complete, and active sentences? Do you adhere to rules of capitalization and correct punctuation? Is your spelling accurate and consistent?

Close Reading-Based Analysis Paper

One of the goals for this class is for students create an original close reading based argument paper. A close reading based analytical paper is a formal argument paper in which the argument is derived from a sustained attention to the details to the form and content of a text. Importantly this paper is not a research paper. It is not a comparative paper, and it is not a summary. In this paper you should pay close attention to the literary form of a small part of a particular text, and you should posit a claim about how you think we ought to read the way that small part of the text is working and ultimately how it affects (challenges, deepens, illuminates, etc.) how we should read the whole text.

In this paper you should use one or both of the close reading strategies we discussed in class. Either way the key to this paper (as with all the assignments) is scope. If you are using the *archeological dig* method, you should only be digging at a small and focused part of the text. Probably not more than 2 pages, and it could easily be as small as the first 30 seconds of a music video. If you are using the *follow the trail* method, you need to be very precise about what it is you are following. You are not following all instances of childhood or regret in *Frankenstein*. That's way too big. You can't even in the amount of space you have follow all references to mountains (there are a fair amount of mountains in the novel). But perhaps you could do a more localized trail following of all the instances of losing footing or potentially falling in the mid-section of where Frankenstein is wondering about the mountains alone when he meets the monster.

Remember in both the case of *archeological dig* (where you analyze the way multiple devices are working together in a small section) and *follow the trail* (where you follow one device or one detail across a longer section), you should in prewriting and drafting follow the method, making observations and connections in the text, and then posit an original interpretation—a claim based on how you see these textual elements working. The paper you turn in though should not wait until the end to posit this claim. You should start with the claim; it will be your thesis. You should give us sense of how you will illustrate this claim for the reader, and then over several body paragraphs with clear topic sentences that introduce each point, you should move through the text, showing the evidence, and explaining how you want your reader to interpret that evidence so that they may understand your central claim. For more information on the close reading strategies, please refer to the following handout: [Close-Reading-Strategy-Clean](#)

This paper should be 4-5 pages. It should focus on a specific aspect of a text on the syllabus. It should have a clear, cogent, and arguable thesis. It should have relevant subsidiary claims which are supported by close reading of the literature (its, language, devices, accompanying visuals, layout, etc.) It should be double spaced, 1-inch margins and 12 point Times New Roman font.

Primary Text Analysis Grading Rubrics

Argument/Perspective

Does your paper have a clearly stated central claim aka thesis? Is the scope of your paper appropriately focused? Does the material you relay in your paper relate to your stated central claim? Is the logic undergirding your argument/perspective clear, consistent, and sound?

Deal Breaker: If you do not have a clearly stated central aim (thesis where relevant), it will affect your grade AT LEAST by a letter.

Engaging Text

Do you provide relevant examples? Do you describe your examples and your particular points about each example in a manner that relays the fullness of your thinking and convincingly proves your point or illustrates your paper's overall thesis? Do you provide relevant context and citations for your quotations and your examples? Is your reading of the primary and/or secondary text sound? (ie. Do you clearly relay the central aims of the author you're engaging? And does the logic undergirding the way you engage that reading reflect and respect what the author is actually doing?)

Deal Breaker: If you do not have proper citations, it will affect your grade AT LEAST by a letter.

Also in argument based paper, please know: Just having an example and introducing it (while important) is not enough. If you do not also follow up your example with a detailed explanation of how you want me to interpret this example, you cannot get an A in this section.

Structure

Are your introduction and conclusion focused and doing more than warming up and cooling down. Do you have clear transitions that introduce your points and help the reader relay the individual point back to the overall thesis? Do you present your points clearly and in a strong, productive order?

Language

Do you use clear, complete, and active sentences? Do you adhere to rules of capitalization and correct punctuation? Is your spelling accurate and consistent?

Deal Breaker: Any language issue that puts you at risk of plagiarizing (i.e. incorrect use of quotation marks, not properly formatting titles of texts, misspelling author names, not including citations, etc.) will result affect your grade AT LEAST by one letter.

Deal Breaker: If I give you or the class a language comment more than twice, but you do not show a good faith effort to correct this issue in subsequent drafts and assignments, it will affect your grade by AT LEAST one letter.

Close reading secondary text analysis paper

A writing 2 course should introduce you to research and scholarly papers. In this class you will not be writing a full on research paper, but this next assignment (and then how you revisit it in the final project) should introduce students to researching scholarly opinion and engaging scholarship in their own writings.

In the first paper you examined a primary text (a piece of literature, a news article, a video, etc.). In this paper you will examine a secondary text. A secondary text is a piece of writing which discusses or examines a primary text. The kind of writing that scholars typically do produces secondary sources. Scholars are interested in talking about primary text and synthesizing data and patterns they see in primary texts. A secondary text though is still a piece of writing. It still has a central aim. It has a beginning, middle, and end, and it employs different devices to accomplish its central aim. Usually in a secondary text the central aim is more explicit in the form of an argument or thesis statement, and subsidiary points are usually clearly introduced. Scholarly essays though can get pretty nuanced and dense. They have a lot of information and the language is very idiosyncratic so that it might be hard to make sure you're clear about the premise the author is working with in making their argument. In this paper you will apply the close reading attention to analyzing and responding to a secondary and scholarly text.

It will be extremely important in this paper for you to utilize your descriptive summary skill. You must first identify what this scholarly essay is trying to do and how it does it. What is its central argument? What are its main subsidiary claims? What is the premise underneath the article? Where is the strongest evidence for the argument? Then you should continue to think about the details. Are there loose ends in this argument? Are there aspects that contradict each other? Or are there aspects that are even more true when discussed at length than the paper acknowledges? Is there an implication to this argument that is not being addressed? A good place to start when making an argument is with whether or not you are compelled by the argument or not or whether you are compelled by parts and not others. HOWEVER that is only a starting place. This is not an evaluative paper. A thesis that states "I agree" or "I disagree" will not fly. A thesis statement that says "I agree with this but not that" is trying to do more work, but it is also not strong enough. You need to present an argument that is about how the piece is working or what's at stake in the argument.

For example maybe you disagree with an argument about men struggling with emotional expression as a reason for work place violence. **A bad thesis** would say: I disagree with this argument about men being more violent because of their emotions. **A great thesis** would say: This article depends on the assumptions that women do not struggle with expressions of emotions in the work place, and as such it is quick to make the issue solely about gender difference when if we look at the case studies provided it seems that class and race may also be contributing factors. This thesis is a great thesis because 1) it identifies the underlying premise of the argument 2) it engages that premise and the way it is executed and 3) it indicates specific places in the text that this argument will focus on (i.e. the way race and class show up in the case examples).

This paper should have a clear, cogent, and focus thesis. It should be 4 pages double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point Times New Romans font. You should include page numbers in the footer and your full name in the header. This paper should include a proper citation of the scholarly article you address.

Secondary Source Paper Grading Rubrics

Argument/Perspective

Does your paper have a clearly stated central claim aka thesis? Is the scope of your paper appropriately focused? Does the material you relay in your paper relate to your stated central claim? Is the logic undergirding your argument/perspective clear, consistent, and sound?

Deal Breaker: If you do not have a clearly stated central aim (thesis where relevant), it will affect your grade AT LEAST by a letter.

Engaging Scholarly Text

Do you identify the scholar's main argument and relevant subsidiary claims? Do you identify the premise and the primary ways in which the scholar attempts to illustrate their argument? When you go to engage that argument are you clear and focused about what part of the scholarly paper you're responding to? Do you provide relevant passages and do you interpret those passages in a way that while showing your point is also faithful to the integrity of what the scholar was originally trying to say? Are your quotes and references properly cited?

Deal Breaker: If you do not have proper citations, it will affect your grade AT LEAST by a letter.

Also in argument based paper, please know: Just having an example and introducing it (while important) is not enough. If you do not also follow up your example with a detailed explanation of how you want me to interpret this example, you cannot get an A in this section.

Structure

Are your introduction and conclusion focused and doing more than warming up and cooling down. Do you have clear transitions that introduce your points and help the reader relay the individual point back to the overall thesis? Do you present your points clearly and in a strong, productive order?

Language

Do you use clear, complete, and active sentences? Do you adhere to rules of capitalization and correct punctuation? Is your spelling accurate and consistent?

Deal Breaker: Any language issue that puts you at risk of plagiarizing (i.e. incorrect use of quotation marks, not properly formatting titles of texts, misspelling author names, not including citations, etc.) will result affect your grade AT LEAST by one letter.

Deal Breaker: If I give you or the class a language comment more than twice, but you do not show a good faith effort to correct this issue in subsequent drafts and assignments, it will affect your grade by AT LEAST one letter.

Group Authored Introduction

The introduction needs to bring all the parts of the issue together. It should present your theme, why your group thinks that theme (or topic or question) is important or put differently what considering that theme might help us to understand. In the introduction your group should posit a central claim. It doesn't have to be a claim that sums up everything that is to be said about that theme, but based on the way your issue has come together, you should posit some claim, some argument, or angle about how we are to read these pieces. It may take you 1-2 pages to do all this part. The second half of the introduction needs to walk us through the different parts of the issue. This part is kind of like writing a descriptive paper except the issue is the object. You want to walk me through what's in the issue in a way that relates it back to the argument you just made. You are like a guide about to walk me through all of your work; this is your chance to make sure I understand how you want me to view these pieces. If you were to present your work, you should be able to read the introduction all by itself. This paper should be 3-4 pages. It should be double spaced, one inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font. It should include any relevant citations.

Group Authored Introduction Grading Rubrics

Argument

Do you identify your theme, topic, or question of inquiry? Do you contextualize how you came to this theme and what you see as at stake in exploring this theme in this time and moment? Do you posit an argument based on how the rest of the issue explores this theme? Do you clearly articulate the logic of this argument? Do you explain the stakes of the argument?

Breakdown

Do you clearly walk me through the parts of the issue? Do you relay those parts back to the claim your introduction has just made?

Language

Do you use clear, complete, and active sentences? Do you adhere to rules of capitalization and correct punctuation? Is your spelling accurate and consistent?

Reference Paper

As part of the goal to introduce you to research and as part of the effort to strengthen your argumentative claims with factual evidence, each issue must include a reference paper. A reference paper is almost like a descriptive paper in that you do not need to present an explicit argument. Your job in this paper is to provide factual information about your topic. This is still creative in that for many of you figuring out what kind of factual information is a creative decision. For example if your theme is dandelions: you might do a reference paper on the treatment of dandelions in suburban lawns. Or you might do a paper on the history of coming to regard dandelions as weeds. Or you might do a literary history of the dandelions in romantic poetry. You can see how each of these papers will be based on facts, but each one sets your issue up to looking at dandelions from a different angle. Your theme might be dandelion and perhaps you have to go broad and think about the history of weeds in 20th century America. Such an angle is itself an argument when put in the issue because it emphasizes the dandelion as a weed. This paper is like the description paper in that even though you don't have a thesis the way you tell the story should help you with the angle of your piece. It is different from a description paper in that you are not drawing your information from describing one text. Indeed you must consult 2-4 references for this section. You will have to find the information and then retell it in a way that helps your theme.

This paper should be 1-2 pages, double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font. It should include all relevant citations.

Reference Paper Grading Rubrics

Relevance

Does your history relate to your theme? Does it relate to and support the argument your introduction presents?

Clarity

Is the focus of your history narrow enough in scope? Is the information you present clear? Does it follow logically and seem connected? Is it clear where the various information comes from (meaning is it properly cited)?

Language

Do you use clear, complete, and active sentences? Do you adhere to rules of capitalization and correct punctuation? Is your spelling accurate and consistent?

Content Reflection Paragraph

Working on a project and working in a group is a strange beast. It changes shapes and takes turns that you did not originally expect. There is also sometime a sense that you might have had to compromise or didn't get to say something you wanted to say. The purpose of this portion of the issue is for each group member to have a time to reflect on the issue as a whole. You might add an additional point you'd been dying to make or make reference to another source. You might choose to echo for the fifth time a very salient point. You might decide to just marinate on a word in one of your peer's essay.

This is a loose assignment. It IS NOT an evaluation of the group, yourself, or the issue. There should be no evaluative comments (i.e. such and so did a good job, or I don't think this part was as good). This is an additional comments and reflection section. You will have a chance to evaluate elsewhere.

You will be evaluated on whether or not you did this assignment, whether or not you reflect rather than evaluate, and the cleanness of your language.

Self-evaluation paper (1-2 pages)

I will provide you a specific format towards the end of the semester.

The Group Evaluation Worksheet

I will provide you with a specific short answer worksheet to complete.

A Work Cited Page

All works cited (quoted or referenced) at any point in the image must be listed in a works cited section.

An Annotated Bibliography for Further Readings

You must include an annotated bibliography with at least 8 entries. Instructions for how to do an annotated bibliography will be discussed in class. Links to further resources will be provided on the site.

3-6 primary texts (each accompanied with a description paper)

You should upload actual primary texts that we can look at and engage (i.e. videos, pdfs of print ads, photography, poems, essays, etc.) Each should be accompanied by a description paper. You may and should draw from the description papers which your group members have done previously