

CORE 131: WRITING IN THE DIGITAL AGE SPRING 2018, DR. PATRICIA TAYLOR

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1.1 INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: patricia.taylor@briarcliff.edu
 Office Phone: 712-279-5516
 Office: Heelan Hall 303
 Office Hours: MWF 2:00-3:00, TTh 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

1.2 COURSE DESCRIPTION

From the catalog: a multimodal composition experience in which students learn to evaluate information and incorporate it ethically as they create, develop, and refine their writing, speech, and design skills in a variety of modes of expression.

In more basic language: this course is a writing workshop designed to introduce you to the process of academic writing and communication. You will learn how to conduct your own academic inquiry and research. Ideally, this will be a process in which you learn to read, research, and write to fulfill your own intellectual curiosity and to contribute to ongoing conversations about a topic. We will read carefully, think deeply and critically about the issues, and develop our thinking through writing and revision. Please expect to be reading and writing extensively in preparation for each class. You will receive feedback on your work both in person and in writing.

Prerequisites: CORE 130 or ACT English Score of 20 or higher. If you have not completed these Pre-requisites, please see me immediately.

1.3 REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Harris, Joseph. *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts*. Second Edition, Utah State UP, 2017. ISBN: 9781607326861.

Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy*. Spiegel & Grau, 2014. ISBN: 9780812984965



For every class, you should also bring the following with you:

- Any assigned readings
- Notebook and pencil or pen
- Your laptop
- This syllabus and assignment guide

1.4 COURSE OUTCOMES

The outcomes listed here are the goals we are working toward, and the course was created to best help you meet those ends. By the end of CORE 131, students should be able to:

Outcomes	Process	Assessment
Write and speak in a range of genres, using appropriate rhetorical conventions;	In class, we will discuss the expectations for different audiences, contexts, and rhetorical purposes.	Assignments in four different genres (comparison, white paper, research, and reflection)
Effectively communicate in multiple modes using digital technologies;	We will focus on producing writing and images in digital environments, but we will also use sounds, movements, and electronic technologies as part of the composition process.	Written essays, research website, electronic portfolio
Read, quote, cite, and analyze sources, balancing their own voices with secondary sources;	We will practice reading and analyzing multimodal texts for the author's project, claims, evidence, conventions, and rhetorical strategies. We will find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize sources to inform and situate claims.	Compare and Contrast Essay, White Paper, I-search website
Employ flexible strategies for generating and revising their writing projects.	Assignments will include an intensive, recursive revision process. We will revise drafts to include changes in ideas, structure, evidence, and style.	Outlines & Drafts, Conferences, Peer Review, Quality of Failure

1.5.1 GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Participation	25%
Preparedness, Professionalism, and Participation Evals	20%
Individual Tutorials, Outlines, and Drafts	50%
Exercises	30%
Project 1: Rhetorical Comparison	15%
Project 2: White Paper	20%
Project 3: I-Search Website	25%
Reflective Portfolio	10%
Quality of Failure (Final Exam Reflection)	5%

Note: failure to turn in any major project (Projects 1, 2, 3, portfolio, or the final exam) may result in automatic failure for the class, regardless of the numeric grade earned through the other assignments. This is because the course outcomes may not have been met if you have not completed all major course work. Please see additional course policies on late work.



1.5.2 GRADING RUBRIC: WHAT THOSE PESKY LETTERS MEAN

It is important to remember that simply fulfilling the *minimum* requirements of the course warrants an average grade (as in C), not an A. Coming to class every day and doing assignments is not something that earns “extra credit” or an automatic A; these are expected elements of the course. A higher grade will be based on the distinctive quality and development of your work, on your ability to guide a piece of writing through the various stages of revision, and on a willingness to explore new subjects, genres, and techniques. Below is a breakdown of how I view letter grades; as we move into the semester we will talk about these elements in more detail. With each major project, you will receive written comments as well as a visual break down in a rubric of which of these elements you did well, and which you need to improve.

Scale	Quality of Work
A 94- 100.00	An “A” project is superior: it has excellent ideas, logical and compelling organization, precise language, and polished prose. The project addresses the rhetorical situation (audience, purpose, context) in a sophisticated manner. It has a complex, convincing, and interesting argument expressed in a thesis statement, and topic sentences and transitions that guide the reader through the logical moves of the argument. The project has extensive, analytic use of any source text(s), demonstrating a clear understanding of the ethical use of sources. It builds on or responds to the ideas of others in thoughtful and/or innovative ways. Multi-modal elements are compelling, fully integrated with the argument, and well executed. The project has been thoroughly and significantly revised; it is also extensively proofread, with few or no grammar, spelling, punctuation, or citation mistakes.
A- 90 - 93.99	
B+ 87 - 89.99	The “B” project exceeds expectations with above-average, high-quality work. It predictably addresses the rhetorical situation. It has a clear thesis, with a well-developed and well-organized argument, clearly articulated in transitions and topic sentences. It shows active, ethical engagement with any source texts, and genuine intellectual work on the part of the author. Multimodal elements are well integrated and appropriate to the rhetorical situation. The project shows substantial improvement from previous drafts. Any grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes do not hinder the expression of meaning. The project may have a few structural flaws, or a few weak points, but overall is a strong piece of work.
B 84 - 86.99	
B- 80 - 83.99	

C+ 77 - 79.99	The “C” project meets minimum expectations with average or mediocre work. The work has some of the good points listed above, but also has serious flaws. The project attempts to address all the elements of the rhetorical situation, but the attempt is insufficient or inappropriate. The language is often imprecise; the argument isn’t fully developed or clear, or the thesis is too vague. The student does not critically engage the texts, only summarizing or “quote bombing.” The project may have large structural problems, but these problems do not hinder the audience’s understanding. Multimodal elements may not be well integrated into the project. A “C” project will have a few “bright” spots, or areas that might be useful in revising. In short, it has unrealized potential.
C 74 - 76.99	
C- 70 - 73.99	
D+ 67 - 69.99	“D” and “F” projects have multiple serious flaws that handicap the work. The project either is difficult to understand or fails to address the assignment goals, prompt, or rhetorical situation. A thesis or argument is unidentifiable, or the project may be reliant on summary rather than analysis. The language is hard to understand, or ideas may be jumbled in such a way as to hinder the audience’s ability to understand the work. Multimodal elements hinder the expression of meaning, or contradict the argument. This project may misuse or misrepresent its sources. (Note: an “F” for reasons of plagiarism is a 0 on the assignment; other failing grades may have some points attached.)
D 64 - 66.99	
F 0 - 63.99	

2.1 EXPECTATIONS: ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In a perfect world, each of you would attend every class, but life tends not to be perfect. I thus offer you **3 free skips** (one week of class); **every absence after that will lower your overall grade one third of a letter grade**—a dreadful result: an A- becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B, etc. I recommend you do not waste these free absences on frivolous pursuits, but save them for the inevitable end-of-semester flu or alarm malfunction. **Six (6) absences can result in automatic failure for the course.**

However, I too have had to attend a family member’s funeral, been sent to the hospital with illnesses-that-must-not-be-named-in-polite-company, and even been chased across campus by hordes of raging zombies; what I mean to say is that if you have a legitimate, serious problem, I’m willing to talk and try to work something out if you bring such problems to my attention **as soon as possible!** If you have mandatory absences (for participation in

official university events, Briar Cliff sports, or religious observances), they will not count against you if you bring documentation to me *in advance*.

Arriving after I take attendance at the beginning of class will count as **one-third of an absence**. If you are late, you are responsible for seeing me after class to make sure you are marked present; if you do not, it will be counted as a full absence. Arriving more than 10 minutes late will be a full absence. Students who leave early may be counted absent as well.

2.2 EXPECTATIONS: PARTICIPATION AND PROFESSIONALISM

I place great value on earnest, enthusiastic engagement. Some of the greatest joy I'll have in class, in fact, will be in hearing your insights and seeing your minds at work. One of our goals is to involve you actively in the learning process rather than simply deluge you with information; to that end, your comments and analysis will provide much of the substance of our class, and much of your grade as well. At three points in the semester, you will be expected to turn in a self-evaluation of your participation and professionalism with regards to this class. I expect the following:

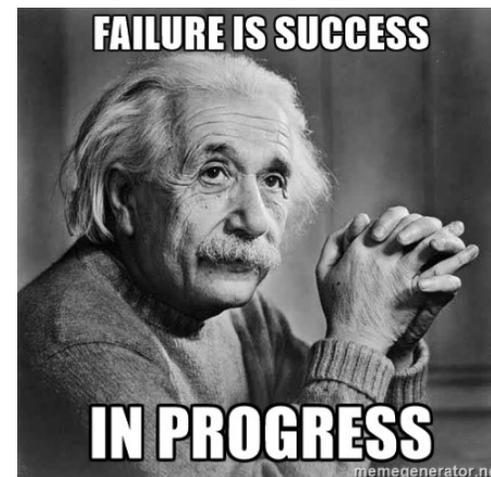
1. *Preparation*: Please arrive at every class with your textbooks, your laptop or copies of any work due that day, a notebook and pen/pencil to take notes, and your copy of this syllabus and assignment guide. Make sure you have completed any reading, and have turned in work on BrightSpace.
2. *Frequency and Quality of Comments and Questions*: Make an effort to say at least one substantial, thoughtful thing in each large-class discussion—this can include asking good questions. Talk more during small group discussions, but also let others have a turn to speak. Please be respectful towards the authors we are reading, towards your fellow students, and towards me. You are welcome and encouraged to disagree with other people's positions so long as you refrain from using language that is derogatory or insulting.
3. *Listening Skills*: Listening is just as important to good participation as speaking. The best participants carefully listen to what others say in order to build on their ideas. During class, your body language should indicate that you are listening; you should be visibly awake, taking notes, etc. Holding side conversations or getting off task (including by texting, checking your phone, etc.) indicates that you are not listening, or do not care about others' ability to listen. Texting or using electronics in an off-task way during class time will result in being considered absent.
4. *Professionalism*: Please avoid using any electronic devices unless I explicitly ask you to use them, as they are often distracting not only

to you, but to me and to other members of the class. Outside of class, any e-mails to me should be professionally formatted with the following elements: 1) a clear subject header, including the course you are referring to (CORE 131); 2) a salutation ("Dear Dr. Taylor"); 3) complete sentences and paragraphs; 4) a signature with your first and last name.

2.3 EXPECTATIONS: QUALITY OF FAILURE

One of the greatest hindrances to a student's active learning can be fear of failure: fear of looking silly or stupid in front of a classmate or faculty member, or fear of not getting a good grade on a project. Students have sometimes been taught that they need to be perfect, or as close to perfect as possible, to be rewarded. Students afraid of failure choose not to take risks; they might even choose not to turn work in because it isn't as good as they think it should be. However, I think that there are things more important than perfection: curiosity, risk taking, persistence, integrity, and self-awareness. Failure can even be an important part of learning. Edward Burger argues that "individuals need to embrace the realization that taking risks and failing are often the essential moves necessary to bring clarity, understanding, and innovation." Rejecting the fear of failure, he writes, can result in "a mind enlivened by curiosity and the intellectual audacity to take risks and create new ideas, a mind that sees a world of unlimited possibilities."

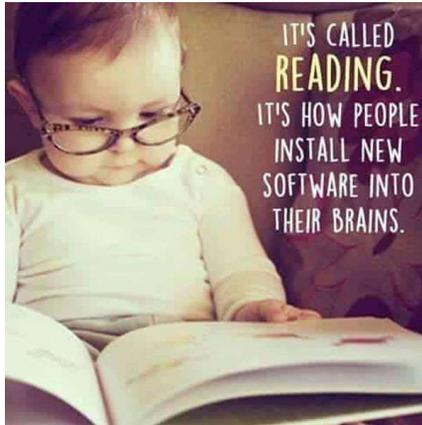
For this reason, 5% of your grade will be dedicated to "quality of failure." To earn this 5%, you will write a reflection at the time of the final exam in which you discuss the quality of your failure over the semester. You will be graded not on how much you failed, but how you handled that failure. Were you willing to challenge yourself to take risks that might result in failure? Were you aware of when you have failed, and did you refuse to give up in the face of failure? Did you find ways to use your failure to create something new and interesting? Have you grown from your failures? I hope this grade category will give you the freedom to try new things, and even to fail at them, and to come back having learned something from the experience.



2.4 EXPECTATIONS: READINGS

Readings are listed on the course schedule on the day they are due.

Please come to class having carefully completed the assigned readings. If it becomes apparent that you as a class have not done the reading, or have not paid close attention to the reading, I will institute quizzes. As you are reading, think about how you can demonstrate that you have paid close attention to the text. What questions do you have after reading? What conclusions can you come to about the purpose of the text? How does the text reinforce, influence, or challenge what you think about the ideas we have been discussing in class?



You should also annotate your text with your thoughts. Do not simply highlight. Instead, write down your understanding of what is happening on the page; underline passages that are important; write questions next to passages that you don't understand or don't agree with. If you don't want to write in your book, write on sticky-notes to serve the same purpose. In-text note taking will be very valuable in writing your outlines and papers, as your ideas and thoughts are suddenly much easier to recall, find, and use in your writing.

2.5 EXPECTATIONS: INDIVIDUAL TUTORIALS

This course emphasizes personalized development—that is, much of this course will be tailored to your particular needs. This will be accomplished by regular individual and small group tutorials. You will need to schedule 15-minute individual tutorials with me several times during the semester in order to work on some issues one on one. To prepare for these meetings, you need to sign up for the meeting on StarFish, bring a copy of your current outline or draft with you to my office, and come with questions about how you can improve your work. I will have notes for you on your outline or draft, and we will discuss the different avenues for improving your work.

Note: missing individual tutorials will be considered 2 absences, depending on how many classes are being replaced by the tutorials. Do not miss them.

3.1 POLICIES: OFFICE HOURS AND E-MAIL

Office hours are a crucial form of class engagement and participation.

Students who come to office hours are more likely to improve their skills and do well in this class. My office hours are MWF 2:00-3:00, TTh 1:00-2:00, and by appointment. You can reserve a 15-minute timeslot in advance on StarFish. Reservations have first priority, but you can also simply drop by. I am also available at other times by appointment, my schedule permitting; I encourage you to e-mail me if you cannot come to the scheduled office hours so that we will find a time for us to meet.

When you come to office hours, it helps to have a specific question to discuss, a paragraph you want feedback on, or a skill you want to work on. If you're feeling lost and don't know what you need to work on, or have multiple issues you want to discuss, I recommend scheduling a longer appointment so we have plenty of time. Of course, if I'm not busy with another student, I'm also happy to talk about more general things like your time at Briar Cliff, your larger educational and professional goals, the latest Star Wars or Marvel movie, etc., so feel to just stop by.

Email: I try and answer questions via e-mail within 24 hours during the workweek unless there are exceptional circumstances; I expect you to do the same. I often respond on weekends, but cannot guarantee I will do so as quickly. Please plan accordingly. I will not normally comment on whole projects outside of office hours, appointments, or the normal class revision and grading process. However, I am happy to look at small pieces of your work if you provide a particular focus for my comments. For example, if you send me a polite e-mail with a draft of an essay introduction, asking if you have clearly established your argument, I'd be happy to provide feedback by e-mail. I recommend that if you have a question about a grade, you come to office hours instead of asking by e-mail. I recommend you do not ask about grades during class time because other students will be present.

3.2 POLICIES: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In academic writing, we are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; this is a vital part of academic life. However, when we use another person's ideas, language, or syntax—whether directly, in summary, or in paraphrase—we must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation. If we do not, we are guilty of plagiarism. In such cases, a student will receive a zero for the assignment or for the course (depending on severity and type of assignment), and the issue will be referred to the Provost's office.

You commit plagiarism if you do ANY of the following:

- **Use the internet as a source of ideas without citing**
- **“Cut and paste” text, images, or sound into a project without citing**
- **Modify material from a source (text, images, sound, etc.) and incorporate into a project without citing**
- Submit a project created by someone else, including a tutor, while claiming to be the author.
- Submit a project created in another course without the permission of both instructors.
- Put another person’s ideas “in their own words” without documenting the source.
- Take another person’s expressions—a key word, a phrase, or a longer passage—without telling the reader precisely what has been done. This is considered plagiarism even when the student’s own ideas are being expressed.

Plagiarism most often happens when students are staring blankly at the page they need to fill and they aren’t sure what to write, so they go online and look for what they are “supposed” to say. They might copy and paste ideas into a document, or type what they read in the hopes it will help them get started. Most of the time, they intend to delete the copied passages, but later forget to remove them, or aren’t sure how to rewrite what they’ve done without the borrowed material. To avoid this problem, here are a few strategies you can try instead of looking online:

1. Type out a passage from the reading that you think is important and write down everything you observe about the passage.
2. If you’re working on a passage you don’t think you understand, try paraphrasing it phrase by phrase or sentence by sentence. Use a dictionary to help you understand individual word meanings.
3. Go back over your notes from in class. Type up your notes and expand on them.
4. Brainstorm with a friend from class about things you could say.
5. Create a mind map. Some people find it easier to organize ideas visually before fleshing them out.
6. Come to office hours!

If you have questions about using sources during the semester, you can consult me, the Writing Center, the Purdue OWL (<http://bit.ly/2fn76eM>) or Harvard’s online guide to using sources (<http://bit.ly/21PrHsx>). If you are ever tempted to plagiarize because of stress or lack of time, talk to me first because I can help. Do not let stress tarnish your academic record.

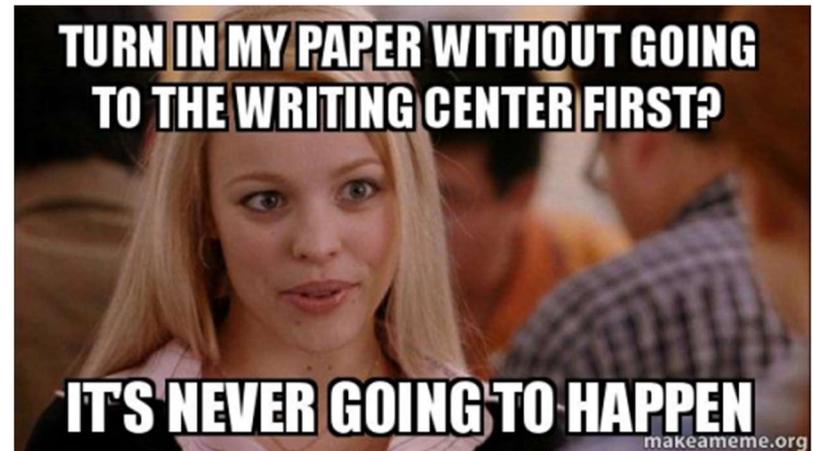
4.0 CAMPUS RESOURCES

Disability and Student Support Services

Students with disabilities who need accommodations should contact the Student Support Services Office to discuss needs. Documentation of the disability is required. They are in Heelan Hall, Room 037, Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. Their phone number is 279-1717. You may also contact Brenda Parkhill by phone at 712-279-5232 or by email at Brenda.parkhill@briarcliff.edu.

Writing Center

The Writing Center, located in the Bishop Mueller Library, is available to all Briar Cliff students for strengthening your academic writing development. The Center provides one-on-one peer mentoring, workshops, and computer-based tutorials. The Writing Center’s number is 712-279-5520 or you can email the Writing Center mentors at writing.center@briarcliff.edu. The Center’s web address is <http://bcuwritingcenter.wordpress.com>.



Title IX Mandatory Reporting and Confidential Resources

As an instructor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under The Title IX Educational Act of 1972 which prohibits violence, harassment, and discrimination based on sex and gender. For the sake of Briar Cliff University students’ safety and welfare, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have involved a Briar Cliff University student with the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinators. This includes incidents that occur within on-line courses, on and off-campus, or study abroad; and whether I see it personally, am told about

it directly (e.g., in-person, through an assignment, on a discussion thread, etc.), or learn about it indirectly (e.g., secondhand, social media, etc.).

Confidential assistance is available for students. If you or someone you know has been harassed, assaulted, or discriminated against because of sex or gender, the following resources are available:

Jeanette Tobin, Director of Counseling Services
712-279-5433, Jeanette.Tobin@briarcliff.edu
Carla Jo Morgan, Campus Nurse
712-279-5436, CarlaJo.Morgan@briarcliff.edu
Sr. Janet May, Director of Campus Ministry
712-279-5227, Janet.May@briarcliff.edu

Reporting to University Officials / Title IX Resources:

Louise Paskey, Title IX Coordinator
712-279-5494, louise.paskey@briarcliff.edu
Dave Arens, Deputy Title IX Coordinator
712-279-1715, david.arens@briarcliff.edu
Beau Sudtelgte, Deputy Title IX Coordinator
712-279-1633, beau.sudtelgte@briarcliff.edu
Security Department: 712-898-1888

The Sexual Violence and Harassment policy and additional off-campus resources can be found at:

<http://www.briarcliff.edu/legal-and-consumer/sexual-abuse,-assault-and-title-ix-procedures/>

5.1 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: LOGISTICS

All assignments must be submitted on BrightSpace one hour before class begins. I do not accept any assignments by e-mail. Do not submit Pages or Google Doc files—I cannot read them on BrightSpace or on my office computer. Convert to a Word document (.docx) to submit. If you cannot turn an assignment in on BrightSpace, let me know by e-mail and bring the assignment to class.

Each submitted file name should include your last name, first initial, course, assignment title, and extension.

Example File Title

Taylor.P.CORE131.RhetoricalAnalysis.RoughDraft.docx

While most assignments have word count requirements, these are not hard limits. A few words under is fine (though if you are substantially short, you probably have misunderstood the requirements and will not do well), and if you need to go over, that is also acceptable provided the content is good.

*All drafts should use standard MLA formatting (see page X of the Writing Guide). Proper citation is expected, even in your process documents (outlines, drafts, etc.). Always **cite as you write**—waiting to do it at the last thing is how accidental plagiarism happens. *Process documents without citations will receive no credit.**

5.2 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: LATE WORK AND EXTENSIONS

I do not accept late work for exercises or process documents such as outlines or drafts; we need this work to be complete for in-class activities. Because I do not accept late work, **turning in an incomplete project is better than turning in nothing.** If you turn in nothing, you will receive a 0; you are likely to still receive some points if you turn in an incomplete project unless there is plagiarism involved.

For the major projects, anything turned in more than 10 minutes after the deadline is considered late. Late work will be penalized 10% off the earned grade for each 24 hour period that it is late. **Students may request an exception for this policy by sending me an e-mail with the request at least 24 hours in advance,** or by providing evidence of a significant, unexpected emergency (hospitalization, death in the family, etc.). I reserve the right to deny requests if a student is abusing this policy. No extensions will be granted for the final portfolio.

5.3 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: GETTING FEEDBACK

I will try to get grades and feedback to students within two weeks of the assignment's due date, though sometimes this will not be possible. The feedback will come in one of two forms:

- 1) Two word documents: a rubric with overall comments explaining what worked well or needs improvement; and marginal comments created using Word's "Track Changes" and commenting features. You are expected to read the feedback, and come to office hours if you have questions. To find this feedback, open Communication > Dropbox in BrightSpace, and then find the appropriate dropbox. There should be an option to "View Feedback." Scroll to the bottom of the screen. There may be written feedback in paragraph form, or files for you to download with feedback.
- 2) Turnitin Quickmark: Sometimes I will use Turnitin to provide feedback. To find this feedback, open Communication > Dropbox in BrightSpace, and then find the appropriate dropbox. Click on the Turnitin Similarity Score. Then follow the directions here for interpreting the feedback:
https://guides.turnitin.com/01_Manuals_and_Guides/Student_Guides/Feedback_Studio/13_Viewing_Instructor_Feedback#Rubrics_and_Grading_Forms

5.4 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: REVISION POLICY

I highly value the composition process, and I believe that learning to revise is one of the most important skills you will learn in this class. Moreover, I believe that students may improve their overall skills by practicing repeated revision, and they do so the most when they make the choice to revise.

To this end, you may request the opportunity to revise any major project that received a C+ or lower (less than 80%), provided that you submitted *all* the required drafting steps (outlines, drafts, peer review, etc.) that were connected to the project, the project did not involve plagiarism, and the project was turned in on time. The request must be emailed to me within 72 hours of the grade being posted to BrightSpace. The request should be made via e-mail and include the following:



1. A clear indication that you understand the most important problems with the previous draft of the assignment, in your own words (rather than just echoing my comments).
2. A detailed plan for revision that addresses these problems, with examples or strategies you plan to use. Please note that *editing* is not the same as *revision*. Revision is changing the *substance* of the project, while editing is changing relatively superficial elements; a proposal that offers only editing or very limited revision plans will not be accepted.
3. A proposed deadline for the revised project that takes into account the other deadlines for the course—that is, do not schedule your revision to overlap with another deadline from the course, which might prevent you from doing your best work on either assignment.

I reserve the right to reject the request to revise if it fails to meet any of these guidelines. Taking the opportunity to revise cannot harm your grade, though I do not guarantee a higher grade on a revision. However, if you do earn a higher grade, it will replace your previous grade completely. I also reserve the right to require revisions of some students (such students will receive a zero until completion of the revision).

Sample Revision Request:

Dear Dr. Taylor,

I would like to request to revise my second paper. After reviewing your comments, my biggest problem seems to be that I don't have a focused argument. My argument changed as I went along, so the thesis statement didn't match the points or what I say in my conclusion. I like the ending of my paper and its argument better than what I have in the introduction, so I plan to create a new thesis that matches what I say in my conclusion. I will replace my first point that sets up my argument more effectively. My second point will need a new transition, but my third point I think will work as it is. I also plan to address some of the other issues mentioned in your comments that are more superficial. I'll make sure the images are better integrated into the text, proofread more carefully, and work on making sure my transitions are specific rather than vague. I also plan to take the draft to the writing center. I would like to propose a deadline of April 17th for the revision—that will give me a couple of days after our next paper to make final changes.

Sincerely,
 Georgina

5.5 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: EXERCISES

These exercises follow up on readings on particular days, or are preliminary steps in the drafting process for larger papers. They ask you to practice specific skills or evaluate whether you understand concepts from our readings.

Exercise 1:

For class, you had to read Joseph Harris' chapter on "Coming to Terms" and watch Bryan Stevenson's TEDTalk (as well as read the first section of Stevenson's book). For this exercise, **write one or two substantial paragraphs (200-300 words) in which you try to "come to terms" with Stevenson's TEDTalk.** Make sure you include all of the components of coming to terms that Harris describes (review pgs. 16 and 20 especially). This assignment must be turned in on BrightSpace and will be graded pass/fail out of 10 points.

Exercise 2:

For class, you had to read chapters 1 and 2 of Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*. **Write one or two substantial paragraphs (200-300 words) in which you try to come to terms with his project so far.** Make sure you include all of the components of coming to terms that Harris describes (review pgs. 16 and 20 especially), and pay special attention to using signal phrases, summary, and paraphrasing. This assignment must be turned in on BrightSpace and will be graded out of 10 points.

Exercise 3:

For class, you had to read chapter 1 of Michelle Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow*. **Write one or two substantial paragraphs (200-300 words) in which you try to come to terms with her project.** You may make reference to the introduction that we read a few days ago, but most of your work should focus on chapter 1. Make sure you include all of the components of coming to terms that Harris describes, and pay special attention to integrating your sources through signal phrases, quotations, summary, and paraphrase. This assignment must be turned in on BrightSpace and will be graded out of 10 points.

Exercise 4:

After completing Steps 1-3 of the instructions for Assignment 1, **write your own version of the assignment prompt question (Step 4 of the assignment has more detail).** This will be a draft of your question, and we will spend time in class reading and offering feedback on the questions you

produce. This assignment must be turned in on BrightSpace and will be graded pass/fail out of 5 points.

Exercise 5:

Based on the feedback you received or saw others receive in class, **revise your question for your first assignment.** Make it as strong as you can. This does not need to be turned in on BrightSpace, but should be brought to class.

Exercise 6:

[This is step 6 of Assignment 1.] Using the methods we read about and discussed in the last class, **create a mind map** of the potential ideas that might help you answer your question from Exercise 5. The question you wrote for exercise 5 should be at the center of your mind map (though you can continue to revise your question). Tip: Your mind map should probably include information from the table from Step 2 of Assignment 1.

When you have completed the mind map, take a picture of it and submit it on Brightspace. It will be graded pass/fail out of 10 points. Please also bring your mind map to class.

Exercise 7:

Write the introduction to your paper. Do your best to follow the instructions in the Writing Guide on what needs to be in an introduction. This assignment will be graded pass/fail out of 10 points. We will be using some introductions to give in-class feedback and for everyone to engage in peer review.

Note: By the time we start class, you should have more of your first paper completed than just your introduction, but we will be focusing on introductions in class.

Exercise 8:

For our next class, you need to read Joseph Harris' chapter on "Forwarding" and an article from *The Atlantic* on school policing. For this exercise, **identify three places in the article where you think the author of *The Atlantic* article is "forwarding" someone else's ideas.** Try to find one example for each of the three purposes that Harris discusses: illustration, authorizing, and extending. This exercise does not need to be turned in on BrightSpace, but you must be prepared to share your answers in class.

Exercise 9:

Read the article on school discipline reform carefully. Then, follow the guidelines for creating a bibliographic entry based on MLA format exactly. Below the bibliography, write a one or two paragraph “annotation” for the source. Instructions and an example bibliography entry with annotation are on the next page. This exercise should be turned in on BrightSpace, and will be graded Pass/Fail out of 5 points.

How to Write an Annotation: Your annotations should have the following three elements:

1. Rhetorical situation and project (1-3 sentences): Identify the source’s project. Describe the thesis (if it has one) and the rhetorical situation of the argument: the problem the article addresses, the argument or purpose of the project, why the project might be important, who the audience is, etc.
2. Methods and Materials (3-6 sentences): Methods include the article’s organization, rhetorical strategies, and/or the approach the author is using. Materials are the main points, types of evidence, and examples the source uses, and the conclusions the source comes to if they aren’t already summarized in the project description.
3. Uses and limits (1-2 sentences). Describe the quality of the source and relevance to the current assignment. Be sure to clearly identify whether the source is scholarly or not in this section (if you haven’t already); if not, explain why it is reputable.

Tip: use **short** quotations (key words and phrases, maybe a sentence) to help your reader grasp the project, methods, and materials.

Example Annotation: Below, you will see that the rhetorical situation is bolded, the methods and materials are in regular text, and uses and limits appear in italics. The bolding and italics are to help you as a reader understand where each section begins and ends; you do not need to use them in your own annotations.

Akombpa, Derick A., et al. “Heat Waves and Climate Change: Applying the Health Belief Model to Identify Predictors of Risk Perception and Adaptive Behaviours in Adelaide, Australia.” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, vol. 10, no. 6, 2013, pp. 2164-84. MDPI, doi:10.3390/ijerph10062164.

As climate change continues, heat waves are becoming more frequent, longer lasting, and more dangerous to human health. This scholarly article examines how people identify and respond to the

risks posed by heat waves, and argues that this information will help governments and other agencies prepare for the increasing danger.

Based on a 2012 health survey of 267 participants from the city of Adelaide, Australia, this study “determine[s] the predictors of risk perception using a heat wave scenario and identif[ies] the constructs of the health belief model that could predict adaptive behaviours during a heat wave” (2164). They found that age was a significant predictor of high perception of the risk posed by heat waves, along with whether people lived with others or had fans. Those with higher income had a lower risk perception. However, those with higher incomes or post-high school education had more extensive adaptive behaviors. *This article is useful because highlights the conversation about how to prepare people for some of the effects of climate change.*

Exercise 10:

Last week, you chose two articles from the class bibliography to read first. **Create an annotated bibliography entry for each article**, as in exercise 9. Please note: your annotations will be distributed to your fellow classmates to help each of you with the research for the White Paper. Your annotations should be turned in on BrightSpace and will be graded out of 20 points.

Exercise 11:

Create a mindmap of possibilities for issues to discuss in your White Paper. When you have completed your mindmap, take a picture of it and submit it on Brightspace. It will be graded pass/fail out of 10 points. Please also bring your mindmap to class.

Exercise 12:

You should receive rough drafts of the White Paper assignment from one or two of your classmates. **Read each draft and write a letter to the author providing feedback on the rough draft.** Make sure you write a substantial paragraph on each of the rubric categories, including the following:

1. Rhetorical Awareness: How well does the project address its intended audience? Does the project effectively or ineffectively use ethos, pathos, and logos? Does the paper clearly have a purpose or reason for existing?
2. Stance and Argument: How well does the project explain itself? Does it have a clear argument or stance? How could the stance be made clearer or more visible? Does the paper have a clear so-what factor that is expressed in multiple places? Where else does the significance need to be reinforced?

3. Development of Ideas: What kinds of evidence does the paper use? Is the evidence used effectively? Are there important pieces of evidence that the paper doesn't currently address that it should? Are there places where the evidence needs more explanation? What sections of the paper could use more evidence or analysis? Does all the evidence help prove the argument?
4. Organization: Is the White Paper effectively organized? Does it have transitions between paragraphs? Does it have clear headings? A clear introduction and conclusion? Are there any sections that should go in a different order, and why or why not?
5. Conventions: How well do the author's sentences work? Are they clear enough to go before a professional audience? What sentences need work for clarity or specificity? Were there any glaring typos or errors that needed to be fixed?
6. Design: How could the design be improved? Consider the following:
 - a. How well is the information laid out on the page?
 - b. Do the images match the information that they go next to?
 - c. Do all the images have appropriate captions?
 - d. Does the paper make use of features like text boxes, colors, etc.?
 - e. Are there any places where using CRAP principles could increase the readability or visual appeal of the document?

Your peer review letters should be e-mailed to the author AND submitted on BrightSpace for credit. They will be graded out of 20 points.

Exercise 13:

Read the I-Search Website Prompt, and **come up with three possible topics** you might want to pursue for this project. You do not need to turn this in on BrightSpace, but expect to use the topics in class; you will be choosing one topic to focus on.

Exercise 14:

Once you've narrowed down your options to one topic that you want to focus on, you need to **develop a good question research question** (or set of questions) about it. Remember: a good research question will be the sort of question that has multiple parts, and go beyond asking about "what" or "how" to "why." You do not need to turn your question in on BrightSpace, but we will work with your questions in class.

5.6.1 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: RHETORICAL STRATEGY COMPARISON

Prompt Summary: For this paper, I would like you to put into practice the information about rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos) by comparing and contrasting the two big texts we will read this unit (*Just Mercy* and *The New Jim Crow*) and making an argument about how and why the rhetorical methods you see in the two books work.

Big Question to Answer: How do Bryan Stevenson and Michelle Alexander attempt to persuade their audiences?

Length: 1400-1750 words (about 5 full pages)

Key Concepts and Skills to Understand and Practice

- The Rhetorical Triangle (Author, Text, Audience)
- Rhetorical Appeals (Ethos, Pathos, Logos, Kairos)
- Comparing and Contrasting
- Integrating Sources
- Organizing Written Arguments

Purpose:

In order to make accurate evaluations about a given topic, you must first know the critical points of similarity and difference. Comparing is an *evaluative* tool that everyone needs to be able to use effectively in any job—whether you are comparing a patient's symptoms with the expected symptoms for a disease, or doing a cost-benefit analysis for two products your company is considering purchasing.

You will practice essential writing skills that we are working on in terms of summarizing, quoting, and analyzing texts. These are skills that you will use in most of the papers you write in college, and will be essential in your professional careers after college.

Major Deadlines

- 2/5: Logical Outline
- 2/6-2/9: Individual Conferences
- 2/12: Introduction
- 2/14: Rough Draft and Recording
- 2/16: Final Draft

Assignment 1 Steps

Step 1: Write your own version of the “Big Question to Answer”

The key to a good compare-and-contrast essay is to have a *reason* for comparing the two objects, or something you want to learn from comparing them. If you were asked to write a paper comparing apples and oranges, you could just list numerous similarities between apples and oranges (both are fruit, both have skin, both grow on trees, both get made into juice, both are widely available in grocery stores, etc.) and numerous differences (oranges have thicker skin, apples have more fiber, oranges have more potassium, apples require cooler temperatures to grow while oranges do better in warm climates). However, a reader will be left asking, “so what?” or “why does this matter?” In other words, you have to have a specific question you want to answer by comparing the two fruits:

- Which is a better source of nutrition for children?
- Which is more economically important to the US?
- Which crop may be more threatened by climate change?

The specific similarities and differences that you focus on will change with your purpose: there’s probably no need to mention the fiber or potassium content if you are focusing on climate change, but you will need to mention both if you want to better understand their relative nutritional benefits.

In other words, your job is to compare and contrast for a specific purpose, and use that purpose to evaluate the different options. Your purpose needs to be as specific as possible; the more specific you are, the stronger your argument is likely to be.

So: how can you rewrite the big question for Assignment 1? The question is broad, and doesn’t address all of the elements of the prompt. The prompt says that you need to compare and contrast their rhetorical strategies (that is, how they attempt to persuade their audiences)—and that means you’ll need to understand those strategies, and maybe even focus in on just one. The prompt also asks you to not just address a *how*, but also a *why*, but the big question to answer only asks for a *how*—so your version of the question will also need to address a *why*. But sometimes you can’t write a version of the question that will work until you’ve done a little brainstorming—so move on to step 2.

Step 2: Brainstorm the rhetorical situation of the chapter. To provide a thorough analysis for your readers, you’ll need to be able to explain the topic the writer wrote about accurately, as well as identify the audience the writer

addresses, and why he or she wrote to that audience. In other words, you will also need to understand and inform your readers about the *rhetorical situation* in which the writer composed this document. The rhetorical situation can be thought of as the following elements:

1. The Exigence: the problem or situation that prompts the author to write
 - a. What problem(s) prompts the author to write?
 - b. How is the problem part of the larger context that the author and the audience share?
2. The Author: the person who wrote the text and what they are hoping to achieve
 - a. Why does the author feel he or she can address the exigence?
 - b. How does the author show that he or she can help the reader address the problem?
 - c. What is the author’s argument or purpose? What does the author want to have happen as a result of people reading the book?
3. The Audience: the group or groups the author is hoping to address
 - a. Who is the author trying to address? How do you know?
 - b. How does the author address the audience?
 - c. Do they rely on ethos, pathos, or logos the most? Why do they use those appeals the most, and what does that tell us about the audience they are expecting?
 - i. How does each author establish his or her ethos (good will, good sense)? How does he establish common ground with his readers?
 - ii. How does each author employ logos (claims, supporting ideas and evidence, implicit assumptions) to deliver the argument? How effective is the evidence?
 - iii. How does each author employ pathos (emotions and values) in order to link his or her cause with the interests or emotions of the reader?

Fill out the table on the next two pages with ideas about the two books. You can also recreate this table on a piece of notebook paper so you have more room to write, or you can create a table in a word document and write your answers there—you don’t have to turn this in, but you will use it in class and in some of our exercises.

Rhetorical Situation	<i>The New Jim Crow</i>	<i>Just Mercy</i>
Exigence		
Author & Argument		
Audience		

Rhetorical Situation	<i>The New Jim Crow</i>	<i>Just Mercy</i>
Ethos		
Pathos		
Logos		

Step 3: Look for patterns in your notes. Are there subtle differences (or even major differences) or unexpected similarities that are important enough to write a paper on? Are there any that really bring into focus what or why each author is doing what he or she is doing?

Step 4: Write your own version of the big question.

A compare-and-contrast paper will answer a question about the relationship between the two subjects and what is learned by comparing them.

Example Comparison and Contrast Question:

What are the relative benefits and risks of organic vegetables compared to traditionally grown vegetables? Which are better for consumers and the environment, and why?

This question sets up the two subjects to be compared and contrasted (organic versus conventional vegetables), and it explains the purpose of the comparison (to determine which is better for the consumer and the environment).

To set up your question, you may want to write a few sentences summarizing the similarities, and then ask your question about the differences (or vice versa). If I was doing a rhetorical comparison of *Rewriting* and *Understanding Rhetoric*, for example, my comparison question might look something like this:

Both Joseph Harris and the authors of *Understanding Rhetoric* want to help students understand how each student's writing is part of a larger context. How do both *Rewriting* and *Understanding Rhetoric* use emotional appeals to persuade students, and why does *Rewriting* use more subtle emotional appeals than *Understanding Rhetoric*?

This question starts by stating the common purpose that links the two texts together. Then, it asks about a similarity (they both use emotional appeals to persuade students) and a difference within that similarity (*Rewriting* uses more subtle appeals than *Understanding Rhetoric*). Your question should do something similar.

[Note: Step 4 is Exercise 4 and you need to turn it in on BrightSpace!]

Step 5: Revise your question based on in class feedback. (This is Exercise 5; review those directions)

Step 6: Create a Mind Map of topics and issues you want to cover in your paper. Tip: Your mind map should include information from the table from step 2. (This is Exercise 6; review those directions.)

Step 7: Turn your Mind Map into a Logical Outline. Re-read the logical outline directions (pages 48-56) and look at the models below before you start. Make sure to provide evidence for each part of your outline. Your evidence can include a combination of summary/paraphrase or quotations. Always remember to include the page number as you record your evidence, otherwise you might accidentally plagiarize. Each piece of evidence should also have some analysis following it. This assignment WILL take a lot of time to do well.

How to Organize a Comparison and Contrast Essay

There are two common ways to organize compare-and-contrast essays:

1. Text-by-Text: Discuss all of A, and then all of B
2. Point-by-Point: Alternate points about A with comparable points about B

Be aware, however, that the point-by-point scheme can come off as a ping-pong game. You can avoid this effect by grouping more than one point together, thereby cutting down on the number of times you alternate from A to B.

No matter which organizational scheme you choose, you need not give equal time to similarities and differences. In fact, your paper will be more interesting if you get to the heart of your argument—that is, the answer to your question—as quickly as possible. Your paper might spend only two or three sentences on the similarities, and then get straight to the differences, and only focus on developing the differences in depth (or vice versa, if your point is that the two things are more similar than they are different). Let's look at the example question I used earlier:

Example Comparison and Contrast Question:

What are the relative benefits and risks of traditionally grown vegetables compared to organic vegetables? Which are better for consumers and the environment?

Organized by Subjects

- 1) Question: What are the relative benefits and risks of organic vegetables compared to traditionally grown vegetables, and which are better for consumers and the environment?
 - a. Conventional Vegetables and How they are Grown
 - i. Chemical Pesticides
 1. What are the benefits
 2. What the risks are for the environment
 3. What the risks are for people who eat them
 - ii. Chemical Fertilizers
 1. What are the benefits
 2. What the risks are for the environment
 3. What the risks are for people who eat them
 - b. Organic Vegetables and How they are Grown
 - i. Without Chemical Pesticides
 1. What can they use instead?
 2. Benefits for the environment
 3. Benefits for people who eat them
 - ii. Without Chemical Fertilizers
 1. What do they use instead?
 2. What are the benefits for the environment
 3. What are the benefits for the people who eat them
 - c. Organic Vegetables are better for the Environment and the health of Consumers
 - i. Counter arguments
 1. Some say there are no differences in nutrition, so organic isn't worth it
 - a. Nutrition isn't the only health factor
 2. Some say cost to Farmers is too high
 - a. Costs of health care for workers versus costs of processes
 - b. Is cost sufficient justification for abuse?
 3. Some say cost to Consumers is too high
 - a. We may need to subsidize for those with lower incomes, or find ways to otherwise lower costs to consumers
- 2) Conclusion: Organic vegetables may cost more than those that are conventionally grown and have the same amount of nutrition, but they are worth the extra money because organic farming practices are safer for the environment, farm workers, and consumers.

Organized by Points

- 1) Question: What are the relative benefits and risks of organic vegetables compared to traditionally grown vegetables, and which are better for consumers, workers, and the environment?
 - a. Pesticides
 - i. How are they used in conventional Farming
 1. What are the benefits
 2. What the risks are for the environment
 3. What the risks are for people who eat them
 - ii. How are organic vegetables grown without pesticides
 1. What are the risks of not using pesticides
 2. What are the benefits for the environment
 3. What are the benefits for the people who consume them
 - iii. What is the difference in cost to farmers or consumers?
 1. Is the difference in cost worth more or less than the benefits?
 - b. Chemical Fertilizers
 - i. How are they used in conventional Farming
 1. What are the benefits
 2. What the risks are for the environment
 3. What the risks are for people who eat them
 - ii. What do organic farmers use instead
 1. What are the risks of not using chemical fertilizers
 2. What are the benefits for the environment
 3. What are the benefits for the people who consume the vegetables
 - iii. What is the difference in cost to farmers or consumers?
 1. Is the difference in cost worth more or less than the benefits?
- 2) Conclusion: Organic vegetables may cost more than those that are conventionally grown, but they are worth the extra money because organic farming practices are safer for both the environment and the people who eat the vegetables.

Notice that both of these outlines are *skeletal*. They don't have enough detail to sufficiently answer the question. Each of the points and subpoints would need to have quotations, summary, paraphrase, and citation of evidence that support each section.

Step 8: Turn in your Outline on BrightSpace. Set up an appointment with Dr. Taylor using Starfish (We will discuss how to do this in class on 2/5.)

Step 9: Meet with Dr. Taylor. Come to the meeting with a copy of your outline, a way to take notes, and a list of any questions or concerns you have about the paper.

Step 10: Write a draft of your introduction. Follow the instructions in the writing guide, and include the necessary background information and your thesis statement(s). [This is Exercise 7]

Step 11: Complete your full draft. Following the feedback that Dr. Taylor gave during your individual conference, turn your outline into a complete paper draft.

Step 12: Take your draft to the Writing Center. Bring your assignment with you, and a list of areas or issues that you think you need to work on (consider asking about integrating sources, organizing your ideas, developing a strong thesis or "so what" factor). Discuss what you need or want to work on and why with your Writing Center Mentor.

Step 13: Revise your draft based on the feedback from the Writing Center. Turn in your rough draft on BrightSpace.

Step 14: Record yourself reading your draft out loud. Bring your draft, your recording, and a pair of headphones or earbuds to class on 2/14.

Step 15: Turn in the final draft of your paper on BrightSpace on 2/16. Also turn in a short reflection in a separate document that answers the following questions:

- 1) What did you see as the purpose of the assignment?
- 2) What do you think you failed at in this paper?
- 3) What do you think you succeeded at in this paper?
- 4) What was the most useful part of the process for you in writing this paper? (Consider the exercises, logical outline, meetings with Dr. Taylor or the Writing Center, reading your paper out loud, etc.)
- 5) What do you need to continue to work on in future papers?

Step 16: Read Feedback. When you get your graded paper back with comments and the rubric, read them carefully and come to office hours if you have any questions. Make a list of things you need to work on for the next paper.

Grading Rubric Clarifications

- **Rhetorical Situation:** You should assume your audience consists of your professor, your fellow students, and people who are reading and trying to understand *The New Jim Crow* and *Just Mercy*.
- **Stance/Argument:** Your argument needs to address the "Big Question" but with your own specific twist. Your argument needs to go beyond the factual "what" and address both a "how" and a "why."
- **Development of Ideas:** You need to use summary, paraphrase, and quotation as evidence. Your evidence must be developed through your own analysis.
- **Organization:** Your paper must be organized using an introduction with thesis statement, topic sentences and transitions, with a conclusion. Your connections between points must make logical sense.
- **Conventions:** Your sentences need to be clear, easy to understand, and as grammatically correct as possible. Your tone must be appropriate to your audience.
- **Design for Medium:** Your paper must be formatted according to MLA format. If appropriate to your argument, you are welcome to include visual elements to support your argument (these might be diagrams, charts, etc.)

5.6.2 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: PROJECT 2, WHITE PAPER

Project Summary: In this project, you will write a white paper that explains the background of police in schools, and makes specific proposals about the roles they should have in the future. You will need to use at least three scholarly sources and three popular sources, and have at least three visual elements.

Police in schools topic is the focus of your white paper for a few reasons: first, it builds on the questions about fairness and equity in the criminal justice system that we explored in our first unit; and second, this is an issue that, as recent high school students, you may have unique perspectives that parents, teachers, administrators, and politicians should hear, because they don't have the same experiences you do.

Your white paper will use research that we work with as a whole class to make recommendations to the administrators, politicians, teachers, and parents about what role police should have in a high school you attended.

Big Question to Answer: “What role should police have in high schools and why?”

Purpose: A white paper is report that explains an issues, describes the current research on the issue, and makes a recommendation to policy makers or stakeholders about what they should do. White papers are common in both government and business contexts. In this particular case, I want you to practice explaining complex issues from your own perspective, both forwarding and countering the ideas that you find in research. This project also asks you to practice persuasion—thinking about specific audiences and engaging in rhetorical appeals. Finally, white papers also ask you to think about the relationship between written text and visual design.

Length: 1750-2100 words

Major Deadlines

3/14: Logical Outline

3/19: Rough Draft 1

3/26-29: Individual Conferences

4/4: Final Draft

Knowledge and Skills (new skills in italics)

Writing to Specific Audiences

Creating Persuasive

Arguments

Summarizing, Paraphrasing,
and Quoting

Forwarding and Countering

Visual Design

The Parts of a White Paper

1. Title
 - a. Your title should convey the specific purpose of your White Paper, and will grab the attention of your specific audience
2. Executive Summary
 - a. An executive summary should be 200-300 words summarizing the rest of your content concisely and persuasively.
 - b. An executive summary should be written *last*, even though it is the first section in your paper—you will only be able to accurately summarize what you say in the other sections if you have already written them.
3. Introduction / Background [Might be broken into multiple sections, and the order may vary]
 - a. Explain the current situation that prompts you to write
 - i. Explain why the issue is important to you, and why it should be important to your audience
 - ii. Explain the history leading to the current situation
 - b. Describe and analyze the problems with the current situation
 - c. Describe the current research and what it says about the problems
4. Proposed Solutions [Might be broken into multiple sections, and the order may vary]
 - a. Describe what you think your audience should do in general and why
 - b. Describe specific strategies/solutions that fit the general pattern
 - c. Describe the expected benefits of your solutions
 - d. Describe objections people might have to your solutions
 - e. Explain why the objections are wrong and your solutions will still work
5. Conclusion and Call to Action
 - a. Remind the audience of the problem and purpose, and reinforce how the audience can address the problem
6. Works Cited
7. Visuals
 - a. Throughout a white paper, you should use images, charts, and diagrams to illustrate your points, summarize your points, provide evidence, and even add emotional resonance.

Task

Step 1: Reading and Research

For this paper, you will not be doing independent research. Instead, Dr. Taylor and Julius Fleschner, Briar Cliff's director of the library, have chosen specific sources for you to use. Some sources we will read as a whole class; other sources will be assigned to each of you individually to review and write annotations for the rest of the class (this will be exercise 10). Then, you will read each other's annotations, and use them to direct reading of your own.

- By the end of the process, you have found at least six articles that you will use in your white paper.

Step 2: Narrow Down the Audience and Question.

Just as with your first project you had to come up with your own version of the question, you will need to do the same thing for this project. You'll want to think about your specific audience—the particular situation of a high school you attended, the people who were there, the situations that arise—and design your question to specifically focus on what will be of most importance to you and them.

Step 3: Mind Map (Exercise 11)

As you read, you should create a mind map, just as you did with the first assignment. You should use your mind map to identify what information you have, if there are any holes in your ideas, and to think through a preliminary structure for your white paper.

Step 4: Logical Outline

You will complete a logical outline, just as you did with the first assignment. Remember to review the instructions from the writing guide, and include all the different parts of the white paper listed on the previous page.

Step 5: Rough Draft

Expand your logical outline into a draft, and also develop the visual design of your project. We will discuss how to incorporate visual elements and basic design principles (CRAP) in class.

Step 6: Peer Review (Exercise 12)

You will engage in more substantive peer review on this project, writing a letter to each of the writers whose white papers you review. See the directions for Exercise 12 for more details.

Step 7: Individual Conference

You will read and work on your rough draft based on your peer review letters, and then meet with me about your draft. You will need to bring *two* physical copies of your rough draft with you to our meeting, or e-mail me a rough draft 30 minutes before your meeting.

Step 8: Final Draft and Reflection

You will revise your final draft and write a reflection answering the following questions:

- What did you see as the purpose of the assignment?
- What succeeded and what failed in this paper?
- What was the most useful part of the process for you in writing this paper? (Consider the exercises, mind map, logical outline, etc.)
- What do you need to continue to work on in future papers?

Grading Rubric Clarifications

- **Rhetorical Situation:** Your white paper must choose an appropriate audience, address their concerns, and have an appropriate tone. You must use at least three scholarly sources and three popular sources to support your ideas and explanations.
- **Stance/Argument:** Your argument needs to address the “Big Question” but with your own twist. You should clearly offer a proposal that you think your audience should accept, and be clear about why that proposal is important.
- **Development of Ideas:** You need to use summary, paraphrase, and quotation from your sources as evidence. You must accurately describe the sources you use, coming to terms with them and then forwarding or countering them.
- **Organization:** Your white paper must have all the required elements listed in this assignment. You must have a clear thesis, headings for different sections, topic sentences for all paragraphs, and logical transitions between paragraphs. Your connections between points must make logical sense.
- **Conventions:** Your sentences need to be clear, easy to understand, and as grammatically correct as possible. Your tone must be appropriate to your audience.
- **Design for Medium:** Your white paper must include at least three visual elements (images, diagrams, charts, etc.) that are accurately cited. You must have an accurate bibliography. Your visual layout of information should follow the basic CRAP principles that we discuss in class.

5.6.3 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: “I-SEARCH” WEBSITE

Prompt Summary: The last two papers have been on topics that have been assigned to you. However, as you may have noticed, in some of our course texts—particularly the TEDTalks that we have watched—many writers and speakers began their research into topics because of their personal experiences and things that happened to them.

For this paper, I want you to *take an approach* from these writers and speakers, not in terms of the topic they are engaging, but the way they go about it. Your research needs to be about some aspect of *your* life—an aspect that you feel you need to know more about because it affects you, either directly or indirectly. This should not be a topic you already have fully set and decided opinions on; ideally, it will be on a topic where you have questions or concerns. For example, when I was in college, I wrote an “I-search” paper on fan-fiction and the history of people writing their own versions of other people’s stories. I had been reading fan fiction on my favorite television show, and but I didn’t know much about the history of fan fiction, why people wrote it, or what the legal implications of writing fanfic were—so those were the three questions I explored in my paper.

There are lots of other topics you can take: some students explore a health condition a family member has, or the histories of objects or places that are important to them. Others write about issues that are influencing their choice of major, questions they have about new technologies and their effects, or about social justice issues that have affected them, their friends, or their families.

The final version of this project will be presented on a website. Your written text is expected to be 2400-2800 words, broken into different sections. and you will need to also include images, links, and possibly even video.

Big Question to Answer: “How can research help me understand things that are important to me?”

Requirements:

- **2400-2800 Words** (Not counting the annotated bibliography)
- **Minimum 7 Sources, at least 5 scholarly** (100-200 word annotations in bibliography)
- **4-6 visual and/or electronic resources** (images, slideshows, video, etc.)
- **Published on Weebly.com or Wix.com**

Key Knowledge and Skills

- Developing research questions and search strategies
- Finding relevant sources in academic databases and through popular search engines
- Distinguishing between popular and scholarly sources
- Critically reading sources to accurately identify and understand their purpose, argument, rhetoric, evidentiary support, and organization.
- Summarizing and explaining sources in a way that makes sense to others
- Presenting and Organizing Information on the Web

Step 1: Decide on your topic.

Exercise 13. Read the I-Search Website Prompt, and come up with three possible topics you might want to pursue for this project. You do not need to turn this in on BrightSpace, but expect to use the topics in class; you will be choosing one topic to focus on.

Step 2: Develop Your Research Questions and Search Terms

Exercise 14. Once you’ve narrowed down your options to one topic that you want to focus on, you need to develop a good question research question (or set of questions) about it. Remember: a good research question will be the sort of question that has multiple parts, and go beyond asking about “what” or “how” to “why” or even “so what?”. You do not need to turn your question in on BrightSpace, but we will work with your questions in class.

You will also need a mix of broad and narrow search terms that are related to your topic. For example, if you are researching fan fiction, you might want to also look at “fanfic,” “fandom,” “fan art,” “fan adaptations,” “fan authorship,” “copyright,” and so on, depending which questions you have.

List your search terms here:

Step 3: If possible, identify and read recent, relevant, reputable non-scholarly reporting.

You should use these sources to further develop your search terms for the scholarly databases, and to make sure you have a basic factual understanding of your topic. You should keep track of what sources you read and what you learned from each.

You will also want to write the annotations for your sources as you read them.

Step 4: Conduct Scholarly Research and Develop an Annotated Bibliography

In class, we will discuss how to conduct research on a variety of topics using a wide range of resources. You will need to keep track of the different databases you tried, the search terms you used, where you found good sources, where you found bad sources, etc. Keeping good records at this stage will be essential for your website.

Sometimes you will need to order articles from InterLibrary Loan: <http://www.library.briarcliff.edu/interlibrary-loan>

You will also want to write the annotations for your sources as you read them.

Step 5: Mind Map

Consider mind-mapping your project if you haven't already. This is not required, but heavily encouraged.

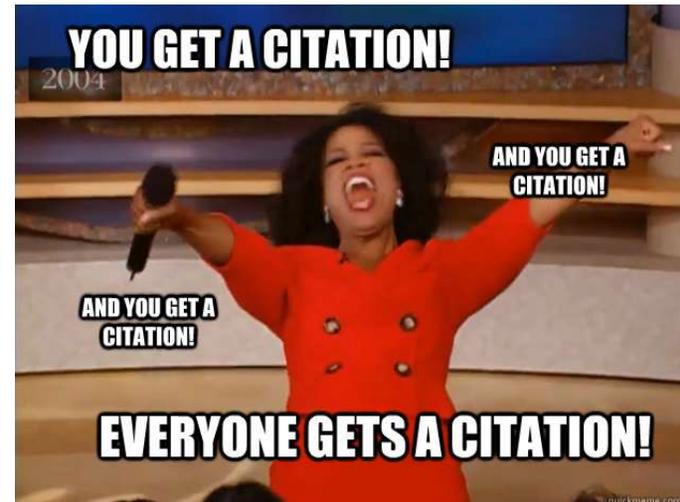
Step 6: Develop your Logical Outline.

Your website will need to have five separate sections:

1. Introduction (300-400 words)
 - a. This should have some sort of hook, and explain what you knew or didn't know about your topic
 - b. It should clearly explain the importance of your topic to you—and, ideally, your readers.
 - c. It should explain your research question, and the eventual thesis or answer to the question.
2. Research Narrative (the story of how you conducted your research 500-600 words)
 - a. You should describe the process you took, the databases you looked at, the obstacles you encountered, and the solutions you found (or didn't find) to problems conducting your research.

You should describe how one source led you to another, and where you hit dead ends and had to backtrack.

- b. This will require you to keep a careful log of your research process as you go.
3. Results (1200-1300 words)
 - a. This is the section that will be closest to a traditional research papers. This is where you explain what your research showed, the conversations you saw in the research, and the evidence that led you to the answers. You should show how your different sources lead you to your own ideas and conclusions through forwarding and countering.
4. Reflection (300-400 words)
 - a. This section should serve as a unifying conclusion: what did you learn about the process of research? What have you learned from conducting this research, both about yourself and about your topic?
5. Annotated Bibliography
 - a. This project requires you to use a minimum of 7 sources, 5 of which may be scholarly. Each source should be in your bibliography, and should have a 100-200 word annotation that follows the guidelines we used with the White Paper annotation exercises.



Step 7: Create a Website

The two easiest ways to create a website are Weebly.com and Wix.com. We will talk in class about how to create a website. Make sure to create a separate page within the site for each of the major sections of this project. You do NOT need put your real name on the site; in fact, I recommend you use a (professional sounding) pseudonym or fake name. Make sure that when you turn in your link to the website that you say what the pseudonym is.

Step 8: Rough Draft

Turn your outline into a full draft and put it on the website.

Step 9: Meeting with Dr. Taylor

Sign up a meeting with Dr. Taylor about your draft.

Step 10: Turn in the link to the final draft of your website.**Grading Rubric Clarifications**

- **Rhetorical Situation:** Your I-Search Website must aim to make your topic accessible to both an academic and non-academic audience. You can take an informal approach, but it needs to be professional.
- **Stance/Argument:** You should have two central arguments: one about the research process and one about your topic in particular. You should examine at least one “so-what factor” for each.
- **Development of Ideas:** You need to use summary, paraphrase, and quotation from your sources as evidence. You must accurately describe the sources you use, coming to terms with them and then forwarding or countering them.
- **Organization:** Your website must have all the required elements listed in this assignment. You must have a clear thesis, headings for different sections, topic sentences for all paragraphs, and logical transitions between paragraphs. Your connections between points must make logical sense.
- **Conventions:** Your sentences need to be clear, easy to understand, and as grammatically correct as possible. Your tone must be appropriate to your audience.
- **Design for Medium:** Your website must be well designed, following the principles we discuss in class. You must integrate the proper number of electronic resources. Remember: simplicity helps readers focus.

5.6.5 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: PROJECT 4, FINAL PORTFOLIO

Project Summary: Create a portfolio of work you have completed this semester, including writing a cover letter that explains what you have learned and how you learned it this semester. The portfolio will be loaded into BrightSpace.

Big Question to Ask: “What have I learned in CORE 131, and where did I show that I learned it?”

Purpose: This assignment asks you to reflect on what you have learned this semester. Reflection will help you thoughtfully consider what you need to do to continue to improve in your communication skills—a central feature that employers look for—as you leave this class and continue in your course work.

Length: 1200-1400 words

Deadlines

Logical Outline: 12/4

First Draft: 12/6

Layout Draft: 12/8

Full Portfolio: 1 hour before Final Exam

Knowledge and Skills:

Writing for specific audiences

Creating an argument

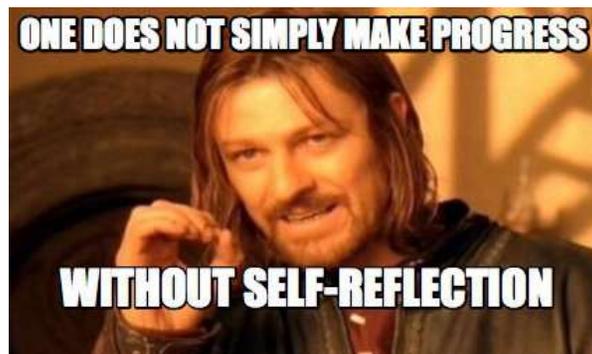
Using and analyzing quotations

Drawing conclusions

Revision

Course outcomes

Purpose of course projects



Step 1: Re-read all your work, including exercises, outlines, rough drafts, peer review, final drafts, comments, and reflections.

Step 2: Brainstorm ideas for letter. Imagine that a professor who taught a different section of this class will be reading and evaluating your work to decide whether you have learned the things you this semester that you were supposed to learn. Write a cover letter to that professor, explaining what you learned and what your work represents. Your job in this letter is to *prove* that you know what you have learned and what you still need to work on.

The emphasis in your letter should be on *reflection*. I want to see you carefully thinking about the purpose of academic writing and visual communication, and how it is connected to the material we read and wrote about. Below, you will find a series of questions to help you brainstorm possible avenues for reflection. **You should NOT try to answer all of these questions in your letter.** Choose just one set of questions, or piece together bits from several of these. Also, don't exaggerate your abilities or spend time trying to impress me. If you haven't perfected some aspect of writing, that's fine. I'm much more interested in an honest reflection. However, failure should not be the central focus of this essay; you will be focusing on your failures in your Quality of Failure essay during the final exam. You can mention failures, but they should not be the focus

- What is the purpose of academic writing? How did this class and the projects you composed fit or challenge your expectations?
- How well do you think you mastered the course outcomes? What assignments most helped you master the course outcomes (below)?
 - Write and speak in a range of genres, using appropriate rhetorical conventions
 - Effectively communicate in multiple modes (written, oral, visual, gestural/spatial) using digital technologies.
 - Critically read, quote, cite, and analyze sources, balancing their own voices with secondary sources.
 - Employ flexible strategies for generating and revising their writing projects and presentations.
- What was hard for you, and why? What was easy, and why? What started hard, but became easier? What do you think will always be hard?
- What did you learn or figure out about writing that you didn't know before? What did you learn or figure out about the topics we wrote on that you wouldn't have if you hadn't written the papers?

Step 3: Write a draft of your letter. To make sure your letter proves you have learned to do what you say you have done, include the following:

- **Argument.** You should have a central, controlling idea in your first paragraph that guides what you choose to include in your paper.
- **Evidence!** Quote from your textbooks! Quote from your papers! If you got better at using ideas from other writers while giving them credit, quote a part of a project where you do that, and explain why you did what you did with that quotation. If you think you struggled with developing logical arguments, show me where you failed at that. If my or one of your classmate's comments on a rough draft really helped you see something in your paper that you didn't see before, quote the comment.
- **Multimodal elements.** Your letter should include images, links, or other design elements to help illustrate your argument. We will examine some creative options in class.
- **So-What Factor.** Draw some conclusions about what you've learned over the course of the semester and where you still need to go.

Step 4: Revise, Edit, and Proofread. Just as you know that your papers have all improved when you had the chance to revise once or more than once, you should give yourself the time to revise, edit, and proofread. You may want to exchange papers with another student in the class and give each other feedback and editing help, or you may want to go to the Writing Center.

Step 5:

- Load your final drafts of all projects (Project 1, 2, and 3) into the portfolio system on BrightSpace.
 - Click the "eportfolio" option
 - Click "My Items" at the top of the page
 - Click "Add" and choose the option to upload a file. Repeat for every document, and any images you plan to use in your cover letter.
- Create a New Presentation. Title the Presentation with your name and "CORE 131 Final Portfolio"
 - Where it says "New Page," click the downward triangle, and choose "Page Properties." Rename the page to "Cover Letter." Click Save.
 - Under Content Area 1, click "add component" and then "Text Area."
 - Title the area "Portfolio Cover Letter"

- Copy your finished letter into the “Content” section.
- Add any images, links or design elements using the design tools.
- Save and Close
- Use the yellow page icon to create a new page for each assignment. Give a clear title to each page.
 - For each page, under Content Area 1, click “add component” and then “artifact.” Choose the artifact for the page.
 - Save and Close.
- Customize your banner and theme.
 - Save and Close.

Step 6: Submit before the deadline

- Go to the dropbox in BrightSpace for the portfolio.
- Click “Add a File”
- Choose “ePortfolio” (underneath “My Computer”) and select your portfolio.
- Submit!

5.7 ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: FINAL EXAM / QUALITY OF FAILURE ESSAY

Prompt Summary: For your final exam, you will be expected to write a short essay in which you reflect on your quality of failure. The exam will be open note. You should plan your essay carefully ahead of time—perhaps writing a logical outline that you can use when writing your essay. You may want to specifically go back and look at your reflections on your assignments (each of which asked about how you may have failed) as you plan.

Purpose: While the portfolio asked you to reflect on what you have learned this semester, the final exam asks you to reflect on how you failed this semester. As stated in the syllabus, part of this course is learning to embrace failure without letting it defeat you. “The road to innovation is a perilous one,” writes Bengt-Arne Vedin, “paved with failure” (83). Repeated studies prove that failure is integral to learning, creativity, growth, and success (Vedin 83-91). Moreover, reflecting on failures is an expected part of common workplace development.

Skills you will need for this project:

- Reflection
- Creating and organizing an argument
- Using evidence and analysis

Knowledge you will need:

- Self-awareness of your failures
- Purpose of course projects
- What you have learned this semester

Task: Write a short essay on your quality of failure this semester.

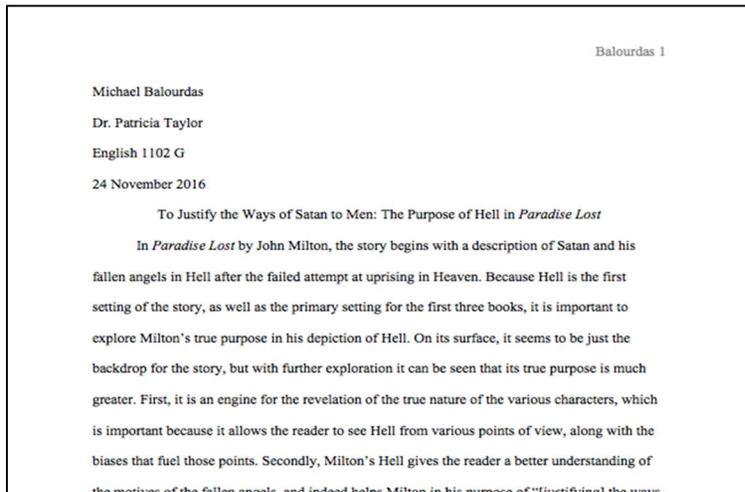
- Provide insight into where and why failure occurred and how failure helped you grow as a student, intellectual, or human being.
- Consider: Have you been willing to challenge yourself and take risks that might result in failure? Have you been aware of when you have failed, and refused to give up in the face of failure? Have you found ways to use your failure to create something new and interesting? Have you grown from your failures?

Works Cited

Vedin, Bengt-Arne. “On the Quality of Failure.” *International Journal of Business and Social Research* vol. 4, no. 5, 2014, pp. 82-92.

6.1 WRITING GUIDE: PAPER FORMATTING

1. **1-inch margins** all the way around the page
2. Times New Roman or Garamond 12 pt. font, **double spaced**
3. Running Header with your last name and page number in upper right corner
4. Header of four lines in left corner of first page
 - a. Your name
 - b. Instructor
 - c. The course
 - d. The date
5. An **interesting title** reflecting your argument, centered (no italics except for book titles; no underlining or bold)



6. All book titles should be italicized. Article and chapter titles should be in quotation marks:
 - a. Yes: *Global Weirdness*
 - b. No: "Global Weirdness"
 - c. Yes: "The Juggler's Brain"
 - d. No: *The Juggler's Brain*
7. A bibliography with all sources on the final page, following MLA format. Sources should be alphabetized by author's last name.

6.2 WRITING GUIDE: DEVELOPING A QUESTION

When you are developing a paper, you usually want to begin not with a thesis, but with a question—a serious, interesting, complex question. This should be a question that a reasonable person could answer in multiple ways, and it should not just ask for a factual answer. Sometimes the writing prompt in the assignment will provide you with this question; many times it will not, or it will require you to write your own, more specific version of the question. If you are creating your own question, it will need to get at an important issue, going beyond simply what happens, to why and how it happens. The more specific a question is, usually the better your thesis and paper will be.

Example Weak Question

What kinds of racism appear in *Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian*?

- This question is weak because it only asks for a list of examples of racism, and does not prompt much analysis beyond categorization.
- In other words, it only asks for a "what" (facts about the novel) and not a "how" or a "why."

Strong Question

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian depicts multiple examples of racism. How does the racism Junior experiences at the hands of adults, especially teachers, differ from the racism that he experiences from students, and why might those differences be important?

- This question assumes you will have examples of racism, and focuses instead on asking for analysis.
- It identifies a pattern (the racism from teachers is different from the racism from students), and asks us to think about why those differences exist and what they might mean.
- It is very specific about what details the paper will need to focus on.

When writing your question, consider the following as a checklist:

1. Is your question a real question with more than one reasonable answer?
2. Does your question identify a "what" and ask either "how" or "why" (or both)? The "how" or "why" may be either explicit or implicit.
3. Is your question specific and detailed, pointing towards elements you will discuss in your paper?
4. Is your question answerable? That is, will you be able to discuss your question completely in the amount of space and time you have to write the paper? Does your question need to be narrower or deeper?

6.3 WRITING GUIDE: LOGICAL OUTLINES

A logical outline is more complicated than the outlines most of you probably have done in school so far. It is more like a rough draft in outline form, and will require a substantial bit of time to complete effectively. The purpose of a logical outline is to make sure that you have all the building blocks to create a good paper: you'll start with an interesting, complex question (as discussed in 6.3); then you'll develop sufficient evidence and analysis; a clear, logical structure; and a strong thesis. After you complete your logical outline, you will meet with me about it.

Students regularly tell me that the logical outline is both the hardest thing they do in my classes, but also the most helpful. Here's how one student put it in his course evaluation last year:

I think the most important thing I took away from this class is that logical outlines might take a lot of time, but they are the most helpful thing I have ever used. I think I put more time into my logical outline than I did on my actual paper, but I still got a very good grade on my paper. When we were told to do a logical outline, I thought it was just a waste of time. I have never been so wrong. The logical outline broke everything down and made it a lot easier to write the paper. In high school, it was always optional to do a logical outline, and of course I always opted to not do it. I regret not using logical outlines for every paper I have ever done.

So, give yourself a lot of time to work on your outline, and put in as much effort as you can. The more material you have to work with in your outline, the more effective your individual tutorial will be. There are six steps to writing a logical outline as required in this class.

Step 1: Develop a Question.

See the previous section (6.3) of this writing guide for more detail, but it's important to remember that you might want to revise your question at any stage in the process. If you come up with a better question at any of the later stages of this process, it is *good* to change your initial question. Don't stick with it just because it was the first thing you came up with.

Step 2: Brainstorm Evidence

Once you have your question, think of having conversation between with text or texts you are reading and writing about, where you're both trying to answer it. You propose the question, and then different pieces of the information give you an answer, or at least part of one; sometimes the answer goes off topic but in a way that adds to the discussion; other times it addresses

the question sideways, or from its own angle. Going through the text and looking for these moments is brainstorming, and the places where the text addresses your question are *potential* points and pieces of evidence. Brainstorming is one of the most important steps in writing a paper. This step involves not only remembering bits and pieces of the text, but also going back over notes, and rereading the text with this new question in mind. At this stage, your goal is to come up with as many different examples and ideas as you possibly can.

Evidence can include a lot of different things:

1. Empirical data
2. Textual Evidence
3. Previous Research
4. Established Theory
5. Personal Experience
6. Hypothetical Examples
7. Metaphors

The first five of these are generally the most important for building credibility with an audience, though it will depend on your topic and audience. For example, sometimes personal experience will build credibility in a way that statistics and theory cannot; other times, it will undermine your ability to seem reasonable. Generally speaking, you want to aim for some combination that is appropriate to the assignment and topic.

Brainstorming is a stage that can benefit from being repeated in several different forms. Some people find that going straight to the outline format works well; others benefit from trying something with more casual and visual organization first, such as mind mapping; still others find they need to free-write about their topic to figure out which evidence they want to use. Many people find they need to repeat this step several times, alternating with Steps 4 and 5, going deeper and adding more evidence each time.

Step 4: Analyze the Evidence

Once you have brainstormed how the text responds to your questions, you can respond to these pieces of evidence yourself—what do you think about each one? Why does it seem important? What is going on in each example, beyond the obvious? (You can do this either as you go through your evidence piece by piece, or you can do it all at once, but you should respond at least briefly to each piece by the time you are done).

Note: Depending on the assignment, you may want to reverse the order of steps 4 and 5. Decide which one works better for you.

Step 5: Organize

This is the stage where you want to start thinking seriously about possible answers to your question. Come up with as many different answers as you can—and see which one accounts for all or as much of the evidence as you have.

Start by look at the evidence and your responses together. Can you find patterns in the text, or in your own responses to the text? Group those things that say the same sorts of things together, and find a succinct way to describe them. (Also, decide if there are pieces that don't help answer the question, and remove them.) Now, you are starting to develop the pieces of your outline. You may want to order these pieces of evidence in terms of importance, or you may want to decide which small patterns or observations lead to the larger patterns, and organize them accordingly. These are two (of many) options for organizing your outline.

Note: Sometimes you will realize that, like a real person, your text contradicts itself, or that it contradicts another text in the conversation. When this happens, do not ignore the problem, or throw up your hands and give up and change topics or questions. Instead, think about how you could synthesize these ideas, and what sort of middle ground could be created, or if certain things are true only in certain contexts. If you decide one text or part of a text is wrong, include it in your paper by describing it as a counter argument, and then showing why it doesn't quite work. Don't gloss over those problematic moments in the text; sometimes, these are the most important pieces of evidence and thinking hard about them leads to the best arguments and thesis statements.

It's crucial that you make the links between the pieces of evidence and how they answer your question explicit. You need to explain *why* and how each piece of evidence is important and makes your answer to the question reasonable.

Step 6: Decide on Your Answer to the Question

The final part of your outline should be the “conclusion” section, where you *answer the question you started with*. How would you summarize the answer to your question now that you have organized all your evidence and analysis?

The answer will become your thesis when you turn the outline into a draft—that is, one of the most important parts of your paper, so this section should get a lot of attention from you at the outline stage.

Outline Framework

Question in your own words, with any necessary background. Might be anywhere from a single sentence to a full paragraph.

1. Background or Main Point 1
 - a. Background, Subpoint, or Evidence
 - i. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
 - ii. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
 - b. Subpoint or Evidence
 - i. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
 - ii. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
2. Main Point 2 (may have as many or few main points as needed)
 - a. Subpoint or Evidence
 - i. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
 - b. Subpoint or Evidence
 - i. Evidence for Subpoint (if necessary)
 1. Commentary, brief thoughts
 - c. Subpoint or Evidence
 - i. Commentary, brief thoughts
3. Main Point 3 (repeat as needed)
 - a. Etc.

Possible Conclusions / Answers to the Question

More tips:

- There is no set number of points for a paper, only the number of points necessary to fully explore and answer your question. Be conscious of the fact that some points may actually be subpoints or parts of larger points.
- Make sure that you aren't just identifying three random points that independently answer your question—each of your points needs to build on or respond to the previous one. You need to logically connect and organize the points.
- You should have some sort of evidence for each point.

- Feel free to use quotations that you might not use in their entirety when you write the actual paper; you may also use paraphrase and summary.
- Everything must be properly cited, even at this stage.
- Your analysis does not necessarily need to be full sentences (though it will be more helpful to you when it comes to writing your paper if you do use full sentences), but they need to be understandable to me.
- Some students prefer to write a rough draft first and then organize it into an outline. *This is perfectly acceptable.*

Example Logical Outline

Hamlet... the Dane?: The Problem of Succession in *Hamlet*

Intro:

In the middle of Act 3, Rosencrantz inadvertently touches on what is a key issue in *Hamlet*: why isn't Prince Hamlet already King Hamlet, Hamlet the Dane? Hamlet has just explained that the reason for his melancholy is he "lack[s] advancement" (3.2.311). Rosencrantz responds, "How can that be when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?" (3.2.312-13). But "the King himself" is Claudius, the man who killed Hamlet's father, married Hamlet's mother, made himself king—and then named Hamlet, the very man he displaced, his heir. How could this occur without some sort of uproar? Why did no one wonder at Hamlet's not ascending to the throne? In order to attempt to answer these questions, I will look at the problem of Denmark being an electoral state, who the candidates for the throne are, and what conclusions we can draw about Shakespeare's attitudes towards succession and inheritance.

1. Denmark combines primogeniture (inheritance by the first-born son) with an electoral state.
 - a. The concept that Denmark is an electoral state is thrown into the play only in the fifth and final act, and then only appearing as two side notes in Hamlet's conversations with Horatio:
 - i. "He that hath killed my king and whored my mother, / Popped in between th'election and my hopes, / Thrown out his angle for my proper life" (5.2.65-67).
 1. Hamlet indicates that Claudius became king because he managed to get between Hamlet and the election. Hamlet *should* have become king under a more traditional primogeniture system; and Hamlet seems to have expected to become king. The language of "popped" suggests a surprise, not something expected.
 - ii. "But I do prophesy th'election lights / On Fortinbras.

He has my dying voice, / So tell him, with
th'occurents, more and less, / Which have solicited.
(5.2.297-98).

1. Hamlet gives his "dying voice" for Fortinbras in an imagined future election, a deciding vote.
 2. The language of "voice" is the same language that Rosencrantz used to describe what Claudius has done for Hamlet in making him his heir (3.2.112-113).
- iii. These passages show that the monarch of the Denmark is not chosen merely by who is the first son of the previous king (though that is part of it). Rather, each king must have the support of some other group which "elects" the king. These two methods of succession, primogeniture and election, are combined in the monarchy of Denmark.
 - b. An audience in England would probably have expected the more traditional primogeniture system, and might have been asking why Hamlet was not made king much earlier.
 - c. It is unclear which group actually elects the king, though some passages suggest it is the people. Laertes is proclaimed king by the "rabble" (4.5.98), and Claudius worries about offending the people concerning Hamlet (4.7.16-21). But Claudius and Hamlet both clearly expect to have a "voice" or vote as well.
2. There are three major options for who could become King in this version of an electoral state: Claudius, Hamlet, and Fortinbras.
 - a. Option 1: Claudius. Claudius became king after his murder of Hamlet Sr. While Hamlet is presumably away in Wittenburg (1.2.119), Claudius "pops" between Hamlet and the throne, due to the fact that election takes his mere eligibility to the throne and turns it into possession of the throne. Claudius further makes his claim on the throne through his marriage to Gertrude:
 - i. "The King doth wake tonight and takes his rouse, / Keeps wassail, and the swagg'ring upspring reels, / And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down / The kettle drum and trumpet thus bray out / The triumph of his pledge" (1.4.9-13).
 1. The triumph is not just the draining of the cup, but with the symbol of the cup comes signs of his taking the throne through

- Gertrude. His “triumph” is winning the throne, but his “pledge” is his wedding vows.
- ii. There is an implicit association between the granting of Gertrude’s sexual favors through her marriage to Claudius with the accession of Claudius to the throne. Thus, it is through his marriage to Gertrude that Claudius can move from second in line for the throne to the first.
 1. Supported by the mousetrap that Hamlet sets up for Claudius. The poisoner kisses the crown before killing the king, but as far as we can tell, does not put it on until after the queen accepts his love (3.2). In fact, he cannot, for otherwise it would be clear that he had poisoned the king.
 - iii. However, it is also clear that Claudius’ position as King is unstable. In his opening speech he is fishing for the support of the court and the nobles.
 1. “Nor have we herein barred / Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone / With this affair along. For all, our thanks.” (1.2.14-16).
 - a. Claudius is deliberate in taking their advice, and careful to thank them. In taking their advice, he makes them dependent on him for their power. In thanking them, he makes them feel appreciated and therefore content to remain under him.
 2. Claudius further cements his position by making the rightful heir, the man who should be ruling, into his own heir.
 - a. “But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son--” (1.2.64); “Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son” (1.2.117).
 - i. If the court were to have any qualms about Claudius as king, this is the sort of move that would relieve them, for it appears at least on the surface that he is not displacing the current line of

- succession as rearranging it.
3. Once Polonius is killed, Claudius fears for both his throne and his life from three quarters: Hamlet, the people, and Laertes.
 - a. Claudius says to Gertrude that Hamlet is a threat “It had been so with us had we been there. / His liberty is full of threats to all-- / To you yourself, to us, to everyone” (4.1.12-13).
 - b. However, Claudius is equally afraid of the people who support Hamlet: “Yet must not we put the strong law on him. / He’s loved of the distracted multitude” (4.3.3-4).
 - c. Claudius fears for his own safety—and possibly for the safety of his throne.
 - b. Option 2: Hamlet. Hamlet was the son of the previous King, and of age. At the beginning of the play, Hamlet does not appear overly concerned with the fact that he has not taken the throne so much as he is with his mother’s apparent disrespect to his father by marrying so quickly. However, this changes over the course of the play.
 - i. Hamlet is well-loved by the people, and Claudius is afraid of offending them, which would support any claim to the throne that Hamlet might make.
 1. It is only in the fifth act that Hamlet asserts his right to the throne: “This is I, Hamlet the Dane.” (5.1.241-42). Hamlet, previous to this point, appears mostly concerned with revenging the wrong to his father, not himself.
 2. There are hints, however, that Hamlet was thinking about the issue of the throne earlier, as in his conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, when he said he “lacked advancement” (3.2.311).
 - c. Option 3: Fortinbras. After the death Hamlet and Claudius, Fortinbras becomes King of Denmark.
 - i. This event in some ways seems more puzzling than Hamlet not gaining the throne.
 1. Why does Hamlet give Fortinbras his “dying

- voice" (5.2.298)? Isn't this passing the kingdom over to a foreigner?
- ii. But Fortinbras might be the most logical choice for Hamlet to support.
 1. Hamlet would probably be foolish in supporting anyone who had previously supported Claudius, which would include the entire court. As far as the play is concerned, there is no one else of noble blood around for Hamlet to name. Even Laertes, who is "a very noble youth" and had the support of the people (5.1.206, 4.5.98-104), is dead.
 2. Fortinbras has the earliest claim on any part of Denmark in being the true heir of Norway, which had become a vassal state of Denmark due to a duel and agreement between Hamlet and Fortinbras Seniors (1.1.81-94). In fact, Fortinbras claims "rights of memory" to "claim" Denmark when he arrives at the end of the play (5.2.390-1)
 - iii. Could Fortinbras's rise to the throne be the fate or "providence" that Hamlet had spoken of in saying "there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow"? (5.2.157-58)

Conclusions: A central problem in *Hamlet* is succession: who has the right to the throne? Is Claudius's crime not just the murder of his brother, but the dispossession of Hamlet from the throne? These anxieties identify succession and inheritance as a primary site of injustice. The revenge that Hamlet seeks is not just for the murder of his father, but the use of political systems and power to disinherit him. *Hamlet* presents the view that ultimately justice will be served—but not in Hamlet taking the throne. Instead, the play looks further back to right the injustice originally experienced by Fortinbras, who regains what his own father lost in single combat to Hamlet Sr. In other words, while not everything will be set to rights, ultimately justice can be done.

6.4 INTRODUCTIONS, THESIS STATEMENTS, AND ROADMAPS

The standard introduction to an academic paper has three parts:

1. Essential background information
2. Thesis statement
3. Roadmap to the paper

Background Information

In your introduction, you need to give your readers a place to start, some sort of context for what you are planning on talking about. You can't just drop a bomb—that is, your thesis—on them with no warning. The background information is how you provide that context. Your background information, then, needs to function as a bridge into your thesis statement. The difficulty is finding the right balance: you don't want to go too basic, or too general, because you don't want to treat your audience like they are idiots. As a result, all of the background information you provide needs to have a specific connection to your thesis. Sometimes this background information is not necessarily derived from your text; it may be background for the theory behind your topic, a historical event that provides clarity for what happens in the story, or an idea proposed by someone else that you will be arguing against or building on (what "they say" in other words). It might also be a brief summary of the conversation that sets up the question you are answering with your paper.

Thesis Statements

The thesis statement is perhaps the one most important parts of your paper. It will give your paper focus and cohesion, and will let the reader know exactly what he or she can expect from the rest of the paper. A thesis statement will do all or most of the following things:

1. It will answer the question that prompted the paper
2. It will articulate your argument, position, or point of view on the question or issue
3. It will be *specific* rather than general.
4. It will go beyond stating a fact, addressing either *how* or *why* any facts in the thesis are important.

A thesis statement will almost always occur in the first paragraph of a paper, with only a few exceptions. Especially in shorter papers, the thesis should be one of the first things your reader can clearly identify.

You will not necessarily know the answer to the question you are answering until you have done some extensive thinking about a topic or issue. The logical outline helps with this, as before you develop an argument on any

topic, you have to collect and organize evidence, look for possible relationships between known facts (such as surprising contrasts or similarities), and think about the significance of these relationships. Once you do this thinking, you will probably have a “working thesis,” a basic or main idea, an argument that you think you can support with evidence but that may need adjustment along the way.

Once you have a working thesis, you can ask yourself the following questions to see if it is a strong thesis:

1. **Do I answer the question?** If the thesis is supposed to answer the question that prompted the essay (whether in the assignment itself or in your own outline), then asking whether you have fully answered the question will help you make sure you have stayed focused.
2. **Is my thesis debatable?** Your thesis must be a claim someone might disagree with. Your job in the paper is to make it difficult to disagree, but when you initially present your thesis, someone should be able to say, “now, wait a minute, are you sure about that?” In other words, your thesis cannot be a simple statement of fact or a summary of facts.
3. **Is my thesis specific enough?** Thesis statements that are too vague often do not have a strong argument. If your thesis contains words like “good,” “interesting,” or “bad,” see if you could be more specific. You might start by defining what those terms mean: instead of being “interesting,” do you mean that it poses a set of important questions? Instead of being “good” do you mean “aesthetically pleasing” or “emotionally compelling”?
4. **Does my thesis pass the how or why test?** Remember that a good thesis goes beyond a “what” to a “how” or “why.” Check to see if you have a “by,” “through,” or “because” as the start of a clause in your thesis.
5. **Does my thesis pass the ‘So What?’ test?** If a reader’s response to your thesis could be, “so what?” then you need to clarify why your argument is important. This is perhaps the most important question you can ask of your thesis, and by the time your paper is done, if we are still left without an answer, you need to think harder and deeper about your topic.

If you can’t answer all these questions when you first start writing your paper, don’t worry. A working thesis tends to be a little vaguer than the thesis in a final paper. As you write, you may find you answer more and more of these questions; you can always go back and revise your thesis to reflect those

answers. Essentially, when you reach the end of your paper, you need to compare what your thesis says with what your paper says. If your thesis and the body of your essay do not seem to go together, one of them has to change, and at least half the time it will be easier and better to change your thesis.

Example Thesis Statements

Based on “*Harlem*” by Langston Hughes

Weak Thesis: Langston Hughes’ poem “Harlem” is about what happens to “a dream deferred.”

Why it’s weak:

- It’s not a very debatable statement, but closer to a statement of fact. It might work as part of a paragraph, but it doesn’t work as a thesis.
- It tells us the topic of the poem, but not why it matters, or what is interesting or complicated about it.

Stronger Thesis 1: In “Harlem,” Langston Hughes uses vivid images of decay and destruction to illustrate how “dreams deferred” can harm human beings.

Why it’s stronger:

- This thesis makes a claim about Hughes’ purpose, addressing “how?” (vivid images of decay and destruction) and “why?” (to illustrate the harm done by deferred dreams)
- The claim is debatable (does Hughes actually describe harm?), and suggests which specific elements the poem support the claim.
- It identifies specific details that will be important to the argument.

Stronger Thesis 2: While “Harlem” is a short, seemingly simple poem, it combines a complex layout with ambiguous imagery and similes to challenge preconceived notions about what happens to those whose dreams must be deferred.

Why it’s stronger:

- This thesis goes beyond fact into debatable interpretation—in fact, it specifically addresses why the interpretation is debatable (the poem seems short and simple at first).
- It identifies and answers an important question about the speaker’s method, thus addressing “how” (layout, ambiguous imagery) and “why” the poet makes his argument (to challenge preconceived notions).

Paradise Lost

Weak Thesis: Pride causes Satan's downfall in *Paradise Lost*.

Why it's weak:

- This is an answer to the question, "What causes Satan's downfall in *Paradise Lost*?" In other words, it addresses a "what" rather than a "how" or "why."
- This type of thesis leads to having lots of examples instead of having a logical argument or substantial points in your paper.

Stronger Thesis 1: "While pride plays an obvious role in Satan's downfall, Milton subtly suggests that envy is the root cause of the fall for both Satan and Eve. In doing so, he suggests how reasonable desires can quickly turn dangerous."

Why it's stronger:

- This still addresses the question "What causes the fall in *Paradise Lost*?" but it also suggests how and why Milton makes his argument
 - How: subtly and through both Satan and Eve
 - Why: to suggest that sin happens when reasonable desires become dangerous or even unreasonable
- The resulting paper will have to go beyond giving examples of pride and how they lead to downfall, and show a series of logical relationships instead:
 - Between envy and the fall (and perhaps between envy and pride),
 - Between reasonable and unreasonable desires,
 - Between Satan and Eve

Stronger Thesis 2: "It is through the illusion of Satan's greatness, compounded by Satan's own pride and belief in his own abilities, that Milton creates the temporary illusion that Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost*."

Why it's stronger:

- It still is about the role of pride in *Paradise Lost*, but it answers a different, more specific question that has both a how and why component ("How and why does Milton seem to suggest that Satan might be the hero of *Paradise Lost*?").
- The thesis goes beyond just answer the how/why, and starts to address the "so-what" question: why should we care that Satan is considered a

hero? By pointing out that this is an intentional illusion, this thesis implies that Milton's portrayal of Satan's heroic qualities is an intentional but temporary deception of the reader.

What is a roadmap?

A road map is the part of your introduction that tells your reader how you are going to go about proving your thesis. You should lay out your points so that you don't risk losing your reader as you move through your argument. A roadmap might be implicit, created by the order of the points in your introduction, or it might be an explicit sentence that says something like, "By exploring X, Y, and Z, I will show that..."

However, be careful not to mindlessly list all your points just because you can. We want only those essential bits that tell us where you going and what you are proving.

Strategies for Writing Good Introductions

Start by thinking about the question.

Your essay should be a response to a question, and your introduction is the first step toward that end. Your direct answer to the question will be your thesis, and your thesis will be included in your introduction, so it can be a good idea to use the question as a jumping off point.

Write a tentative introduction first and then change it later.

Very rarely are you going to be able to write a good introduction on the first try. You probably need to put *something* on the page to get going, but you will probably need to change it in substantial ways. In fact, you might want to consider the fact that if your introduction is going to describe your argument and how you are going to prove it, you might want to actually have the argument laid out in detail first—which means you will need to write your introduction last.

You may find that you don't know what you are going to argue at the beginning of the writing process, and only through the experience of writing your paper do you discover your main argument. It is perfectly fine to start out thinking that you want to argue a particular point, but wind up arguing something slightly or even dramatically different by the time you've written most of the paper. The writing process can be an important way to organize your ideas, think through complicated issues, refine your thoughts, and develop a sophisticated argument.

However, an introduction written at the beginning of that discovery process will not necessarily reflect what you wind up with at the end. You will need to revise your paper to make sure that the introduction, all of the evidence, and the conclusion reflect the argument you intend. Sometimes it helps to write up all of your evidence first and then write the introduction -- that way you can be sure that the introduction matches the body of the paper.

Open with an attention grabber.

Sometimes, especially if the topic of your paper is somewhat dry or technical, opening with something catchy can help. Consider these options:

1. An intriguing situation or scenario from your primary text
2. A provocative quotation from your text
3. A vivid or perhaps unexpected anecdote related to the text
4. A thought-provoking question about the text

These attention-grabbing openers might get your reader interested and also help your reader connect to what might otherwise seem a pretty obscure topic. Essentially, you can use attention-grabbers to help your readers see why your topic is relevant and to help them begin to care about your findings and perspectives. All attention-grabbers should be clearly related to your thesis.

Pay special attention to your first sentence.

If any sentence in your paper is going to be completely free of errors and vagueness, it should be your first one. Make sure the first sentence says something useful, interesting, and relevant to your essay. Make a good impression by proofreading it especially carefully.

Introductions to Avoid Like the Plague

1. **The Place Holder Introduction.** Place holder introductions contains several vague or extremely general sentences, perhaps only distantly related to the topic at hand. They exist just to take up the “introduction space” in your paper. However, it is acceptable to write a place holder introduction for a rough draft and then come back and write another introduction later. (A place holder introduction is often a sign that there has been incomplete revision)
2. **The Restated Question Introduction.** This introduction simply repeats (or slightly rewords) the initial prompt or question that came as

the assignment. While you want to use your introduction to prove that you are answering the question, spending most of your time restating the question can be ineffective if *all* you do is restate it. A better approach is to think about how you can put your own, very specific spin on the initial question—though make sure you don’t diverge too far and get off topic or go too far from the original assignment.

3. **The Dictionary Introduction.** Many students like to start their papers by quoting a definition of a key term from Merriam Webster, Wikipedia, or Dictionary.com. While establishing key definitions can be an important part of an introduction, opening with a standard dictionary or Wikipedia definition can seem insulting (do you really think your professor does not know what the word means?). It will be far more effective if you can develop your own definition of the terms in play because you will be able to define the term in the specific context of the text(s) you are using. If you must use a definition from someone else, perhaps because you are not confident about developing your own definition, try and find a definition from an expert on the subject at hand instead.

The one occasion where it might be acceptable to use the dictionary in your introduction is if you are going to argue with the definition or challenge its use of the term in relationship to your particular topic/examples. However, if you do take this approach, use the OED.com as your dictionary, be sure that you aren’t establishing a straw-man, and follow up with your own definition as well.

4. **The Dawn of Man Introduction.** Papers that begin with “from the beginning of time,” “throughout history” or “since the dawn of man” are problematic because they make broad, sweeping statements about the relevance of this topic. But while such introductions imply the importance of the topic, they are rarely true and are usually completely unprovable. Students write these sorts of introductions when they don’t have something more specific to say about why their topics are important—which is precisely why they are ineffective. Instead, focus on coming up with a more specific opening and a stronger “so-what” or significance factor.
5. **The Book Report Introduction.** A book report is all about the facts. It summarizes the text under discussion, reporting basic facts or plot points without much consideration for whether the intended audience already knows the text, or how the facts in question set up a thesis. Such a summary is of limited effectiveness; you could have written this kind of

introduction in the fifth-grade, and probably did. Students often use this format because it is familiar and comfortable. Instead of summarizing the whole text, put your focus on drawing attention to the parts that will set up your thesis.

6. **Hyperbolic praise introduction.** This introduction spends most of its time exclaiming how wonderful or insightful the author/text under consideration is. However, this introduction makes you seem less critical and objective, and delays your ability to establish the real purpose of your paper. It diminishes a reader's sense that you will be able to say something interesting and important about the real topic of your paper.

6.5 PARAGRAPHS, TOPIC SENTENCES, AND TRANSITIONS

Good paragraphs have a structure that is similar to, though simplified from, the larger essay structure:

- **Introduction.** Where the essay has a thesis, the paragraph has a *topic sentence*. Just as in an essay you want to make sure you have a clear statement of purpose in the beginning, you want to do the same for your paragraphs. The introduction to a paragraph may also provide a transition from previous points or give background information necessary to understand the body of the paragraph.
- **Body.** The body of the paragraph proves or develops the ideas in the topic sentence the same way the various paragraphs prove or develop the ideas in the thesis and roadmap of the over-arching essay. It will include relevant facts, evidence, examples, arguments, and analysis.
- **Conclusion.** The conclusion wraps up and synthesizes the material in the paragraph the same way the conclusion at the end of the paper does for the entire argument. The conclusion might also serve to remind us of the “so-what” factor of the paragraph, explaining how the body connects to the thesis statement.

In a good paragraph, the lines between these different elements are less distinct than in an essay; after all, there is no new paragraph break and indentation to signal the changes. Readers will look for more subtle clues in the form of internal transitions.

Topic Sentences

The vast majority of good paragraphs begin with topic sentences that clearly state the argument of a paragraph, functioning as a mini thesis statement for the paragraph. You need to state your point before you discuss the evidence and logic that proves it. Readers absorb information best when they know why information is important; if you don't explain your point, readers will have a tendency to skim, and may miss the details that are most important to your point.

A good topic sentence will also make connections. It will connect to the thesis and/or the previous point. We sometimes call these connections “sign posts,” playing off the idea that they are complementary to the “road map” provided at the beginning of the essay.

Topic sentences can also apply to more than just a single paragraph. Sometimes a topic sentence will set up the argument for a series of related paragraphs. If you wrote a logical outline with multiple sub-points for a main point, it is more likely that you will use this technique.

Just as you might write your thesis statement last in your outline, you might want to write the topic sentence for a paragraph last as well. Just make sure it appears as the first (or perhaps second) sentence of your paragraph by the time you turn it in.

Transitions

Within your paper, sentences and ideas must follow one another in a logical pattern. By “logical pattern,” I mean that your sentences and points have to relate to one another in various ways, and that these relationships must be clearly explained. If thoughts follow one another without sufficient connection, your essay will make no sense. Within each paragraph you will be using transitions almost continuously. However, linking words and transitions alone will not do you any good unless the ideas themselves are actually connected. Here are some techniques for creating transitions:

1. Echo a key phrase or word from the last sentence or idea.

Whatever Lear’s faults, it cannot be denied that he *loves* his daughters.
Unfortunately, Regan and Goneril care little for their Father’s *love*. . . .

Be careful that you do not just repeat the previous sentence. You are working on switching to a slightly different subject, not repeating your last point

2. Use a transitional sentence rather than a transitional word or phrase.

The evidence thus far suggests that there is no other option.
And yet there may still be a solution. If we consider...

The transitional sentence does not indicate what will come next in the paragraph, but it establishes that this paragraph is a negation of the last. Note that this kind of sentence displaces the topic sentence you would expect to find at the beginning of the paragraph; the topic sentence should follow it.

3. Use a linking or “code” word to indicate the relationship between your points. *However*, make sure you use the right word for your context, or you can do more damage than good.

Thus the pattern established by Dickens in the first chapter is consistent throughout the rest of the first volume.

However, the second volume offers a new approach to the narrative. . .

If you used “Indeed” instead of “However” the sentence would make no logical sense—you are indicating that the connection is a change, rather than repetition or emphasis. A list of different transition words appears below.

A Few Types of Logical Transitions

You should be using some of these terms in every paragraph to link your evidence with your analysis, and to link different paragraphs with each other. Make sure you know all of the nuances of each word; it won’t do to use the wrong one.

Similarity: also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly, in the same manner

Exception/Contrast: however, in spite of, but, on the one hand ... on the other hand, in contrast, on the contrary, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, although, rather than, though, unlike

Time, Place, or Position: after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, last, meanwhile, now, then, recently, below, beyond, simultaneously, subsequently, adjacent, in back, nearby, here, there, while

Example: for example, for instance, namely, specifically, such as, to illustrate, including, especially

Emphasis: even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly

Cause and Effect: Because, hence, therefore, so, thus, accordingly, as a result, consequently, caused by

Additional Support: also, again, additionally, and, as well, besides, further, equally important, moreover, in addition, furthermore

Repetition: In fact, once again, in other words, to put another way

Conclusion/Summary: thus, in a word, in brief, briefly, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary

6.6 SIGNAL PHRASES, SUMMARY, PARAPHRASE, AND QUOTATION

When using other people's writing, students should have two primary goals, both of which are necessary for the ethical use of sources:

1. **Signaling Sources:** the clear indication of the sources from which the ideas and materials of the project originate
2. **Fair Representation:** the accurate description and representation of the ideas and materials of your sources, using a combination of quotations, paraphrase, and summary.

Ethically representing other people's ideas is important for a number of reasons. On the most pragmatic level, if you don't integrate sources in a way that makes it clear where you got your ideas or materials, you are plagiarizing, which can result in failure on an assignment or for a class. More generally, the purpose of using sources—instead of creating a project that doesn't reference anyone else's ideas—is to participate in an ongoing conversation about a topic. Failing to signal your sources—that is, the other participants in the conversation—or fairly represent their ideas means your own contributions won't be taken seriously.

Signal Phrases

Also sometimes called attributive tags, signal phrases let the reader know when an idea, piece of information, or quotation comes from a source. It usually alerts the reader to who created the source, what type of information is being taken from the source, and the author's attitude towards the material. For example, a project on the 2014 Ebola outbreak might use the signal phrase like this:

A recent report from the CDC indicates . . .

Here, the signal phrase alerts the reader that the information coming in the rest of the sentence originated with the CDC, and that the information is timely and appropriate to the project. Using a verb like "indicates" shows that the information is presented in factual, relatively neutral fashion. If the information had not come from a neutral source, or had been presented in an inflammatory way, a different verb would have been more appropriate.

Sometimes students who are not proficient with signal phrases will include a page number as their primary signal, writing something like, "On page 64, we see," or "in chapters four and five, we find," before moving into the quotation or paraphrase. However, this is ineffective: while your audience may indeed have read the text, it is not at all certain they will remember page or even the chapter off hand. It is better to provide the specific context of

the passage or source you are discussing by describing the elements of the argument or narrative that appear before or after the passage.

What verbs and phrases can I use to introduce my sources?

Familiarize yourself with the various verbs commonly used to introduce summary, paraphrase, and quotations. Here is a **partial** list:

argues	writes	points out	concludes	reveals
insists	says	maintains	observes	counters
notes	implies	comments	identifies	describes
states	claims	demonstrates	suggests	explains

Each verb has its own nuance. Make sure that the nuance matches your specific aims in introducing the source.

You can also use a phrase to introduce

In the words of X, . . . According to X, . . . In X's view, . . .

Vary the way you introduce quotations to avoid sounding monotonous, but never sacrifice precision of phrasing for the sake of variety.

Fair Representation

There are three ways to incorporate the ideas of other people into your own writing:

- **Quotations** must be identical to the original text (they should be word for word, punctuation for punctuation mark identical), use a small part of the source, and must be attributed to the original author. Depending on length, quotations can be identified by quotation marks or by being set off from the rest of the paper in block-quotation format.
- **Paraphrasing** involves putting a passage of someone else's writing into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source—this means you must CITE paraphrases. It may be interspersed with very short quotations of words or phrases.
- **Summarizing** involves putting the main idea(s) of a larger text into your own words, usually focusing on just the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are shorter than the original and provide an overview of the source material.

Generally, the best rule is to summarize the factual, quote the memorable, and paraphrase the in-between. Writers frequently intertwine summaries, paraphrases, and quotations. As part of a summary, a writer might include

paraphrases of various key points blended with quotations of striking or suggestive phrases.

Summary and Paraphrase

Summarizing and paraphrasing are very similar activities; their primary difference is scope and level of detail. **Summarizing** involves putting the big idea of a source into your own words, including only the main point(s). **Paraphrasing** involves putting a shorter passage from your source into your own words, often including more detail from the original source even while condensing slightly. Unlike quotations, paraphrases are used to represent ideas where the original wording is less important.

When you are summarizing or paraphrasing, the first thing you need to do is decide which information from the source is necessary to your particular project; not all of the material from any given source will be crucial to supporting your particular argument to your particular audience. You'll also want to decide if there are particular phrases or words from the source are irreplaceable—you can integrate these quotations into your paraphrase or summary.

Once you have made these decisions, you'll need to work on putting the ideas into your own words. It is important to remember that in the case of both paraphrase and summary, changing the words of the source is not enough to avoid plagiarism; you also need to avoid replicating the syntax or structure of the sentences that you are paraphrasing. Some textbooks recommend that students close the book and set it aside so they don't accidentally plagiarize; however, some students find that their memories are good enough that they still accidentally replicate language or syntax even with the book closed. If this is true for you, you may choose to keep the book open to check to see that your paraphrases and summaries are distinctly different in vocabulary and structure.

Finally, just as quotations should be followed by your own analysis, summary and paraphrase should be integrated with or followed by your own analysis.

Example Summary and Paraphrase

Here is a piece of a text that provides a definition of science fiction by the award-winning writer Robert Heinlein.

Science Fiction is speculative fiction in which the author takes as his first postulate the real world as we know it, including all established facts and natural laws. The result can be extremely fantastic in content, but it is not fantasy; it is legitimate—and often very tightly reasoned—speculation about the possibilities of the real world. This category excludes rocket ships that make U-turns, serpent men of Neptune that lust after human maidens, and stories by authors who flunked their Boy Scout merit badge tests in descriptive astronomy. (311)

Heinlein, Robert. “Ray Guns and Spaceships.” *Expanded Universe*. New York: Ace, 1981.

A summary of this source will identify a single central idea than can be extracted and put into other words. This summary does not use the particularly vivid elements of the passage, focusing just on providing the most succinct account of Heinlein’s definition. Note the use of a signal phrase to open the summary:

Robert Heinlein defines science fiction as a genre in which genuine scientific principles serve as the foundation for an author’s conjectures about the future and technology (311).

By contrast, the paraphrase below uses short quotations to bring attention to the most memorable language from the passage:

According to Robert Heinlein, science fiction is “fantastic . . . but not fantasy,” dealing with with the “real world;” it is rational and incorporates scientific ideas, without ignoring the rules governing how things work (311). Ultimately, science fiction examines the extreme possibilities of the world as we know it, and simply writing about aliens, advanced weapons, and spaceships is not enough. As Heinlein put it, science fiction “excludes rocket ships that make U-turns, serpent men of Neptune that lust after human maidens, and stories by authors who flunked their Boy Scout merit badge tests in descriptive astronomy” (311). Heinlein’s examples highlight the necessity that science fiction express an intrinsic knowledge of the rules by which our universe works, and the willingness to work within those boundaries.

The final sentence of the paraphrase is functionally analysis. One of the most common uses of paraphrasing is “unpacking” or explaining a piece of text

that you have already quoted. Paraphrase is combined with analysis to get at the larger meaning of the passage that goes beyond the explicit statements that Heinlein made.

Citing Paraphrase and Summary

It can sometimes be easy for students to forget that summarizing and paraphrasing require the same level of citation as quoting. Students often forget to cite summary or paraphrase because they work from memory rather than looking at specific pieces of a text. However, it is still necessary to attribute summarized and paraphrased ideas to the original source. A signal phrase might be sufficient citation for a summary if there are no quotations within the summary, and it is summarizing the whole text as opposed to just a portion of it. Paraphrases require signal phrases and parenthetical citations if the material is from a paginated source. In all cases, the goal should be to give a reader enough information about the source to find the specific place that you got your information.

Quotations

Quotations provide the reader with specific bits of information where the original wording of the information is important or memorable. Quotations must be identical to the original text, using a small part of the source, and must be attributed to the original speaker.

It is important to provide context for each quotation. Even if you can assume that your audience knows the text you are writing about, you may not want to assume they have done so recently, or that they remember all the specifics of the text. For this reason, your signal phrase can benefit from including a description of the scene from which the quotation comes, giving context for it. Your goal is to provide just enough information to help your reader be able to say, “Oh yes, I know the bit you’re talking about,” so that you can move along and make your point. Ideally, you will lay out your evidence in such a way that a reader never has to pick up the text unless she wants to double-check your point for herself.

Quotations should be integrated into the text of a sentence that starts with a signal phrase, like this:

In the beginning of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Junior, the main character, explains that he was born with “water on the brain,” a poetic way to describe the serious medical problem of having “too much cerebral spinal fluid inside [his] skull” (Alexie 1).

Quotations that aren’t integrated into a sentence in this way are sometimes called “dropped quotes” or “quote bombs.”

Generally speaking, the integration of long quotations into a paper follows a standard paradigm:

1. **Context** for the quotation, including a signal phrase.
2. The **quotation**, followed by an in-text **citation**
3. **Analysis** that draws the reader's attention to the elements that support the argument.

For all quotations, you need to cite according to the page of the source. Periods and commas go after the citation, which is outside the quotation marks, like so:

As Dr. Taylor said in the writing guide, “periods and commas go after the citation, which is outside the quotation marks” (336). I often forget this rule because I want to put the citation inside the quotation marks.

However, other punctuation marks like exclamation marks and question marks still goes inside the quotation marks, and a period still occurs after the citations, like so:

One of the questions Dr. Taylor tells us to ask when writing a conclusion is, “why is your paper/thesis/idea important, either for the world or the text you are studying?” (342). This reminds us to always include a “so-what” factor in our project.

This is only the case if the punctuation (?, !, etc.) is part of the original quotation. If *you* are adding the question mark or the exclamation mark, they take the place of the period after the citation information.

For quotations of more than four lines of prose, cite the text as a **block quotation, indented 1 inch**. There should be no quotation marks (the indentation takes the place of the quotation marks), and the punctuations reverts to before the citation. These quotations should not be centered or italicized unless that is part of the formatting from the original source.

Now I shall quote something—a rather long section, too—and after introducing the context for the quotation, I type:

Note that you omit the outer quotation marks. Should the passage include an embedded quotation, such as “O what a witty example this is,” then enclose the speech in double rather than single quotation marks. Put two spaces after your last punctuation mark, and then give the page number. (page)

Then continue with your analysis of the quotation.

Quotations within Quotations

If you were to quote the part of the above section that includes an internal quotation in a non-block-quotation format, it would look like this: “Should the passage include some speech, such as ‘Oh what a witty example this is’” (page). Note that the quotation inside the quotation only has single quotation or apostrophe marks around it.

Ellipsis

Whenever you want to leave out material from within a quotation, you need to use an ellipsis, which is a series of three periods with spaces in between [. . .]. These periods are surrounded by brackets so the reader knows that you are the one who made the change. **Do not use ellipses at the beginning or ending of quotations**, unless it is vitally important for the reader to know that the quotation was truncated.

Whenever you use ellipses, you must remain careful so that you do not change the inherent meaning of the text.

6.8 CONCLUSIONS

Writing a conclusion can be the hardest part of writing a paper (except maybe the introduction). Here are a few tips for writing a conclusion; as always, these are guidelines, not hard and fast rules. Overall, a conclusion should

- a) **stress the importance of the thesis statement;**
- b) **give the essay the sense that it is complete;**
- c) **leave a good final impression on the reader.**

There are a few options for writing conclusions. None of these are hard and fast rules; there are plenty of other options out there, and they can be mixed and combined at will.

The So-What Question: Try and answer in more depth the “so what” question. Why is your paper/thesis/idea important, either for the world or the text you are studying? This is easily the most effective sort of conclusion. The reader needs to leave your paper with a clear sense that she hasn’t wasted her time reading it. However, don’t go too broad in trying to tell us why it is important: if you try and tell me that your conclusion about *Hamlet* should change the world, you will usually end up sounding melodramatic and silly. Stay focused and reasonable.

Synthesis (as opposed to Summary): Generally, you don’t want to simply repeat ideas that were in your paper. If you’ve done your job with your paper, your readers now know the facts, and hopefully they remember your points. So, instead of summarizing what you’ve already said, synthesize your ideas. Your conclusion is your last chance to show your readers how all the points, support, and examples you used were not random, but fit together into a cohesive whole. Hopefully you will have been doing bits and pieces of this as you went along, but the conclusion is the place emphasize the major connections in a new way.

A New Application: Sometimes you might want to conclude a paper by giving your readers a new way to think about your topic—a way that the ideas you have spoken about fit into the real world. If you’ve been writing about how “The Lottery” criticizes the 1940s and 50s unthinking following of traditions, then perhaps you might suggest the ways in which we continue to do the same.

Redefinition: Conclude by redefining one of the key terms of your argument in light of the analysis you performed in your essay. If you started by talking about how Satan defines the term “liberty” in *Paradise Lost*, but your analysis

shows that there are other ways of thinking about liberty in the text, you can spend time in your conclusion suggesting how we can redefine the term.

Echo, Echo, Echo: One way to tie your paper together and give it the sense that it is complete is to echo what you started with. If you start with a poignant example or scenario, or a quotation of some importance, bring yourself back to that example. This can serve as proof that you have adequately addressed the problem you started with. However, **do not** just regurgitate your introduction. Try to talk about your topic in a new way, even when echoing what you started with. When you restate your thesis, do not leave it in the words it was in your intro, but rephrase it so that you demonstrate that you’ve incorporated the individual points and ideas from the body of your paper into the thesis.

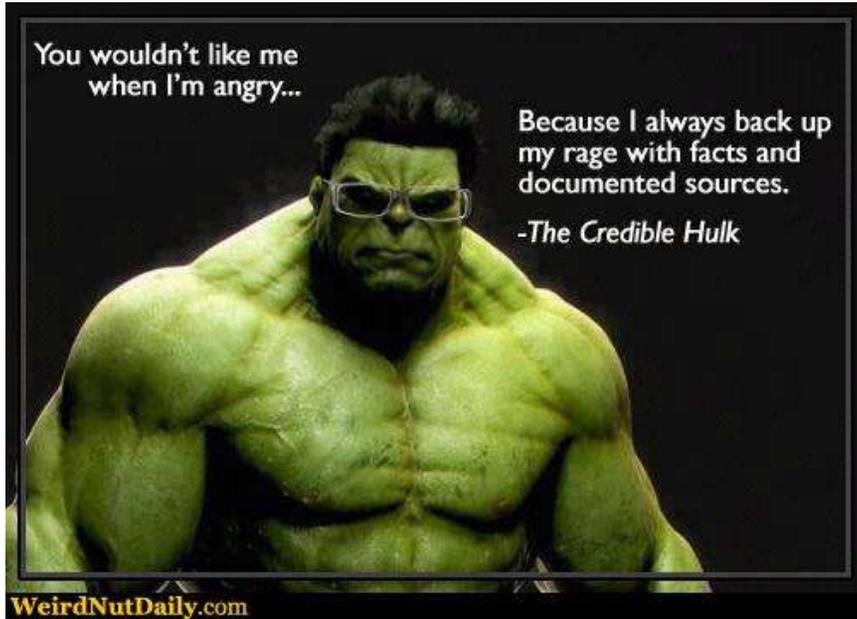
When deciding which tactic to take, always ask, “What will best reinforce my argument for my audience?”

Words of Warning

- Generally avoid ending your conclusion with a quotation. While you can have a quotation in your conclusion, ending with it can deflect attention away from what *you* have been trying to say, implying that what other people have said is more important. Also, most students tend to end with clichéd quotations—definitely avoid these!
- Remember the warning about generalizations: they are hard to prove, and thus are dangerous things to attempt, especially in your conclusion. The same goes for overly sentimental or obvious statements.
- Don’t make a claim in your conclusion that is unsubstantiated or unmentioned anywhere else. New material may enter a conclusion occasionally, but it must be closely related to everything else you have said.
- Avoid phrases like “in conclusion,” “to conclude,” “in summary,” and “to sum up.” While you might want to use one of these phrases in an oral presentation, they are overly obvious in a written work. If your essay doesn’t *feel* concluded to the reader, then simply saying “in conclusion” won’t fix your problem.

6.7 CONDUCTING RESEARCH: POPULAR VS. SCHOLARLY SOURCES

Research is a key part of academic writing, because it shows not only that you know what the current conversations on a topic are, but that you really understand your topic. When you make arguments, you are expected to back them up with facts and other people's ideas that have been tested, and to cite your sources in order to be credible or believable.



One difficulty that students have when starting to work on research based papers in college is that they aren't always sure what sources are considered credible in college. In this class, we're going to start with a pre-determined set of sources that are credible, and you'll spend some time learning how to evaluate them. Then, in your second research project, you'll learn how to find good sources yourself.

Popular vs. Scholarly Sources

When you are writing research papers, your professors generally will expect you to limit yourself to *scholarly* sources, though some will also allow you to use reputable, authoritative popular sources on certain topics. However, even if you don't use popular sources in your papers, when you are first learning about a field, popular sources can help introduce you to the larger conversation on a topic. They are usually aimed at people who are not yet

experts, and sometimes they will point readers to more scholarly sources where they can advance their understanding.

However, popular sources, because they are not aimed at experts and usually don't go through a rigorous review process, are more prone to errors, to contain distorting bias, or to oversimplify a topic. By contrast, scholarly sources are written by professionals in a field, and verified ("peer reviewed") by other professionals. Scholars use these sources rather than popular sources in order to maintain academic integrity: to make sure we have accurate and complete information on which to base our ideas, to make sure the methods used were valid, and to make sure that the arguments are accepted by people who really know their fields. Peer review and academic authors do not guarantee that an author is right but it does mean that we can treat their writing and ideas with respect even when we disagree or plan to prove them wrong.

Popular Sources	Scholarly Sources
Written by journalists, stakeholders, or members of the general public for the general public	Written by an expert in the field for other experts (if in a journal, peer reviewed).
Based on secondary research—they talk to the experts.	Based on primary research: they look at the sources or do the studies themselves
Usually published quickly—over hours, days, weeks	Usually published slowly—over months or years
Rarely includes references or footnotes. May cite experts in the text or include links.	Includes extensive evidence, footnotes, and references.
More likely to have errors or over-simplification	More likely to be accurate and nuanced

For every source you are considering, determine as best you can whether something is popular or scholarly. Additionally, you need to be discerning about *which* popular and scholarly sources you use. Your scholarly and popular sources need to be reputable, relevant, and recent:

- **Reputable:** With popular sources, you need to use reputable media outlets, both from the US and abroad. The vast majority of peer reviewed sources will be reputable (unless you find something to show that the source was later discredited). Popular sources are more complicated. Reputable popular news outlets include the *New York*

Times, the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, the BBC, NPR, and PBS. For some topics, there will be additional reputable popular sources.

- **Relevant:** You want to focus your attention on both scholarly and popular sources that address your topic directly and in a substantial way. Avoid sources that only briefly or tangentially address your topic.
- **Recent:** A major part of research is identifying the current conversation. For this reason, the more recent, the better. If the source is older, it won't include the people who are talking *now*. Older reporting or articles can be good only if you are going to explain how the conversation has changed over the years. While there are "seminal" books and articles—books and articles that remain relevant for long periods of time because everyone is still in conversation with them, or because the facts that they report have not changed—for the most part you want sources that are newer.

Notes on bias in popular sources: Some popular sources are known to have more liberal perspectives, while others have more conservative ones; others try very hard to be neutral. However, biases are not universal even within an organization: the *New York Times* is often considered slightly liberal in its approach to issues, but it will also publish articles and editorials by conservatives or with conservative assumptions. The *Wall Street Journal* is usually considered slightly conservative, but it will also publish articles and editorials by liberals or with liberal assumptions. You even have to be careful with groups that try to be neutral, like Reuters or the Associated Press: their reporting can in some cases make a conversation seem more balanced than it actually is. If a debate has 99 people who say that pizza is the quintessential Italian-American food, and 1 person who says, no, eggplant parmesan is, a reporter who interviews both sides and gives them equal amount of time can make a conversation seem balanced when it is not. This is a kind of distortion towards artificial neutrality rather than honest but inescapable bias.

The best places to find scholarly articles is through the University's online databases but you can also use Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com>). The library has lots of databases, but these are the ones that are most likely to be useful to you:

Ebook Central	Credo Reference
Academic OneFile	New York Times
JSTOR	Wiley-Blackwell
Project Muse	Wall Street Journal
ProQuest Central	

When you are doing research in more narrow fields, there will be databases that are designed specifically for your area. So, there are Business databases (ABI/Inform Complete, Business Source Premier, IBISWorld Industry Reports), Health databases (Health Source, CINAHL Plus), Social Work databases (Encyclopedia of Social Work) and so on. You have to look at the descriptions to find which ones will do what you want. You can find the databases that our library gives you access to here:

<http://www.library.briarcliff.edu/databases>

6.2 MLA CITATION STYLE

Parts of the MLA Citation

- 1 Author.
- 2 Title of source.
- 3 Title of container,
- 4 Other contributors,
- 5 Version,
- 6 Number,
- 7 Publisher,
- 8 Publication date,
- 9 Location.

1: Authors should be listed last name, first name. Bibliographies should be alphabetized by author's last name.

2: Titles of sources should be in italics for large sources (books, films, whole websites), or quotation marks for smaller ones (articles, book chapters, individual web pages). See more information below.

3: "Container" refers to any print or digital venue (a website or print journal, for example) in which an essay or article may be included.

4: Other contributors are people who did not write the text, but may have edited, translated, or performed the text. Their role should be made explicit.

5-7: Version, number, and publisher only apply to some sources (journals and books). See below.

8: The amount of information on the date you need to include depends on the source. See more below.

9: Location is where someone else can find the source. It can include page numbers, web addresses, or DOI numbers. See more below.

3-9: These elements might be repeated a second time in a citation if there are multiple levels of containers (such as online databases). See more below.

Once you have all the information, you need to use the punctuation on the chart, and format it with a hanging indent of ½ inch.

Basic MLA Formats

Source Type	Basic Citation Format
Book	Author(s). <i>Title of Book</i> . Publisher, Year.
Article in a Book	Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Book</i> , edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, Pages.
Newspaper or Magazine Article	Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Periodical</i> , Day Month Year, Pages.
Journal Article:	Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Journal</i> , Volume, Issue, Year, pages.
Web Page	Author(s). "Title of Page." <i>Title of Website</i> , Publisher (if not same as website), Day Month Year. Web address.

Secondary Containers

To add secondary containers (like the database you found a source in), add the title of the database (italicized) and the DOI or URL after the date or location of the first container. Provide a date of access if you wish.

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, Volume, Issue, Year, pages. *Database*, doi:number. Accessed Day Month Year.

Breaking it Down

Author

Begin the entry with the author's last name, followed by a comma and the author's first name. End this element with a period.

Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. W. W. Norton, 2011.

If there are multiple authors, list the authors in the same order they are listed in the publication. The first name should be listed last name, first name, while other author names appear first name, last name.

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 3rd ed., W.W. Norton, 2017.

If there are three or more authors, list only the first author followed by the phrase “et al.” in place of the other authors’ names.

Berlowitz, Marvin J., et al. “Bullying and Zero-Tolerance Policies: The School to Prison Pipeline.” *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, vol. 12, no. 1, Mar. 2017, pp. 7–25. ERIC, doi:10.1515/mlt-2014-0004.

If a book is written by a group (a government agency, corporation, non-profit organization, etc.) and does not list individual authors on the title page, list the name of the group where an author’s name usually appears. If the author and the publisher are the same, skip the author and list the title first.

Climate Central. *Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future*. Vintage Books, 2012.

Title of Sources and Containers

Titles should either be in italics or quotation marks. Generally speaking, sources that are big enough to contain other sources should be in italics, while the sources that could be contained in a larger source are in quotations marks.

Italics	Quotation Marks
Books	Book Chapters Poems Short Stories
Films	Short Films
Television Series	Television Episodes
Music Album	Songs
Journals	Articles in Journals
Magazines	Article in Magazines
Newspapers	Articles in Newspapers
Websites	Articles on a Website

Containers are the larger wholes in which a source is located. For example, if you want to cite an article from the *New York Times*, the individual article is the source, while the *New York Times* is the container. The title of the container is italicized and followed by a comma.

Plumer, Brad and Nadja Popvich. “As Climate Changes, Southern States Will Suffer More Than Others.” *New York Times*, 29 June 2017. nyti.ms/2tqg1Wm.

In some cases, a container might be within a larger container. You might read an article in a book that you found on *Google Books*, or found a journal article on Academic Search Premiere. It is important to cite these containers within containers so that your readers can find the exact source that you used.

Burrow, J. A. “The Fourteenth-Century Arthur.” *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, edited by Ad Putter and Elizabeth Archibald, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 69–83. *Cambridge Core*, doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521860598.005.

Other contributors

In addition to the author, there may be other contributors who should be credited, such as editors and translators. Be sure to name the role the contributor played, such as “edited by . . .”

Derrida, Jacques. “Des Tours de Babel.” *Difference in Translation*, edited & translated by Joseph F. Graham, Cornell UP, 1985, pp. 165–207.

Version

If a book has been published in multiple editions, you need to identify the version or edition.

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 3rd ed., W.W. Norton, 2017.

Number

Some sources or containers are part of a numbered sequence. These include multi-volume books, journals (which often have both volume and issue numbers), and even television episodes.

Gallagher, Chris W. "The Trouble with Outcomes." *College English*, vol. 75, no. 1, 2012, pp. 42–60.

Publisher

The publisher distributes the source. However, you do not need to include the publisher's name for periodicals, works published by their author or editor, a website whose title is the same as the publisher's, or a website that allows individuals to publish their own work (such as *YouTube*, *WordPress*, etc.).

Climate Central. *Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future*. Vintage Books, 2012.

Publication date

How much information you need to give about your source's publication date depends on the source.

- Books generally only need the year.
- Journals may need just the year, or the season and year.
- Magazines need the month and year, and sometimes the day.
- Newspapers need day, month, and year.

Climate Central. *Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future*. Vintage Books, 2012.

Plumer, Brad and Nadja Popvich. "As Climate Changes, Southern States Will Suffer More Than Others." *New York Times*, 29 June 2017. [nyti.ms/2tqg1Wm](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/29/us/climate-change-southern-states.html).

Location

The location is where in the container a source is located, or where on the internet the source is located.

- An essay in a book or an article in journal should include page numbers.
- Sources that you find online should list a URL or DOI.
- Physical objects (like artwork) should list their physical location.

Gallagher, Chris W. "The Trouble with Outcomes." *College English*, vol. 75, no. 1, 2012, pp. 42–60.

Plumer, Brad and Nadja Popvich. "As Climate Changes, Southern States Will Suffer More Than Others." *New York Times*, 29 June 2017. [nyti.ms/2tqg1Wm](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/29/us/climate-change-southern-states.html).

Burrow, J. A. "The Fourteenth-Century Arthur." *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, edited by Ad Putter and Elizabeth Archibald, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 69–83. *Cambridge Core*, doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521860598.005.

Have a more complicated issue or question about citations? Start by checking the Purdue OWL website:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

You can also visit the Writing Center or come to Dr. Taylor's office hours, or even ask a question in class.

Overall Formatting

Your bibliography should have the word "Bibliography" centered at the top of the page (unless you are writing an annotated bibliography, which should have a more interesting title), and the entries should be alphabetized by the first word of each citation (ignoring words like "the" or "an").

Bibliography

- Berlowitz, Marvin J., et al. "Bullying and Zero-Tolerance Policies: The School to Prison Pipeline." *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, vol. 12, no. 1, Mar. 2017, pp. 7–25. *ERIC*, doi:10.1515/mlt-2014-0004.
- Burrow, J. A. "The Fourteenth-Century Arthur." *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, edited by Ad Putter and Elizabeth Archibald,

Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 69–83. *Cambridge Core*, doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521860598.005.

- Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. W. W. Norton, 2011.
- Climate Central. *Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas, and the Weather of the Future*. Vintage Books, 2012.
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- Plumer, Brad and Nadja Popvich. “As Climate Changes, Southern States Will Suffer More Than Others.” *New York Times*, 29 June 2017. nyti.ms/2tqg1Wm.
- The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2016. owl.english.purdue.edu.

6.9 EDITING AND PROOFREADING

Sentence Editing

Complex ideas and complex sentences might seem like they go hand in hand. To a certain extent, this is even true: many complex ideas can only be expressed in complex sentences. However, because our brains can have trouble managing complex ideas *and* complex grammatical structures at the same time, it’s important for all writers to learn to communicate even the most complex ideas in the most concise, efficient manner possible. However, our brains *also* have can have a hard time thinking complex thoughts and writing concise sentences at the same time. This means that every writer will need to learn to edit their work, though it might look different for each person. One person might write one sentence, and rewrite the very next moment, and rewrite it again until it’s perfect. Another person might write an entire draft, then revise for content, and then go back and edit each sentence separately in a discrete step. Most people find themselves between these two extremes.

There are three common problems with over-written sentences that you should watch out for:

1. Overuse of prepositions
2. Unnecessary “to be” verbs
3. Passive voice

Prepositions

Prepositions indicate relationships between different parts of a sentence—usually between nouns. In the last sentence, “between” and “of” are the two main prepositions. A prepositional phrase (a preposition and the noun phrase it is attached to, such as “of a sentence”) often serves as an adjective or adverb.

Prepositions

about	above	across	after	against
along	among	around	at	beyond
behind	below	beneath	beside	between
beyond	by	despite	down	during
except	for	from	in	inside
into	like	near	of	off
on	onto	out	outside	over
past	since	through	throughout	till
to	toward	under	up	upon
	with	within	without	

It is both impossible and undesirable for you to avoid prepositions altogether, but some prepositions are prone to misuse. “Of,” “by,” “with,” and “to” are usually the worst offenders. Here’s an example from a student paper:

Counter *to* all *of* the arguments made *by* the devils *about* God depriving them *of* freedom and liberty are the angels.

This sentence does not need all those prepositions, though it probably needs some of them. One prepositional phrase is usually fine, two in a row is sometimes unavoidable, but three in a row should raise a red flag: the sentence may lack focus, and often has insufficient verbs. Our goal is more precise verbs and fewer nouns. Here’s one way the sentence could be rewritten:

The angels provide a counterargument refuting all the devils’ claims that God deprived them *of* freedom and liberty.

Instead of five prepositional phrases, this new sentence just has one; most are replaced with more precise verbs, and in one we replaced “of” with a possessive apostrophe. Theoretically, the sentence could be rewritten even further to remove the last preposition (“refuting all the devils’ claims that God removed their freedom and liberty”), but it might change the meaning of the sentence beyond what the author intended, because depriving and removing have different meanings. It’s important to make sure your sentences still convey what you mean, but as concisely as possible.

“To Be” Verbs

Where possible, you want “meaty” verbs, or verbs that tell us something substantial. The more concrete the action, the better. The least meaty verbs tend to be variations on “to be”: “is,” “was,” “will be,” “have been,” etc. You can’t always get rid of “is” verbs, but many times you can. “To be” verbs are sometimes insubstantial, often part of unnecessary wind-ups, and when used as a helping verb they can sometimes become redundant:

There is ample evidence that *Milton is portraying* the necessity of reason.

In this case, there are two “to be” verbs here: the first is part of an unnecessary wind-up (bolded), while the second is an unnecessary helper verb with a gerund (a verb that ends in –ing) that we can eliminate.

Milton portrays the necessity of reason in several places.

Passive Voice, or, Zombie Sentences

When writing formal English, most of the time you want to use *active voice* to increase clarity and conciseness. Active voice consists of subject, verb, and object, in that order. The subject is not the topic of the sentence, but the person/thing that does the action, and the object is the person or thing the action produced or affects.

Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*.

Here, “Shakespeare” is the subject, “wrote” is the verb, and “*Hamlet*” is the object. Passive voice is when the order is reversed, so the sentence starts with the object, then the verb, and then the subject:

Hamlet was written by Shakespeare.

You can easily identify the passive voice because of the “by” that follows the verb. However, sometimes passive voice leaves out the subject of the sentence entirely:

Hamlet was written near the end of Queen Elizabeth’s reign.

Here, the person doing the action (writing *Hamlet*) is absent from the sentence. If you can’t immediately tell who the subject of the sentence is (that is, who is doing the action), you can check to see if the sentence is passive voice by adding the phrase “by zombies” after the verb; if the sentence makes grammatical sense, then it is probably passive voice.

Hamlet was written **[by zombies]** near the end of Queen Elizabeth’s reign.

You won’t be able to get rid of all passive voice in your papers—and in fact you might not want to get rid of it all—but many students drastically

overuse it. Passive voice in these cases reduces clarity and adds large amounts of filler to sentences that you will want to avoid.

To get rid of passive voice, start by figuring out who is doing the action, and make them the subject of the sentence. You'll need to revise the verb to fit the new subject as well:

Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* near the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

Editing Checklist:

1. Does your paper have an interesting, appropriate title that reflects the content of your paper?
2. Do you have a clear, defined thesis in your introduction?
3. Does your introduction mention your primary points?
4. Does each paragraph have a clear purpose or main point expressed in a topic sentence? Is the point of the paragraph relevant to your thesis? Do your paragraphs have a logical sequence or order?
5. Do you have clear transitions between all your main points?
6. Do you have clear transitions between your points and your evidence?
7. Do you clearly define your key terms for your audience? For this to work, you need to know what your key terms are. Remember that your reader is probably not as familiar with the material as you are.
8. Do you use signal phrases and/or parenthetical citations for all cases where you use other people's ideas or language, whether in summary, paraphrase, or quotations?
9. Do you provide sufficient context and explanation for all quotations? Do your explanations tie to the main point of the paragraph or the thesis?
10. Are your quotations memorable, or merely factual? If they are merely factual, it is often better to paraphrase or summarize (though you still need to cite).
11. Do your examples contain enough detail? Conversely, do they contain extraneous information not important for your point that you could remove?
12. Have you reduced the number of unnecessary prepositions in each sentence?
13. Have you removed unnecessary "to be" verbs and made as many verbs active verbs as possible?
14. Is each sentence or paragraph interesting and clear?

15. Is each paragraph or sentence of an appropriate length? Be especially aware of giant paragraphs (more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a double spaced page) and consider breaking them up.
16. Is your language choice appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose of your paper? Avoid colloquial or casual language in an academic paper.

Proofreading Checklist:

1. Is your paper formatted properly?
 - a. Double Spaced
 - b. One inch margins
 - c. Header with page number
 - d. No extra lines between name/class/date and title, or between title and paper body. [This should be double spaced, just no extra spaces]
 - e. Title of your paper should **not** be bold, underlined, or italicized.
 - f. Are all quotations in proper format? Are all quotations of four or more lines indented 1" in the form of a block quotation?
2. Do you use the word "you" or "your" in your paper? Do you use contractions? Generally, you should avoid both in academic papers, though it may be acceptable in some more informal writing.
3. Are any of your sentences incomplete? Do you have run-on sentences?
4. Check for missing words (which are often the most difficult to spot) and repeated words.
5. Does each sentence end with a period, exclamation point, or question mark?
6. Are there commas between each item of a list of three or more items? For example: "Hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades are the different card suits." Notice the comma before the "and." It is customary in journalistic writing to leave it out, but not in academic writing. You may choose either method, so long as you are consistent throughout your paper.
7. Check spelling, punctuation, apostrophes, capitalization, etc.

A Few Strategies for Editing and Proofreading:

1. Take a break from your paper—preferably overnight, but at least 30 min. Most people are more effective at editing in the morning, assuming they have gotten sleep and are not rushed.
2. Go over your old papers, and make a list of your typical errors. Identify which are the most serious or happen the most often.
3. Do not attempt to look for all errors at once; instead, go over your paper multiple times looking for a different type of error each time.
4. Print out your paper. A change of format (from looking at the computer screen to looking at a piece of paper) often helps to identify mistakes.
5. Force yourself to slow down and concentrate. Focus on each word and character, not on meaning. If you think about meaning, you'll see what you expect to see, not what is there. Tips for focusing:
 - a. Proofread backwards. Begin at the end of your paper and work back line by line or paragraph by paragraph. This will force you to look at the paper's surface elements instead of its meaning. It may be helpful to place a ruler or blank piece of paper under each line as you read it, or use your finger to point to each word as you consider it.
 - b. Proofread aloud. This will slow you down and you will hear the difference between what you meant to write and what you actually wrote.
 - i. Obviously, these tactics will not help you catch all the types of errors, but they can be helpful.
6. Use the “find” feature in Word to check all occurrences of words that are easily mixed up: they're, their, there; were, where, we're; effect, affect; its, it's; to, two, too; etc.
7. Have others read it and proofread; alternatively, read your paper aloud as someone else follows along to check for awkward sounding phrases or errors (circle the errors as you go along).

Portions of these handouts adapted from:

- Bellanca, Pat. *Ending the Essay: Conclusions*. Writing Center at Harvard University, 1998. 12 March 2006, www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/documents/Conclusions.html.
- Holewa, Randa, and Joe Mathison. “Strategies for Writing a Conclusion.” *The Write Place*, St. Cloud State University, 19 February 2004. 12 March 2006, leo.stcloudstate.edu/acadwrite/conclude.html.
- Kleist, Aaron. *Guidelines for Logical Argumentation, Grammar, and Mechanics*. (Not published, acquired by e-mail on Sept. 15, 2006; used and distributed with permission.)
- Taylor, Patricia. “Integrating Sources into Multimodal Projects.” *WOVENText: The Bedford Book of Genres for Georgia Tech*, edited by Georgia Tech's Writing and Communication Program, Amy Braziller, and Elizabeth Kleinfeld, Bedford/St. Martins, 2015.
- Womack, Mark. “How to Quote Shakespeare.” *Dr. Mark Womack*, 22 November 2016, drmarkwomack.com/mla-style/how-to-quote/quote-shakespeare/.

All examples taken from these handouts, Dr. Taylor's own writing, or student papers used with permission.

6.3 COURSE SCHEDULE

Subject to change in case of blizzard, hurricane, plague, alien invasion, etc.

Readings should generally be completed in the order in which they are listed on the schedule.

BS = BrightSpace Reading

WG = Writing Guide section of this syllabus

AG = Assignment Guide section of this syllabus

Assignments in [square brackets] **do not** need to be turned in on BrightSpace, only brought to class. All other assignments are due 1 hour before class begins unless otherwise noted on the syllabus.

	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
M	1/15	Syllabus (pgs. 1-16)	Syllabus Quiz on BrightSpace Due by 11:00 PM
W	1/17	<i>Rewriting</i> , Intro (pgs. 1-13) BS: <i>Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide to Writing</i> (pgs. 45-69) AG: Comparative Rhetorical Analysis Prompt (pgs. 22-32)	
F	1/19	<i>Rewriting</i> , "Coming to Terms" (pgs. 14-34) BS: Bryan Stevenson TedTalk https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice?language=en <i>Just Mercy</i> (pgs. 3-18) WG: Formatting Papers (pg. 47)	Exercise 1
M	1/22	BS: <i>The New Jim Crow</i> (1-19) WG: Using Sources: Signal Phrases, Summary, and Paraphrase (69-73)	Plagiarism Quiz
W	1/24	<i>Just Mercy</i> (19-46)	Exercise 2
F	1/26	BS: <i>The New Jim Crow</i> (20-57) WG: Quotations (73-75) WG: Developing a Question (48)	Exercise 3
M	1/29	<i>Just Mercy</i> (47-66) AG: Review Assignment 1 (especially steps 1-4)	[Assignment 1, Steps 1-4] Exercise 4
W	1/31	<i>Just Mercy</i> (67-91) BS: https://liferhacker.com/how-to-use-mind-maps-to-unleash-your-brains-creativity-1348869811	[Exercise 5]

	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
		BS: YouTube Video on MindMapping https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0XzZCd2tPE	
F	2/2	WG: Logical Outlines	Exercise 6 (Step 6)
M	2/5	WG: Paragraphs, Topic Sentences, and Transitions (65-69)	Assignment 1: Logical Outline (Steps 7-8) [In Class: Sign up for Individual Conferences on Starfish]
W	2/7		Individual Conferences
F	2/9		Individual Conferences
M	2/12	<i>Just Mercy</i> (92-114) WG: Introductions (57-64) and Conclusions (77-78)	Exercise 7 (Step 11) Participation Eval 1
W	2/14	WG: Editing (89-95)	Assignment 1: Rough Draft and Recording (Steps 12-15) [Bring Headphones and Recording to Class]
F	2/16	<i>Just Mercy</i> (115-126) AG: White Paper Prompt (33-37)	Assignment 1: Final Draft and Short Reflection
M	2/19	<i>Rewriting</i> , "Forwarding" (35-54) WG: Conducting Research (78-81) BS: https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/09/when-schooling-meets-policing/406348/	[Exercise 8]
W	2/21	BS: Na and Gottfredson, "Police Officers in Schools"	
F	2/23	<i>Rewriting</i> , "Countering" BS: https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/09/will-school-discipline-reform-actually-change-anything/405157/	Exercise 9
M	2/26	<i>Just Mercy</i> (127-146) BS: Goffmann TEDTalk https://www.ted.com/talks/alice_goffman_college_or_prison_two_destines_one_blatant_injustice#t-556889	
W	2/28	BS: https://www.wikihow.com/Write-White-Papers	Exercise 10
F	3/2	<i>Just Mercy</i> (147-162)	
M	3/5	Spring Break	Spring Break
W	3/7	Spring Break	Spring Break
F	3/9	Spring Break	Spring Break

	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
M	3/12	<i>Just Mercy</i> (163-185)	Exercise 11
W	3/14		Assignment 2: Logical Outline
F	3/16	<i>Just Mercy</i> (186-202)	
M	3/19	<i>Rewriting, "Revision"</i> (99-124)	Assignment 2: Rough Draft 1
W	3/21		Exercise 12
F	3/23	<i>Just Mercy</i> (203-226)	[Sign-up for Conferences] Assignment 2: Rough Draft 2 Due on 3/25 at 10PM
M	3/26		Individual Conferences
W	3/28		Individual Conferences
F	3/30	<i>Easter Break</i>	<i>Easter Break</i>
M	4/2	<i>Easter Break</i>	<i>Easter Break</i>
W	4/4	<i>Just Mercy</i> (227-241)	Assignment 2: Final Draft and reflection Deadline for Withdrawal
F	4/6	AG: I-Search Website Prompt (37-41)	[Exercise 13]
M	4/9	<i>Just Mercy</i> (242-255)	[Exercise 14 and Search Terms]
W	4/11		
F	4/13		
M	4/16	<i>Just Mercy</i> (256-274)	Assignment 3: Logical Outline
W	4/18		
F	4/20	<i>Just Mercy</i> (275-294)	Assignment 3: Rough Draft [Sign up for Conferences]
M	4/23		Individual Conferences
W	4/25		Individual Conferences
F	4/27	<i>Just Mercy</i> (295-316) AG: Final Portfolio Prompt (42-45)	Assignment 3: Final Draft
M	4/30		
W	5/2		Assignment 4: Rough Draft
F	5/4	AG: Final Exam Prompt (46)	Participation Eval 3
		Final Exam	Assignment 4: Final Draft

Note on Course Withdrawals: The institutional deadline for withdrawal without penalty is April 4th. After the withdrawal deadline, students may withdraw with a penalty grade of WP (withdrawal passing) or WF (withdrawal failing). Withdrawals are not permitted during finals week.

Note on Syllabus Changes: The instructor retains the right to clarify, change, and/or emend the contents of the syllabus and assignments as needed, provided that students are given reasonable notice of such adjustments.