

NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

English 1121

Writing and Social Justice

Colleen Birchett, Ph.D.

cbirchett@yahoo.com

PREFACE

The syllabus that is the foundation of this on-line course was developed and piloted during Spring of 2016, at New York Theological Seminary. The country was heading toward the U.S. presidential election that Fall. The challenge was to create an intensive writing course that engaged students in critical thinking, problem-solving and persuasive writing. The hope was, upon completion of this course, students would be able to use these skills within a variety of contexts – academic, work related and social justice oriented. The course took place within the electrically charged framework of presidential debates, robust news coverage and on-the-street exchanges between students and members of the general public. As the candidates narrowed to two, a treasure-trove of writing stimuli surfaced, enabling students to write about a wide variety of political issues and they explored how these issues might impact their individual lives and the lives of their families.

In February, at the beginning of the term, students brainstormed a list of topics they preferred to explore. From that list, I created a “ballot” that enabled them to “elect” five themes. Based on their first, second and third choices from among these themes, students joined small groups of no more than six students each. Each student then explored his/her assigned theme to identify one controversy that would form the stimulus for their term’s work. Each student then conducted a two-part research project. Part ONE involved identifying a problem related to their controversy, identifying the central question, and articulating competing answers to the central question. Part TWO involved defending his/her personal answer to the central question. The answer could be one of the competing answers already identified or a new answer. The student then had to address the most salient issue raised by the opposition.

Part THREE involved using research completed in the previous research, along with literary elements, to analyze a thematically-related short story. Over the course of the term, small groups also appeared on panels to discuss related journal articles that explored various aspects of the overall themes. They produced three essays (5-7 pages), one at the culmination of each of the three-parts of their research.

Completing their projects required collaborating in small groups, sharing their progress and getting ideas and resources from others. The projects also involved locating research in

professional journals available through the college library databases. The final examination at the end of the term required that they respond to a very short article containing a controversy unrelated to the ones that they had studied earlier in the term. This was for the purpose of enabling them to use skills gained earlier in the term within a different learning context.

The framework of their research was the 2016 presidential campaign and its aftermath, where they identified the controversies they perceived to be of most consequence for them and their families – environmentalism, immigration, racism, technology and women’s issues.

During the first term that the course was offered, students exhibited a very high level of engagement with the subject matter. This enthusiasm continued in the Fall term where the course was offered again as the U.S. crossed the threshold of the Fall 2016 election. The excitement was still evident, after the election when a third group of students, in Fall of 2017, explored the same themes in the post-election context of sweeping changes by the new administration.

It is the syllabus for the above sections of English 1121 that is the foundation for this current course manual. The manual contains three units and an appendix. The course design is flexible, in that instructors are free to update the content by brainstorming with students to create a new list, issuing the new “ballot”, identifying new themes and locating new readings related to those themes. The appendix contains the course syllabus, the ballot, and links to selected additional resources that might be useful to both instructors and students. Links to the recommended readings for each unit are provided within the units where they are referenced.

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OVERVIEW

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 1121 develops skill in using both primary and secondary sources for research purposes, and for literary criticism. It engages writing and critical thinking processes of brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing essays. Students gain experience incorporating research from outside sources into expository, argumentative and literary critical essays.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to write argumentative essays that:

- critically respond in writing, to published articles;
- take a stance in reaction to the main thesis of an articles,
- use supportive information from professional journal articles;

- raise central research questions, locate alternative answers to such questions, and then select and effectively defend his/her answers to such questions;
- revise essays in response to feedback from peers and the instructor;
- edit essays for mechanical errors;
- avoid plagiarizing by summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting;
- employ MLA style for formatting and publishing essays.

ORGANIZATION

The course is divided into three units.

I. Exploring Controversies

This unit provides skill in narrowing a topic, using both primary and secondary sources to locate basic information about the topic, identifying current controversies related to the topic, and summarizing such research in a five- page research paper. It is required that the topics selected, generally relate to one of the three themes elected by the class on the first day of class. Moreover, throughout the unit, student respond, in large and small group discussions to one assigned reading (from the text) for each of the three themes selected by the class on the first day of class.

II. Argumentative Writing

Based on the research completed in Unit II, the student selects one controversial topic, identifies a central question, states an answer to the question, defends the answer (using outside data and research) and addresses the most important point raised by the opposition. This research is to culminate in a five to seven-page research paper. It is required that the argumentative essay deal with a controversy that generally relates to one of the three themes elected by the class on the first day of class. Moreover, throughout the unit, students will respond, in large and small group discussions to one assigned reading (from the text) for each of the three themes that were selected by the class on the first day of class.

III. Literary Analysis

In this unit, students use literary elements and information gained in Units I & II above to analyze short stories. The stories relate, thematically to the themes elected by the students at the beginning of the term. At the culmination of this unit, students compose a three to five page literary criticism of the assigned story.

During the course of each of the above units, students join small groups, based on their elected themes (environmentalism, immigration, racism, technology and women's issue). Within the groups students collaborate, exchange ideas and make class presentations via panel discussions.

UNIT ONE

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIES

OVERVIEW

This unit is the first a three-part research project. It engages the student in critical thinking, problem solving and collaborating skills as they explore social justice issues. The issues relate to broad social justice themes. At the beginning of the term, students are given the opportunity to select from among the broad themes the one that they will explore for the term. The five themes areas include: environmentalism, immigration, racism, technology and women's issues. They also explore these themes within collaborative teams. In Part ONE, students identify given problems, research the history of them, investigate their significance, locate related central questions, and identify competing answers to the central questions. The investigation culminates in five to seven page expository research essays. The Assignment Description for the essay is below. Within this same "Exploring Controversies" unit, students form "literary circles" where they read selected articles, discuss them in small groups and then present the articles on panel discussions. .

THEMES

Students enrolled in several sections of English 1121 indicated that they were most interested in writing about controversies in five subject areas: environmentalism, immigration, racism, technology and women's issues. Once students were assigned to small groups based on their selected themes, they were asked to explore political platforms, google searches, Academic Search Complete, the New York Times Archives and Opposing Viewpoints, all available through the CUNY library databases. The following resources were posted on Blackboard.

ENVIRONMENTALISM – Jill Stein and Green Party Platforms
[GREEN PARTY PLATFORM](#)

IMMIGRATION – Democratic and Republican Party Platforms
[CLINTON IMMIGRATION REFORM](#)
[TRUMP IMMIGRATION REFORM](#)

RACISM – BLACK LIVES MATTER PLATFORM
[BLACK LIVES MATTER PLATFORM](#)

TECHNOLOGY – Wikipedia List of Controversies/Technology

[Wikipedia List of Controversies/Technology](#)

WOMEN'S ISSUES – WOMEN'S MARCH PLATFORM

[WOMEN'S MARCH PLATFORM](#)

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: By the end of Unit ONE, students should be able to produce a five to seven page research essay exploring a controversy related to their elected themes. Actually this is a two-part assignment. This first part is to identify a problem, discuss its history, its significance and some of the controversies that are associated with it. This will culminate in Essay ONE, the Exposition essay. The upcoming second essay (Part II of the two-part assignment) will be an Argumentative essay. The process for producing the essay follows:

PROCESS:

- Survey the general topic by reading a variety of articles about it.
- Narrow the focus to a specific subtopic/problem.
- Identify a particular controversy within this specific subtopic area.
- Identify one central question at the foundation of the controversy.
- Identify the competing answers to this central question.
- Develop a bibliography of articles about this problem within this specific subtopic area.
- Write a five to seven page essay that answers the following questions:

§ What is the problem?

§ What is a very brief history of the problem?

§ What is the actual controversy?

§ Why is this problem and related controversy significant?

§ What is the central question?

§ What are the competing answers to the central question?

§ What evidence, examples, logic, etc., does each competing answer use to support its stance? [Briefly summarize.]

SAMPLE OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Lead-In

B. Thesis Statement

C. Itinerary [**Very** Brief Statement that the essay will discuss the problem in more detail, its history, its significance, the central question at the root of the controversy, and competing answers to the central question.]

- II. BODY
 - A. Problem
 - B. History of the Problem
 - C. Significance of the Problem
 - D. Controversy Related to the Problem
 - E. Central Question
 - F. Most Significant Competing Answers
 - G. Supports Proponents use to Support their Stances
- III. CONCLUSION
- IV. WORKS CITED PAGE

WORKSHEET ONE A
EXPOSITORY ESSAY PLANNING WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: This form aids in selecting a controversial social justice issue for investigation. Steps:

- Get a general overview of the topic, by consulting articles from the internet, New York Times, an encyclopedia or from a Wikipedia article (for background information only);
- YouTube might also have some videos on the topic, but be sure to carefully consider the sources of the video for potential bias;
- See the library database, “Opposing Viewpoints” for additional suggestions. If you don’t know how to use this at this point, see or telephone the reference librarian;
- Type your answers to the questions in the chart below.
- Save your answers on your flash drive.
- Bring a hard copy of the completed form to class for use in your small group discussions and collaborations.

What problem will likely be the focus of your essay? Explain in one short paragraph (Roughly (About Four Sentences)).

Why is the above problem significant/important? Explain in one short paragraph (About Four Sentences).

What are some controversies related to this problem? (List at least four.) For it to qualify as a controversy, people should vary in their opinions about it.

Select the controversy from those you list that most interests you. Explain it in a few sentences.

In about four to six sentences, sketch a brief history of this controversy. Feel free to use an encyclopedia, Wikipedia, general Google search or articles from the *New York Times* archives to locate this history. See:

<http://www.nytimes.com/ref/membercenter/nytarchive.html>

What is the question at the center of this controversy?

List competing answers to the above question?

Describe some of the types of articles and sources that you intend to consult for more information about this topic.

Summarize any difficulties you had narrowing your topic, and any help you still need.

KEY CONCEPTS

- **CONTROVERSY**
- **CENTRAL QUESTION**
- **COMPETING ANSWERS**
- **WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY**
- **NOTETAKING SYSTEM**

READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

The following exercises are based on the notion that there is an interaction between cognitive skills involved in reading, reflecting and collaborating – skills that positively influence the writing process. Students share their insights in small groups (based on the themes they “elected” at the beginning of the term.) In “literary circles”, they identify concepts in argumentation that are parallel to those that they will write about in their expository research essays. The process is as follows:

- Each small group examines one articles (below) based on themes “elected” at the beginning of the term.
- For any given article, the student states the problem, locates the central controversial question, and identifies various competing answers to the central question.
- Worksheet ONE-B is included below for convenience. It can be completed on line.
- Each team member completes his/her Worksheet A-1 prior to class and uses it as a basis for small group collaborations.
 - The questions related to each article can be divided among group members so that each person becomes a “specialist” in one or two questions, and presents his/her findings, “literary circle” style, for group discussion.
 - Each small group examine a different one of the articles below.
 - After small group collaboration, the group presents its topic and findings before the larger class on a panel discussion.
 - If possible, the instructor can preface the panel discussion with a brief YouTube video (10 minutes or so), that provides an overview of the topic that is the subject of the article to be presented.
 - The following reflection questions apply to all of the articles. Worksheet ONE – A (included below) can be completed for convenience.

Questions

- What problem is the topic of the article?
- Briefly outline the history of the problem?
- What is the central question?
- What are competing answers to the central question?
- Are there competing answers to the central question that are not covered in the article?
- What is the main point the author is trying to make?
- What type evidence does the author use to support his/her stance?
- Primarily to what audience is this author writing? Why?
- Do you agree with the author? Why? Why not?

Environmentalism

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifrHogDujXw>

[Kaufman, Alexander, "Donald Trump Signs Order to Undo Obama's Legacy on Climate Change"](#)

Immigration

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65GThGSvVOI>
Michaels, Samantha, "1 in 4 Dreamers are Parents of US Citizens"

Racism

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZN9mwhSrTdU>
Crosley-Corcoran, "Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person"

Technology

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fcc0YjOFdRg>
Davidson, Karil, "Has Cyberchondria Become a Medical Trend to Concern the Healthcare Community?"

Women's Issues

VIDEO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Yno_3NxEsw
Steele, Chandra, "Fighting Sexism in Silicon Valley: Your're Doing it Wrong"

WORKSHEET ONE - B
Parsing Controversies

Title of Article: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: The following worksheet is for identifying and exploring controversies in published articles. For each article:

- Write the answer to each question in the appropriate spaces below.
- Use the completed worksheet in your small group discussion.

Each article relates to the theme elected at the beginning of this term. The concepts to explore are include:

- Problem
- History of the Problem
- Significance of the Problem
- Central Controversial Question
- Competing Answers to the Question

QUESTIONS

What problem is the topic of the article?

Very briefly outline the history of this problem? (Recommendations: Google Search, Encyclopedia, Academic Search Complete, YouTube, New York Times Archives).

What is the central question?

What are competing answers to the central question? (Recommendation: Consult Opposing Viewpoints)

Are there competing answers to the central question that are not mentioned in the article?

What is the main point that the author is trying to make?

What type evidence does the author use to support his/her points?

Primarily to whom is the article directed? Why?

Do you agree with the author? Why/Why not?

UNIT TWO

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

OVERVIEW

Unit III is the second part of the term-long research project that engages students in critical thinking, problem-solving and argumentative writing. The process itself is similar to basic problem solving and collaborating activities occurring throughout academia, workplace and social justice activism. In Part I of the project, the student should have already identified a central question at the core of a controversy related to social justice. S/he then should have identified competing answers to this central question, and should have briefly researched the basic assumptions and evidences that supported various competing answers.

In Part II of this project, the student now aligns him/herself with one of the competing answers or with an answer of his/her own development. The student devotes Part II of this project to supporting his/her stance on the social justice issue at hand. This research is to culminate in a five to seven-page argumentative research essay. The argumentative essay should deal with a controversy related to the theme selected at the beginning of the term.

Collaboration is also an important part of the problem-solving process so, throughout this unit, students have the opportunity to collaborate in small groups and serve on panel discussions. Worksheet ONE-B allows for students within the small groups to “specialize” in the content of a given worksheet question(s), “literary circle” style and in his/her presentation

on the related panel discussion. Before beginning the panel discussion, it might be useful to show a short video that provides a brief overview of the subject matter. There is a short video for each of the assigned readings below.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Stance
- Strategy
- Supportive Evidence
- Audience
- Opposing Viewpoint

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

Argumentative Essay

INSTRUCTIONS: By now the student has:

- Selected a controversial issue;
- Compose an Expository Essay that presents an overview of the controversy;

This second argumentative essay:

- States a personal answer to the central question that was covered in the first essay.
- Defends that position with at least three lines of reasoning and evidence;
- Addresses the most compelling issue raised by the opposing viewpoint.

SAMPLE OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Lead-In (Brief Presentation of the Controversy/Emphasizing its Significance)
- B. The Central Question
- C. Opponent's Answer to the Central Question
- D. Your Answer to the Central Question [Thesis Statement]
- E. Itinerary (BRIEF Summary of Three Lines of Logic and/or Evidence)

II. BODY

- A. Line of Logic #1 with Evidence

- B. Line of Logic #2 with Evidence
- C. Line of Logic #3 with Evidence
- D. Refutation of Opponent’s Answer to the Central Question, with evidence.

III. CONCLUSION

IV. Works Cited Page

THE STUDENT SHOULD BE SURE TO:

- Include in-text citations throughout, in MLA style;
- Include a Works Cited page, in MLA style;
- Additional Research

Use relevant information from articles already referenced in Essay ONE. However, locate new articles for this current argumentative essay. See A, B, C and D of the above outline. You can get such articles from a combination of the library databases, the Internet, Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, Opposing Viewpoints and Google Scholar.

WORKSHEET TWO A – Argumentative Essay Planning Worksheet

Name: _____ Section: _____

ARGUMENTATION ESSAY
Planning Worksheet

Topic
Controversy
Central Question

Your Answer to the Central Question

REASON ONE:

SUMMARY OF SUPPORTIVE EVIDENCE, LOGIC, REASONING, EXAMPLES

REASON TWO:

SUMMARY OF SUPPORTIVE EVIDENCE, LOGIC, REASONING, EXAMPLES

REASON THREE:

SUMMARY OF SUPPORTIVE EVIDENCE, LOGIC, REASONING, EXAMPLES:

THE MAIN, MOST SIGNIFICANCE AND PERSUASIVE POINT RAISED BY THE OPPOSING VIEWPOINT Y

A SUMMARY OF YOUR ANSWER TO THE POINT RAISED BY THE OPPOSING VIEWPOINT.

WHO IS THE MAIN AUDIENCE THAT YOU NEED TO PERSUADE?

READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

Select one of the following articles. The selection should be based on theme “elected” at the beginning of the term. For each article, reflect upon and then answer the following questions.

For convenience, complete Worksheet One-B, and use it in class when collaborating within your small group.

- What problem is the focus of this article?
- What controversy is associated with this problem?
- What is the central question?
- What are competing answers to the central question?
- What stance does the author appear to be taking?
- Are there other competing answers that are not mentioned?
- Who appears to be the author's primary audience?
- What strategy (s) does the author use to convince his/her audience?
- What type evidence (logical assumptions, statistics, case studies) does the author use to support his/her stance.
- Do you agree or disagree with the author and why?

For your convenience, use Worksheet ONE - B below.

Environmentalism

VIDEO: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\[r\]Jxn-gCdo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=[r]Jxn-gCdo)
[Koerth-Baker, Maggie, "Climate Change and Earth Quakes: It's Complicated"](#)

Immigration

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YLR3NvV3s8>
Obeidallah, Dean, "Do Palestinians Really Exist?"

Racism

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9H3gynN468>
[Amar, Akhil Reed, "The Troubling Reason the Electoral College Exists"](#)

Technology

VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK5Www9FaHA>
[Eger, John, "It's a Lot More Than Privacy: the Apple/FBI Controversy"](#)

Women's Issues

VIDEO: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\[N\]ozGbAfpo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=[N]ozGbAfpo)
[Zimmerman, Kaytie, "What Gender Barriers Do Millennial Women Face in the Workplace?"](#)

WORKSHEET ONE - B

Parsing Arguments

Title of Article: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: The following worksheet is for identifying argumentation in published articles. For each article:

- Write the answer to each question in the appropriate spaces below.
- Use the completed worksheet in your small group discussion.

Each article relates to the theme that you elected for your study this term. The concepts include:

- Problem
- History of the Problem
- Significance of the Problem
- Central Controversial Question
- Competing Answers to the Question

QUESTIONS

What problem is the focus of this article?

What controversy is associated with the problem?

What is the central question?

What are the competing answers to the central question?

What stances does the author appear to be taking?

Are there other competing answers to the central question that are not covered?

What type evidence (logic, examples, statistics, case studies, etc) does the authors use to support his/her argument?

For what audience (s) is this article designed? Who might the author be trying to reach?

What strategies does the author use to convince his/her audience?

Do you agree or disagree and why?

UNIT THREE LITERARY ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

This unit provides the opportunity for students to combine research skills learned in Units I & II literary analysis, to analyze short stories. In this particular unit, students discuss explore short stories to discover how authors use various literary devices to make statements about the five themes they have studied throughout the term. The unit will culminate in the student composing a three to five page literary criticism of an assigned short story. In this unit, students also continue to collaborate in small groups. Worksheets THREE – A and THREE – B aid students in planning the literary analysis essays and in collaborating within small groups.

Key Concepts

- Theme
- Setting
- Plot
- Characterization

- Point of View
- Literary Devices
- Historical Context

ESSAY THREE - LITERARY ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: The short story for this assignment relates to the theme that you selected at the beginning of the term. First study the short story, using Worksheet THREE-A to take notes. Then feel free to use Worksheet THREE -B to plan your literary analysis essay. In writing your commentary, be sure to reference any relevant research from research you conducted for Essays ONE and TWO. In your essay, be sure to answer as many of the following questions as you can:

THEME AND PURPOSE

What is the overall theme and purpose of the story? How does it relate to the theme and/or controversy that you have studied this term?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In what ways might the following have affected the short story author's development of the story?

- The historical context within the story itself.
- World, national and local events surrounding the author at the time of his/her composing the story;
- Particulars of the author's biography at the time the author wrote the story.

LITERARY ELEMENTS

How does the author use the following elements to make his/her point?

- Setting
- Point of View
- Characterization
- Plot
- Style

THE AUTHOR'S THESIS

- What point was the author trying to make?
- How well did s/he make his/her point? Explain.
- Do you agree with the author? Why/Why not? Explain
- If you were going to rewrite the story so that it expresses a viewpoint that is opposed to that of the author, describe how you would do it.

WORKSHEET THREE LITERARY ANALYSIS PLANNING WORKSHEET

What is the primary theme of this short story?
How does the primary theme of this short story relate to the overall theme you have been studying this term?
Overall, what point might the author be attempting to make?
What is the historical context within the story? How does this historical setting useful to the author in making his/her point?
What is the historical context that surrounded the author when s/he composed this story? How might his/her historical context have influenced what s/he wrote into the story?
Explain how the author uses some of the following literary elements to make his/her point? Specific setting, plot, characterization, point of view.
Do you agree with the author? What are other competing viewpoints that might be made from other points of view?
Is the author's perspective consistent or inconsistent with discoveries you made while composing Essays ONE and TWO?

Readings for Reflections

Immigration

[Diaz, Junot, "The Pura Principle"](#)

Racism

[Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi, "A Private Experience"](#)

The Environment

<http://needleinthehay.net/climate-controlled-rhiannon-cowan/>

Women's Issues

Glaspell, Susan, "A Jury of Her Peers"

Technology

[Butler, Octavia, "Blood Child"](#)

APPENDIX

SYLLABUS

NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

English 1121

Section D440, NAM 605

M-W, 10:00 a.m. -11:15 a.m.

Professor Colleen Birchett, Ph.D.

cbirchett@yahoo.com

Conference Hours: 1:30pm-2:30pm, M-W (And by Appointment)

OVERVIEW

English 1121 develops skills in using both primary and secondary sources for research purposes, and literary criticism. It engages in writing and critical thinking processes of brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing essays. Students gain experience with incorporating research from outside sources into expository, argumentative and literary critical essays.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the participant will be able to write argumentative essays that:

- critically respond in writing, to published articles;
- take a stance in reaction to the main thesis of an articles, using supportive information from professional journal articles;
- raise central research questions, locate alternative answers to such questions, and then select and effectively defend his/her answers to such questions;
- revise essays in response to feedback from peers and the instructor;
- edit essays for mechanical errors;
- avoid plagiarizing by summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting;
- employ MLA style for formatting and publishing essays.

ORGANIZATION

The course is divided into four units, with the first one being introductory.

IV. Introduction

This unit reviews (or introduces) basic concepts such as: elements of academic essays, basic methods of researching primary and secondary sources, use of MLA conventions, the course rubric, and academic writing style. It will also cover summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, in-text citations and Works Cited pages. In this unit, the student selects a broad theme as the general subject area for essays written for the term.

V. Expository Writing

In this unit, the student identifies and writes about a controversial topic related to the theme selected at the beginning of the term. S/he consults primary and secondary sources for an overview of the controversy, identifies competing answers to the central question. This research culminates in a five-page paper that identifies the problem, identifies the central question and summarizes competing answers to this central question. The essay employs MLA-style in-text citations and a Works Cited page. Throughout the unit, students collaborate in small groups, giving and receiving further insights into topics explored by his/her group and responding to related literature.

VI. Argumentative Writing

Based on the research completed in Unit II, the student presents one answer to the central question, defends the answer (using outside research, data, and observations) and addresses the most salient challenge to his/her answer, raised by the opposing viewpoint. This process culminates in a five to seven-page research paper. Throughout the unit, students collaborate in small groups, giving and receiving further insights into topics explored by his/her group and responding to related literature.

VII. Literary Criticism

Throughout the term, students read short essays and fiction related to the themes at hand, and discuss them in small groups. In this particular unit, students also discuss such concepts as theme, plot, characterization, and literary elements as they relate to short stories related to their small group theme. In this unit, students will also collaborate in small groups and complete related worksheets. The unit will culminate in the student composing a five page literary criticism of an assigned short story.

COURSE TEXTS

Ferrel, Monique and Julian Williams, *Lead, Follow or Move Out of the Way: Global Perspectives in Literature and Film*, 2nd Edition, (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt, 2012).

Silverman, Jay, *Rules of Thumb*, 9th Edition, (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, New York, 2012).

Assigned Readings, Short Stories, Films, Handouts and Worksheets posted on Blackboard.

PREREQUISITES

English 1101

CONFERENCE HOURS

The standard conference hours are between 1:30pm - 2:30pm, but appointments can be arranged at other times. It would be best to contact the instructor by email to arrange a different time. I am also available on other days and times to conference via email.

OTHER COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To succeed in the class, students must:

- Access and use resources available on Blackboard;

- Type and submit essays, using appropriate MLA format;
- Submit essays as attachments to emails;
- Interact with peers in small groups and make meaningful contributions to the group's work;

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Learning takes place during:

- lectures;
- small group work;
- general class discussions;
- computer lab sessions;
- reacting to videos;
- completing worksheets;
- composing journal entries;
- reacting to assigned readings and films.

Engagement with all of the above is considered class participation. Moreover, remaining on task in class is important. Therefore, all electronic devices (cell phones, IPODs, laptops, etc.) must be turned off completely. No texting is allowed. One or more class sessions will be spent in the computer lab. In the lab, it is important for everyone to be able to concentrate. That is why it is important for people not to socialize in the lab, but to focus on the assignment of that particular day. If personal help is needed, it is much less disruptive to get it from the instructor than from another student.

Entering class late, not listening, and then disrupting other people's ability to concentrate and complete lab assignments will result in a lowering of the offenders overall class participation grade. The amount of time spent examining the resources available on Blackboard is also figured into the class participation score.

ATTENDANCE

Some class time will be devoted to completing worksheets. Therefore, it is important to be in class and on time every time that the class meets. Abruptly walking in and out of class is considered disruptive, and will be computed into the total number of classroom absences. At the end of the term, the number of times late and absent will be computed into the class participation score. More than four absences can result in failure of the class. Students sign their names on an attendance sheet. If tardy, they sign the opposite side of the sheet and note the time. Students who stop attending before the end of the semester without officially dropping will be given a WU. This is the academic equivalent of an F, and can adversely affect a student's financial aid. If the student drops officially, then the student receives a "W" which does not adversely affect the grade point average. A student has up until the tenth week of the semester to withdraw without it counting in the student's grade point average.

REQUIRED FORMAT FOR PAPERS

MLA style will be required for all essays. The format for essays is the same as that posted in *Rules of Thumb*, the course text, and on the Purdue OWL website, which is posted on Blackboard. See the English Department Handout distributed the first day of class. It contains a detailed description of the format and length of the essay assignments. Detailed Assignment Descriptions and suggested outlines will be distributed and posted on Blackboard, for each unit. The essays are to use supportive evidence from both print and non-print sources, both primary and secondary. The films are selected from those listed in the text, *Lead, Follow or Move Out of the Way!* Most are available through *NetFlix*, *AmazonPrime* or *YouTube*.

ESSAY DUE DATES

- Bibliography and Worksheet #1 – 9/18
- Return Bib and Worksheet – 9/25
- Essay #1 – 10/16
- Return Essay #1 – 10/30
- Option to Revise Essay #1 – 11/13
- Essay #2 – 12/4
- Essay #3 – 12/13
- Practice Final Exam – 12/13
- Final Exam – 12/18

GRADING WEIGHTS

- Essays 60%
- Class Participation 20%
- Final Examination 20%

SEMESTER CALENDAR

- 8/25 - Classes Begin
- 9/4 - Labor Day, Classes Closed
- 9/20 - No Classes
- 10/9 - No Classes
- 10/30 - Mid-term Grades
- 12/13 - Practice Final Exam
- 12/18 - Final Exam

MEETINGS WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

Each student should meet with the instructor at least once either during Unit I or during Unit II. The instructor will circulate a sign-up sheet during the first week of class. The student can request appointments on additional by email. The meetings provide the opportunity to detect if there are any problems in the development of the research papers. The student can bring a completed worksheet to the consultation. It is also recommended that students get help in developing the research papers from the writing consultants in AG31. The writing consultants will issue a receipt of the consultation and it will count towards the class participation score for the term.

MID-SEMESTER GRADES

At the end of the seventh week of classes (4/4), a mid-semester grade will be submitted to the registrar. The grades at mid-term are:

- P (Passing)
- B L (Borderline Passing)
- U (Unsatisfactory)
- SA (Stopped Attending)

COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

PLAGIARISM: “Students who work with information, ideas, and texts owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity. Accordingly, college prohibits academic dishonesty throughout CUNY and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity maybe found in the catalog.” Plagiarized essays may be returned with the option of revision, depending upon the extent of the plagiarism. Without revision, the essay will receive the grade of “F”.

COURSE CALENDAR

Unit ONE

INTRODUCTION

DATES	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENT
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<p>8/28 - 9/6</p>	<p> Introductions Syllabus Blackboard The Course Texts Term Themes Bibliographies Online Databases Internet Sources Plagiarism Rubrics and Grading Scales Attendance System </p>	<p> From Rules of Thumb <i>"Shortcuts for 'Word'" (90)</i> <i>Introductions, 70, 75-76, 98</i> <i>Bibliography, 136-149</i> <i>Internet Sources, 114-117, 120-123</i> <i>Plagiarism 119, 132</i> Blackboard <i>"Sizing Up a Website" (117)</i> <i>Worksheet for Essay #1</i> <i>Sample Expository Essays</i> </p>
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Unit TWO
EXPOSITORY WRITING

<p>DATES</p>	<p>TOPICS</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENTS</p>
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9/11	<p>Assignment Description for Essay #1 Sample Student Essays Narrowing the Topic Sample Student Papers Small Group Discussion Large Group Discussion</p>	<p>From Rules of Thumb <i>"Seven Steps to a Research Paper"</i> (111) <i>"Getting Information Online and at the Library"</i> (121) BLACKBOARD <i>"Brainstorming Guidelines"</i> <i>Brainstorming Worksheet for Essay #1</i> <i>"Locating Journal Articles in NYCCT Databases"</i></p>
9/13	<p>Return Essay #1 Notecards Systems Practice: Summarizing, Paraphrasing and Quoting Outlines Small Group Discussion of Topics</p>	<p>FROM RULES OF THUMB <i>Bibliographies"</i> (159) <i>"Outlining"</i> (72-74) BLACKBOARD <i>"Microsoft Word Online Notecard Apps"</i> <i>"Notecard Aps for IPHones"</i> <i>"How to Use Notecard Aps Note Card Tutorial on YouTube"</i> <i>"Social Loafing"</i></p>
9/18	<p>Overview of Essay #1 Results Sample Investigative Reports Primary Sources Assigned Reading</p>	<p>Assigned Reading: See page 8 of the Syllabus. BLACKBOARD: <i>"Responding to Readings"</i> <i>Sample Investigative Reports</i> <i>Article on Primary Sources</i> ** BIBLIOGRAPHY AND WORKSHEET DUE. 9/18</p>

9/25 - 10/16	MLA Documentation Discussion	<p>From <i>Rules of Thumb</i> <i>"Footnotes, Endnotes and Works Cited Page 136-149"</i> <i>"Exercises: MLA Parenthetical Citations, 136-40"</i></p> <p>BLACKBOARD <i>"Exercises: MLA Works Cited Page"</i></p> <p>INTERNET Sample "Purdue Owl MLA Works Cited Pages"</p> <p>Assigned Reading: See page 8 of the Syllabus, Worksheet</p> <p>RETURN BIB 9/26 ESSAY #1 DUE 10/16</p>
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Unit THREE
ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

DATES	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
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<p>10/18 – 10/30</p>	<p>Argumentative Writing Power Points Essay Two Assignment Description JSTOR Sample Argumentative Essays Sample Investigative Reports Documentary Short followed by discussion</p>	<p>BLACKBOARD POWERPOINTS: <i>“Argumentation: What is it and What are its parts?” “Narrowing a Research Topic”</i> <i>“Brainstorming Controversies”</i> <i>“Controversial Topics”</i> <i>“Controversial Issues”.</i> <i>Sample Argumentative Essays</i> BLACKBOARD WORKSHEET <i>“Controversial Issues Worksheet”;</i></p> <p>RETURN ESSAY #1 10/30 MID GRADES 10/30</p>
<p>11/1-11/8</p>	<p>Primary Sources Videos and Collaborating in Small Groups and Reporting to the Larger Group Outlining Argumentative Essays Sample Outlines</p>	<p>BLACKBOARD: <i>“Argumentation Outline”</i></p>

11/13 - 11/15	Audience Shark Tank Exercise Identifying Opposing Viewpoints in Literature,	ASSIGNED READING: See page 8 of the Syllabus, Worksheet Shark Tank Website for One Panelist
11/20 - 11/22	Film and Debates Worksheet on Literature	Literature Worksheet (Blackboard)

Unit FOUR
LITERARY ANALYSIS

DATES	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
11/27	Literary Analysis Power Point Short Stories Elements of fiction: <i>Theme</i> <i>Setting</i> <i>Characterization</i> <i>Plot</i> <i>Conflict</i> <i>Climax</i> <i>Point of View</i>	BLACKBOARD: Handouts: <i>"Fiction Sub-Genres"</i> Power points <i>"Literary Analysis"</i> <i>"Characterization"</i> <i>"Conflict"</i> <i>"Setting"</i> <i>"Short Story Power Point"</i> "ESSAY #2 DUE 12/4 Writing Stimulus"

11/29		From "Rules of Thumb" <i>Writing "About Literature" (101-107)</i>
12/4	Small Group Collaborations about Literature Literary Circles	ASSIGNED READING <i>See syllabus, page 8</i> BLACKBOARD <i>"Storyboard Worksheet"</i> <i>Worksheet on Literary Analysis</i> <i>"Organizing Literary Analysis Essays"</i>
12/6	Organizing Literary Critical Essays Discussion of Assigned Readings	BLACKBOARD: <i>"Literary Circles"</i> Assigned Readings, See page 8 of the Syllabus

Unit FIVE
FINAL EXAMINATION

DATES	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
12/13	Take Practice Final Exam Practice Final Exam Discuss Practice Final	ESSAY #3 DUE: 12/13
12/18	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM - 12/18

BALLOT FOR THEME ELECTION

The ballot below can be used to select semester themes for study. The “election” allows the students to select five themes. Once the themes are selected, students can be assigned to groups based on their top three choices of themes. The general “election” is “round one”. In “round two”, students are assigned to groups based on individual choices made in round one. The list in column #1 resulted from a survey of students during spring term, during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. Therefore, many of the topics are parallel to issues that were being debated among contenders for the presidency. It would be expected that the list would contain different items if the survey is conducted in some other time period. The top five topics of interest, at the time, were: environmentalism, immigration, racism, technology and women’s issues.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS:

- Read the themes listed in Column #1.
- Select the five in which you are most interested.
- In Column #2, place a check mark beside each of the five you select.
- Now rank each of your choices, 1-5, by placing a check mark beside each in the appropriate column.
- Check “5” beside the one in which you are MOST interested.
- Check “1” beside the one, (among those you selected) in which you are least interested, and so on until each of choice has a ranking.

BALLOT

THEMES	FIVE MOST INTERESTING	RANK #1	RANK #2	RANK #3	RANK #4	RANK #5
Immigration						
Health Care						

Popular Culture (Hip Hop, Film Industry/the Arts, etc.)						
Women's Issues						
Mass Incarceration						
Racism/Black Lives Matter						
Environmental Issues/Climate Control						
Sexuality/LGBTQ Issues/Male-Fem ale Relationships						
U.S. Foreign Relations/Nucle ar Ban, United Nations, etc.						
Technology						
Other: _____						

Theme Election Results

The following represent the theme results based on the above ballot being distributed to students. Each person was assigned to one of these themes, based on each person's top two selections, but limiting groups to no more than six people.

THEME	TIMES SELECTED
Immigration	25
Racism	16

Environmental Issues	14
Women's Issues	20
Technology	12

Group Assignments

- A. IMMIGRATION**
- B. RACISM**
- C. ENVIRONMENTALISM**
- D. TECHNOLOGY**
- E. WOMEN'S ISSUES**