

Clare 110-01 | Composition & Critical Thinking I
Mr. Brett Keegan
Fall 2014
MWF 12:30-1:20 | Plassmann 200

Office: Plassmann F1
Office Hours: M, 2:30-4:30; W, 2:30-3:30
Also by appointment
Keeganbe09@bonaventure.edu

Catalog Course Description: <http://bit.ly/1nXBnR6>
Course Learning Objectives: <http://bit.ly/X9ehxk>

Program Learning Goals: <http://bit.ly/1qg09dZ>

Course Overview:

This course will help you develop writing and critical thinking skills you will draw on to succeed at St. Bonaventure. Toward this end, we will focus primarily on critical reading, writing, and argumentation skills as well as the analysis of cultural texts and the study of language through the lens of semiotics, rhetoric, ideology, and social action. We will thus be interested in how we encounter various aspects of the world around us as signs that embody and negotiate different meanings and power structures, and we will also be interested in how we are persuaded and moved to think, act, and feel by these texts. As you develop your critical capacities, you will take up writing as both an academic practice and an instrument of social change. (3 credits)

Goals:

- Develop an effective writing process that focuses on the production of text across multiple drafts and strategies for research, invention, revision, editing, peer review, and reflection;
- Produce writing that effectively addresses concerns of audience and purpose, both in terms of the conventions and standards of academic writing and in terms of framing writing as a force for social change and social action;
- Develop reading and analysis strategies that facilitate the identification of purpose, argument, structure, and method, with attention to the ways these are shaped by specific disciplinary or professional concerns and conventions;
- Effectively summarize, analyze, and synthesize texts to put writers from a variety of disciplines and professions in conversation with each other;
- Contribute to these conversations with your own analysis and argument, responding to sources within the terms of the discussion;
- Adequately document the sources used and develop an understanding of the significance of different types of sources and the function of documentation.

Texts:

The World is a Text. 4th edition. Ed. Silverman & Rader.
They Say / I Say. 3rd edition. Graff & Birkenstein.
The Little Seagull Reader. 2nd edition.

Grading:

Your grade will be determined primarily by the writing you do throughout the semester. You will complete five major papers, short papers, in-class work, and online course work, which may include such things as quizzes, responses to readings, and grammar and usage worksheets. Paper assignments will involve a rigorous process of research and reading, taking notes, drafting, peer workshops, and revision. For certain assignments, you will be required to attend individual conferences with me to discuss your work and possibilities for revision. At the end of the semester, you will submit a reflection

paper and a portfolio of the work you have completed throughout the semester. You are responsible for keeping all the writing you produce for possible inclusion in the portfolio.

Grade breakdown

Paper 1 – Analyzing Music (1.2)	= 10%
Paper 2 – Analyzing Space and Place (2.2)	= 15%
Paper 3 – Analyzing Film (3.2)	= 15%
Paper 4 – Language and Social Action (4.2)	= 15%
Critical Reflection Paper	= 25%
<u>Participation</u>	<u>= 20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Papers will be graded based on the quality of the final product and the writing and revision process work you put into completing the paper. When you hand in a final draft, unless otherwise specified, you will also submit the first draft with instructor comments and the required process work. If any of these pieces are missing, you will not receive credit for it.

The **Critical Reflection Paper** will describe, analyze, and evaluate your development and efforts as a writer and critical thinker throughout the semester.

Participation will be based on preparedness for class, participation in class activities, completion of short assignments, and how you interact with your peers and your instructor, which must always be with a spirit of respect and helpfulness.

All papers should be typed and submitted electronically through the Moodle drop box. If the feature is not working, please e-mail me the assignment. Follow all MLA guidelines for paper formats: use a standard font (Times New Roman, Calibri, Helvetica, etc.), type in 12 point, and double-space the paper. Papers should have the standard MLA heading in the upper left hand corner that includes your name, my name, course and section number, and the date. Please include a centered title following the date line, in which you indicate which piece of process work you're writing, or an original title for the final draft of a paper. In the upper right hand corner of each page, include your last name and the page number. You can find more details about MLA style and a sample of what the header should look like at the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Late Work. Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Late papers, whether a rough or final draft, will lose one full letter grade. If you are absent when a rough or final draft is due, the paper must still meet the deadline. Excessive lateness (more than two class sessions) may be further penalized.

Attendance. You should arrive to class on time with all assigned readings and papers for the day completed. You are allowed seven absences throughout the semester without a grade penalty (although missing class can affect your participation grade and your ability to succeed in the class generally). **An eighth absence will result in failure of the course.** For every 3 instances of tardiness, you will incur 1 absence. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be marked as absent. Coming to class unprepared (forgetting textbooks, notebooks, workshop materials, etc.) can also result in an absence.

For athletes, students who provide documentation for absences related to athletic competitions will be excused for all such absences. Student athletes can also miss two more class periods throughout the semester without a grade penalty. If you have three or more unexcused (non-athletic) absences throughout the semester, then all of your absences will be counted toward the attendance policy. For example, five athletic/excused absences and three non-athletic/unexcused absences would result in failure of the course.

+/- Grades. Plus and minus grades will be used in awarding final grades for this course. The letter-to-percentage conversion is given below.

<i>Paper Grades</i>			<i>Semester Average</i>		
A+ = 98.5	A = 95	A- = 91.5	93-100 = A	90-93 = A-	
B+ = 88.5	B = 85	B- = 81.5	87-90 = B+	83-87 = B	80-83 = B-
C+ = 78.5	C = 75	C- = 71.5	77-80 = C+	73-77 = C	70-73 = C-
D+ = 68.5	D = 65	D- = 61.5	67-70 = D+	63-67 = D	60-63 = D-
F = 55			Less than 60 = F		

Plassmann Writing Center:

Revising and responding to feedback will be an invaluable and necessary part of your development as a writer this semester. Toward this end, you are strongly encouraged to visit me during office hours or by appointment, and you are also strongly encouraged to visit the Writing Center in the basement of Plassmann Hall (6A). There is a sign-up sheet outside the Center and, while occasional walk-in appointments may be available, you will likely want to sign up for an appointment ahead of time. You must drop off a copy of your essay in advance or bring it with you when you come to your appointment. You will receive a 1/3 letter grade bonus on the grade of each course paper that you workshop at the Writing Center. You are welcome to attend the Writing Center more than once for any assignment, but additional visits will not further increase your grade.

Academic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty is inconsistent with the moral character expected of students in a University committed to the spiritual and intellectual growth of the whole person. It also subverts the academic process by distorting all measurements. It is a serious matter and will be dealt with accordingly. A list of unacceptable practices, penalties to be assigned, and procedures to be followed in prosecuting cases of alleged academic dishonesty may be found in the Student Handbook.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services Office, Doyle Room 26, at 375-2066 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Documentation from this office is required before accommodations can be made.

Email:

Email will serve as an official means of communication for this class. You are therefore required to check the email account you have registered with the university regularly. Please feel free to email me with your questions and concerns. It may take me up to two days to respond, so please do not expect an immediate response. If your question is a lengthy one (about writing, etc.), I may ask you to visit me during office hours instead of responding to you on email.

Cell Phones & Other Electronics:

You may use electronic devices in class for note-taking, viewing documents, and other learning-directed reasons. Any other use is forbidden. If you persistently disregard this policy, you will be asked to leave class.

Agreement:

It is important that you read this syllabus and keep it for the rest of the semester so that you are aware of how you will be evaluated and the expectations of your role and participation in the class. I reserve the right to change this syllabus with due notice to you. Please bring a copy—electronic or paper—to the first day of class. Please tell me if you lose your syllabus, so I can get you a new copy.

Clare 110 | Course Schedule

Date	Activities and Assignments (all homework and readings should be completed before class on the day listed)
Monday, August 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to course
Wednesday, August 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read <i>They Say, I Say</i> (TS, IS) Introduction, Ch. 1-3• Read <i>The World is a Text</i> (WT) Introduction (1-21)
Friday, August 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary Due on Alessandro Portelli's "Coal Miner's Daughter" (WT, 521-528)
Monday, September 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TS, IS Ch. 4 & 5• WT Reading and Writing About Music (515-19)• Lessig, "Creators" and Lang, "Cultural Appropriation"
Wednesday, September 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comparative Summary Due on Lessig and Lang
Friday, September 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Musical Analysis Due
Monday, September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TS, IS Ch. 6 & 7• WT "How Do I Write for College?" (26-27), "How Do I Write about Popular and Visual Culture Texts?" (31-43)
Wednesday, September 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 1 Peer Review Draft Due for peer reviews in class• Read blog post on peer review
Friday, September 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 1.1 Due
Monday, September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TS, IS Ch. 8• Blog posts on revision, grammar, etc. (Reid, Bernstein, Prendergast 1, Prendergast 2, Prendergast 3)
Wednesday, September 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revision workshop in class
Friday, September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 1.2 Due; Complete Paper Reflection in class
Monday, September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WT "Reading and Writing about Public and Private Space" (186-91), "Architecture, Experience, and Meaning" (193-204), and "Reading and Writing about Your Campus" (240-47)
Wednesday, September 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Space and Place Proposal Due; Discuss research
Friday, September 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary Due on one of the following from WT (skim all four): "Reading the Rural" (204-216), "Spatial Segregation and Gender Stratification in the Workplace" (217-221), "Making Space on the Side of the Road" (222-234), "Campuses in Place" (247-254)
Monday, September 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TS, IS Ch. 9 & 10• Bogost, "The Broken Beyond"
Wednesday, October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Space and Place Research Due
Friday, October 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 2 Peer Review Draft Due for peer reviews in class
Monday, October 6	Conferences (arrive with Paper 2.1)
Wednesday, October 8	Conferences (arrive with Paper 2.1)
Friday, October 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Midterm Reflection Due
Monday, October 13	MIDTERM BREAK
Wednesday, October 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce Analysis of Film unit

Friday, October 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 2.2 Due; Complete Paper Reflection in class
Monday, October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WT “Reading and Writing About Movies” (319-324) • Smith, “Altered States: Character and Emotional Response in the Cinema”
Wednesday, October 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Description / Analysis Due • WT “Sex Sells: A Marxist Criticism of <i>Sex and the City</i> (160-164)
Friday, October 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petersen, “Jennifer Lawrence and the History of Cool Girls”
Monday, October 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hirschman, “Men, Dogs, Guns, and Cars: The Semiotics of Rugged Individualism” • Comparative Summary Due on Petersen and Hirschman
Wednesday, October 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Research Due
Friday, October 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 3 Peer Review Draft Due for peer reviews in class
Monday, November 3	Conferences (arrive with Paper 3.1)
Wednesday, November 5	Conferences (arrive with Paper 3.1)
Friday, November 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Language and Social Action unit
Monday, November 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 3.2 Due; Complete Paper Reflection in class
Wednesday, November 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
Friday, November 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jensen, “White Privilege Shapes the U.S.”; Begin working on Social Action Invention/Research Paper
Monday, November 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Action Invention/Research Due
Wednesday, November 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing workshop
Friday, November 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 4 Peer Review Draft Due for peer reviews in class
Monday, November 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 4.1 Due
Wednesday & Friday	THANKSGIVING BREAK
Monday, December 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop Critical Reflection Paper
Wednesday, December 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop Critical Reflection Paper
Friday, December 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 4.2 Due
Wednesday, December 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Reflection Paper (with portfolio) Due

Summary Assignments

These short assignments ask you to write *conceptual summaries of specific class readings*. Your main goal is to identify various components of the text and to summarize the author’s argument. The paper should be approximately one page (1” margins, single spacing, and 12 pt standard font [e.g., Times New Roman, Calibri, Helvetica]). At the end of your summary, skip a line and include a full citation of the text you are summarizing.

The first (and most substantial) section of your paper should summarize the argument made in the text. You should identify the main claim(s) and the reasons and evidence supporting these claims, showing how these various pieces fit together. If the author addresses any counterarguments, identify these as well. Your summary should include properly cited quotes from the article to help clarify and support your account of the argument. Do not offer your own opinions or arguments in response to the text. Stick to content: *what* is the author saying in this text? *What* position is s/he advocating?

The second section of your paper (probably one substantial paragraph) should address the style, structure, audience, and purpose of the text. How is the text organized? How would you describe the author's tone and language? What audiences does the text seem to address? How does the text fit its purpose/argument, style, and structure to these audiences and their expectations, values, and beliefs?

Comparative Summaries: At some points, you will be asked to complete summaries that compare two sources. These assignments will have the same formatting but should be 1-2 full pages. In the first section, summarize the first source; in the second section, summarize the second source. In the third section, you should compare and contrast the two sources, noting points of intersection and divergence, similarity and difference, both in terms of argument and also style, structure, audience, and purpose.

Questions for Structure

- How does the author introduce and conclude the article? Where does the main argument appear? What does each main section accomplish?
- How does the author support the main argument (reasoning, examples, data, etc.)? Where does this support appear, and how does this affect the argument?

Questions for Style

- What is the tone/mood/atmosphere of the article? What emotions and responses does the article evoke? What word choices stand out to you?
- How would you describe the sentences and paragraphs in terms of length and readability?

Questions for Audience

- Who is the intended audience for this article? How does the author appeal to this audience?
- How might different audiences respond in different ways to this article? Consider how different identity markers, perspectives, and assumptions might come into play.
- How does the article affect us as readers? What sort of reading experience do we have?

Musical Analysis

Overview and Formatting: In this one page paper (single spacing, 1" margins, 12 pt font), you will offer a brief introduction to the band or musician you will be analyzing for Paper 1, and you will analyze the band through the lens of one of the articles we have read about music.

Specifics: The introduction (no more than one paragraph) should identify the band or musician you will be analyzing and explain generally why they are a good fit for thinking about the concepts and questions raised by our readings. After this introduction, the next section should focus on an analysis of the band or musician through the lens of one of the articles we've read about music. For this short paper, you won't be able to analyze the band or musician thoroughly, so you should focus on a specific song, lyric, music video, biographical detail, or other example along these lines. Quickly introduce the example and the argument from our readings that you will use to analyze it. Keeping in mind what *They Say/I Say* tells us about incorporating what "they say" into our own ideas and arguments, your analysis can go a few different directions with reference to the argument you are drawing on from our readings.

The main question to keep in mind here is, "how does this argument/concept/question from the readings illuminate and help me understand something about this band or musician?" Or, vice versa, "how does this band or musician illuminate and help me understand this argument/concept/question?"

Your artist might provide an example that supports or works against a particular argument about music; your artist might provide an example that leads you to adjust or shift a particular argument; they might allow you to take an idea from our readings and apply it in a new context or develop it in some way. Regardless of which way you go here, you should point to specific details from the argument and specific details related to the artist (lines from a song, biographical details, etc.) that support your ideas and provide evidence for your position.

Space and Place Proposal

Our work in Unit 2 asks you to analyze a specific place or space. As noted in *The World Is A Text*, we can think of public and private spaces as constructed texts that have come to be what they are through a series of decisions and broader cultural, economic, and material forces. This short paper (1 page, single-spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins) gives you an opportunity to propose a space or place that you would like to consider for this unit and to begin thinking about it as a text.

Here are the criteria you should keep in mind when choosing a space or place: you will need to be able to describe it and analyze aspects of it in specific detail, so you should either be able to access it or have a clear memory of it; you will need to be able to do research on the space and/or the community or broader context in which it is situated; and you will need to have access to images of this space or place. Perhaps most importantly, your space should be, in some sense, "public" and should have a larger social or cultural relevance. It will not work to focus on your dorm room, home, family's lake house, etc.

In your paper, respond to the following prompts and questions, most of which draw on Liz Swanson's article "Architecture, Experience and Meaning."

- Offer a general overview of your place or space, why it is significant to you, and how it has a larger social or cultural significance.
- For your given place, describe its space. Following Swanson, we can ask: is the space large and voluminous? Tight and narrow? If it is a room or has rooms, are they big or small? How are objects organized in this space? What associations does this space have? How does the space shape our understanding and our experience of this place?
- Describe the form of your place. If you are focusing on a building or other structure, what does it look like? How would you describe its shape and form? What objects do you associate with this place, either permanent or transitory? What is the function or purpose of the building and the objects present? What associations do the building and objects have? How do the forms and objects shape our understanding and our experience of this place?
- What materials is the building and objects composed of? What associations do these materials have? How do the materials shape our understanding and our experience of this place?

Space and Place Research

For Paper 2, we will be drawing on outside sources to help us analyze our spaces and places. This assignment asks you to locate at least five relevant sources and at least three relevant images or video clips. Once you have located your sources, you should write a short paper (1-2 pages, single-spaced, 12

pt font, 1" margins) summarizing your research followed by a bibliography using MLA guidelines. In this summary, offer an overview of what each source discusses and how it contributes to your thinking on space and place.

As you are doing research, you should be looking for sources that help you analyze your space or place. These sources might take a variety of forms. You can look at books, newspaper articles, magazine articles, blog posts, or any other print or digital publications that help you think about your space or place. These sources might discuss your space or place directly; they might discuss the larger context in which your place or space is situated (such as a city or a particular part of it, a region, the larger building in which your space or place is enclosed, etc.); they might discuss the type of place or space you are studying (such as a college campuses, restaurants, parks, etc.); they might discuss some larger concept, idea, or question that helps you think about your space or place (such as the idea of the rural, the question of how economic forces shape places, the concept of design, etc.); they might discuss a specific aspect of your place or space related to form or material.

It will help to search different databases with a range of search terms in different combinations, and you should be looking to add to your list of search terms based on the sources you find. Here are some general search terms related to space and place that might be helpful: design, development, urban planning, community, landscape, architecture, building, structure, border, material.

Film Description and Analysis

In this one page (single-spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins) paper, you will describe and analyze the film clip (from a movie, a television show, an advertisement, music video, etc.; no longer than five minutes) that you will be examining in Paper 3. In the first section, introduce the clip generally and then give a detailed and thorough description of the scene, taking into account such considerations as dialogue, character, setting, action, camera angles, lighting, special effects, etc. In the second section, analyze the clip by explaining how it contributes to or otherwise fits into a larger context (the movie or television episode in which it appears, a larger collection of advertisements from a particular company or for a particular type of product, other music videos produced by the musician or others in the genre, etc.).

In this second section, your analysis should incorporate considerations of theme, purpose, argument, character development, audience, etc. What is the purpose of the clip? What elements help to achieve this purpose? How does this scene develop a larger theme? How does the clip affect the audience, and why would the producers of the clip want the audience to feel this way or have this experience? Addressing these sorts of questions should help you work toward larger insights about the clip and its significance. For Paper 3, we will ultimately want to situate our discussion of our clips in larger social, cultural, political, and/or intellectual conversations. Our analysis at this point aims to address the clip in a more limited context to prepare us to better address the broader context.

Film Research

This paper will be styled as an [annotated bibliography](#). There is not a set page requirement, but it should include 3-5 sources and be formatted with single-spacing, 12 pt font, and 1" margins. For each entry, first include an MLA citation, then skip a line and begin your annotations. The annotations should be 2-3 substantial paragraphs, and they should address the main argument or points from the source and explain how the source will contribute to your paper. In terms of sources, you can include articles that focus specifically on your film clip and/or articles that address a term or concept or concern that is

relevant to your clip. For example, if I were writing about *The Real Housewives of New Jersey*, I could include articles that review the show or otherwise comment on it, articles that address the genre of reality television, articles that address relevant concerns like celebrity, wealth, gender roles and expectations, etc. At least two of your sources should be more substantial and academic in nature. The most helpful databases for these types of sources will be [JStor](#), [Project Muse](#), [Google Scholar](#), and [Academic Search Complete](#). For other types of sources, you are welcome to look at reviews or other articles from newspapers, magazines, blogs, etc.

Social Action Invention/Research Paper

In this one page (single-spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins) paper, you will begin to consider the example or examples you will address in Paper 4 related to language and social action. We can think of social action as efforts made by an individual, community, or organization to effect positive change in the world. Social action often focuses on structural inequalities in our society related to race, class/poverty, gender, or sexuality. In this short paper, identify an example or examples of social action and analyze how language and writing shaped and contributed to this action. What was the purpose of this social action? What role did language and writing play in coordinating, inspiring, or achieving the results of this social action? What was the nature of this writing or use of language? Who authored it? Who was it directed toward? What media or delivery platforms did it draw upon? Thinking about terms that have been important to us this semester, how did this use of language function semiotically, rhetorically, and/or ideologically? What sort of effect did this use of language have? Addressing these sorts of questions here will help prepare you to make a broader argument about language and social action in Paper 4 based on these examples.

Your example(s) can come from public events and conversations and/or from personal experience. Your understanding of a given example will need to draw on research and outside sources that discuss the example in greater detail, and you should incorporate your research into this paper.

Paper 1: Analyzing Music

In our discussions of music, you have read and summarized several articles that discuss music in a variety of ways. For this assignment, you should choose two or three of these articles and use them to analyze a specific text or texts (e.g., a song, an album, lyrics, an interview, a music video, a concert, an aspect of the band's history, album artwork, etc.) produced by the musical artist/group that you selected. Through your analysis, you should apply relevant terms and concepts from our readings (e.g., distinctions between authentic/inauthentic, past/present, public/private; ideas about creativity and cultural appropriation; etc.) to the texts from your artist/group.

The main question to keep in mind here is, "how does this concept from our readings illuminate and help me understand something about this artist/group?" Or, vice versa, "how does this band or musician illuminate or help me understand or elaborate on a point from our readings?" Your artist/group might provide an example that supports or works against a particular argument about music; your artist/group might provide an example that leads you to adjust or shift a particular argument; they might allow you to take an idea from our readings and apply it in a new context or develop it in some way.

Regardless of your approach, you should think of your answer to this question as an argument that you can state in a sentence or two or three and that you can support throughout your paper. In other words, from your analysis, you should work to articulate a larger point, insight, or claim, and you will need to

support this argument through your analysis by considering specific details and aspects of the arguments from our readings and also from the text(s) from your artist/group.

Your paper should include the following elements (not necessarily in this order):

- Summaries of 2-3 of our articles;
- A brief introduction to your artist/group and the text(s) you will analyze;
- An analysis of these texts that draws on the arguments and concepts from the articles; you should examine specific details from the text to support your analysis;
- An argument that emerges out of your analysis as described above.

This paper should be approximately 3-4 pages (1" margins, 12 pt standard font [e.g., Times New Roman, Helvetica], double-spaced), and it should include MLA citations as needed, both in-text and on a works cited page at the end of the paper.

Paper 2: Analysis of Space and Place

For this assignment, you will be focusing on the articles you've read about the ways public spaces and events are constructed to signify certain meanings while also drawing on outside research. Your analysis should focus on specific elements and details of your space/place while drawing on concepts, terms, and questions from the class readings and your own research. For example, what aspects of your space help us think about concerns related to form, space, and material; to the urban and rural, public and private, and past and present; to politics, economics, memory, race, and gender? How does your space or place affect us? How can we move through and affect this space ourselves? How does the space structure relations between different people and objects? What sort of cultural and economic forces have shaped your space or place? In this sense, you should address both what the space signifies to you personally and also how it signifies on a broader social and cultural level. Ultimately, you should work from your analysis to a larger point, insight, or perspective about your space or place (or about space and place generally). This argument should contribute to the conversation you have examined in our class readings and your own research.

Your paper should include the following elements:

- Specific observations that note relevant details of your space;
- An analysis of your space that draws on terms, concepts, and/or questions from at least three outside sources, including at least one source from *The World is a Text* and one from your own research;
- An argument about your space that emerges from your analysis and contributes to the conversation about space we've explored in class and in our readings.

This paper should be approximately 3.5-5 pages (1" margins, 12 pt standard font [e.g., Times New Roman, Helvetica], double-spaced), and it should include MLA citations as needed, both in-text and on a works cited page at the end of the paper.

Paper 3: Analysis of Film

For this paper, you will be analyzing a film clip from a movie, music video, advertisement, or TV episode, etc., that is no more than five minutes in length and then making an argument about how this excerpt fits into a larger social, cultural, political, and/or intellectual conversation. The nature of this conversation will vary depending upon the type of film clip you choose. Your analysis should draw on our class readings as well as sources you identify through your own research, and it should involve considerations of theme, argument, purpose, style, structure, and/or audience. You should work from this analysis toward a larger argument about the clip and how it fits within a larger conversation. Toward this end, you might consider such questions as: How does this particular scene contribute to the main theme or concern of the movie? How do specific aspects of the scene (action, dialogue, character, lighting, camera angles, sound, etc.) shape our understanding of and attitude toward this broader theme or concern? How does this scene embody or reinforce a particular ideology? What social, cultural, or political issues does this film clip draw attention to?

Your paper should include the following elements:

- A detailed description of the film clip (NOT a summary of the entire movie or TV episode) using specific language that highlights action, dialogue, character, lighting, camera angles, lighting, sound, technology/special effects, etc.;
- An analysis of your film clip that draws on terms, concepts, and/or questions from at least four outside sources, including at least two sources from *our class readings* and two from your own research;
- An argument that considers how your film clip is part of a larger social, cultural, political, and/or intellectual conversation.

This paper should be approximately 4-6 pages (1" margins, 12 pt standard font [e.g., Times New Roman, Helvetica], double-spaced), and it should include MLA citations as needed, both in-text and on a works cited page at the end of the paper.

Paper 4: Language and Social Action

Throughout the semester, we have been considering different ways that language works: as signification, as rhetoric, as ideology. For this paper, you will consider how language and writing contribute to and work as a form of social action. We can think of social action as efforts made by an individual, community, or organization to effect positive change in the world. Social action often focuses on structural inequalities in our society related to race, class/poverty, gender, or sexuality. The main goal of the paper is for you to advance an argument about language as a form of social action, and toward this end you might address the following sorts of questions: how do language and writing constitute a form of social action? How does this form of social action differ from other forms of social action (demonstrations, marches, protests, strikes, etc.)? In our current cultural and media landscape, what forms of writing prove most effective as social action? How do specific technologies and digital environments shape the possibilities for writing as social action? To answer these sorts of questions, it will help to examine and analyze specific examples from public events and conversations and/or from personal experience. Also, for this paper, we will switch from MLA to APA guidelines, a shift that will affect formatting, citations, and conventions of argumentation.

Your paper should include the following elements:

- *Introduction/Literature Review*. An APA paper typically begins with an introduction to the main question or issue that the paper will address and a review of other sources that have addressed

this question. For our purposes, you should introduce your reader to language as social action by locating it in a broader conversation about how language works (as signification, as rhetoric, as ideology, etc.), and your literature review can draw on sources we've encountered throughout the semester or other sources that help you think about language and writing. Your introduction should also articulate your argument – your understanding of language as social action – and establish expectations for the rest of the paper.

- *Body/Example(s)*. The main body of your paper should focus on a consideration of a specific example or examples of social action where language and writing play an important role. Give us a sense for what this instance of social action aimed to achieve and how language and writing shaped and contributed to this goal.
- *Conclusion*. The last section of your paper gives you an opportunity to revisit your argument through the lens of your analysis of specific examples. What is the significance of these examples? How do they demonstrate a particular understanding of language as social action? How do these examples fit in with our understanding of social action more generally?

This paper should be approximately 3.5-5 pages, and it should follow APA conventions (title page, abstract, in-text citations and references page, 1" margins, double-spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman or Courier font).

Critical Reflection Paper

Modeled on the Learning Record, this assignment has two main goals. First, it aims to encourage reflection on your strengths and weaknesses as a student – an invaluable activity for your development as a reader, writer, and thinker. Second, it introduces a different grading economy into your final average by allowing you to evaluate yourself. This portion of your grade will be determined by the paper you submit at the end of the semester, although you will also write other reflection papers earlier in the semester to help you prepare for this final paper. In the final paper, you will analyze your development throughout the semester with reference to specific dimensions of learning and course strands. The dimensions of learning have been developed by teachers and researchers, and they represent where learners develop in most any learning situation: confidence and independence; knowledge and understanding; skills and strategies; use of prior and emerging experience; reflection; and creativity. Your reflection will also consider the specific goals ("Course Strands") for this course: academic writing; critical reading, analysis, and argument; and exploratory writing.

Dimensions of Learning

Learning theorists have argued that learning and development cannot be broken down into discrete and precise steps but is rather an organic process that unfolds in complex ways. Teaching and learning occur in dynamic environments where teachers, students, texts, technologies, concepts, social structures, and architectures interact. In our reflection papers, you will be documenting evidence of your development across six dimensions. These six dimensions cannot be "separated out" and treated individually; rather, they are dynamically interwoven. Our goals for a particular class should describe a trajectory of learning across multiple dimensions, and our measurements should be able to identify the paths taken by students and their progress from their individual starting points along that trajectory.

Confidence and Independence

For this dimension, it is not a simple case of "more (confidence and independence) is better." For example, an overconfident student who has relied on faulty or underdeveloped skills and strategies can

learn to seek help when facing an obstacle; an independent student can learn to work collaboratively. In both cases, students are developing along the dimension of confidence and independence.

Skills and Strategies

Skills and strategies represent the “know-how” aspect of learning. When we speak of “performance” or “mastery,” we generally mean that learners have developed skills and strategies to function successfully in certain situations. Skills and strategies are not only specific to particular disciplines, but they often cross disciplinary boundaries. In a writing class, for example, students develop many skills and strategies involved in communicating and composing effectively.

Knowledge and Understanding

Knowledge and understanding refers to the “content” knowledge gained in particular subject areas and is the most familiar dimension, focusing on the “know-what” aspect of learning. In a psychology class, knowledge and understanding might answer a wide range of questions such as, What is Freud’s concept of ego? Who was Carl Jung? What is “behaviorism”? These are typical content questions. Knowledge and understanding includes what students are learning about topics; research methods; the theories, concepts, and practices of a discipline; the methods of organizing and presenting ideas to others; etc.

Use of Prior and Emerging Experience

The use of prior and emerging experience involves learners’ abilities to draw on their own experience and connect it to their work. A crucial but often unrecognized dimension of learning is the capacity to make use of prior experience as well as emerging experience in new situations. In a math class, for example, students scaffold new knowledge through applying the principles and procedures they’ve already learned: algebra depends on the capacity to apply basic arithmetic procedures.

Reflection

Reflection refers to the developing awareness of the learner’s own learning process, as well as more analytical approaches to the subject being studied. When we speak of reflection as a crucial component of learning, we are referring to the learner’s ability to step back and consider a situation critically and analytically with growing insight into his or her own learning processes. For example, students in a history class examining fragmentary documents and researching an era or event use reflection to discover patterns in the evidence and construct a historical narrative. Learners draw on this capability to use what they are learning in other contexts, recognize the limitations or obstacles confronting them in a given situation, take advantage of their prior knowledge and experience, and strengthen their work.

Creativity, Originality, Imagination

As learners progress across the dimensions of learning, they generally become more playful and experimental, more creative in the expression of that learning. This is true not only in “creative” fields but in nearly all domains. In all fields, primary contributions at the highest levels are the result of creative or imaginative work. Even in the early stages of learning in a discipline, exploration and experimentation, taking new or unexpected perspectives, and playfulness should be recognized and encouraged as a natural part of the learning process. Among other things, it recognizes the value of creative experimentation even when the final result of the work may not succeed as intended.

Course Strands

These categories represent the main activities and skills that we will be addressing throughout the semester. As with the dimensions of learning, the course strands are dynamically interwoven.

Critical Reading, Analysis, and Argumentation

Our work this semester focuses on different semiotic and rhetorical situations – that is, different situations in which we can read texts to analyze their meaning and their persuasive force. In terms of analysis, we will be using terms, concepts, and arguments from the class readings and from our own research. For each paper, we will be working to make an argument that is grounded in our analysis and our reading of texts and outside sources. This course strand asks you to consider aspects of the course and our assignments that focus on analysis and argumentation.

Academic Writing

This course strand focuses on how we translate the skills of analysis and argument into formal academic prose grounded in considerations of style, arrangement, and delivery. This course strand also provides an opportunity to consider activities and skills related to research and citation. Overall, it asks you to consider the specific writing challenges related to expression, organization, and documentation as something separate from the critical skills that will help you develop the content for your writing.

Exploratory Writing

This course strand draws on writers who use the metaphors of [mountain climbing](#) and [occupation](#) to describe writing. As mountain climbing, “writing is complicated. It’s tricky and unfair. Of course, as a student, you want good grades; you want to head off to a great career. But writing doesn’t care about that. Writing doesn’t care if you are trying to tell the truth or do the right thing. It’s not ethical; it’s not rational. ... writing and symbolic behavior bridge the natural and the cultural, the human and the technological.” As occupation, writing “requires that we move inward, that we creatively and critically try to find a blank space that we can fill, a hole in the writing that we can turn inside out, that we perceive our subject with renewed senses in order to infuse language with deeper persuasive and imaginative meaning.” In this sense, we will think of exploratory writing as less concerned with formal writing skills and more concerned with writing as an activity and a capacity that draws on language to account for our evolving relationship to ourselves, others, and the world around us.

Grading Criteria

You should use the following criteria to assess yourself on the Critical Reflection Paper.

A

Represents excellent participation in all course activities. Evidence of significant development across the dimensions of learning and course strands. Demonstration of specific goals for the semester and substantial work toward and progress on these goals.

B

Represents good participation in all course activities. Evidence of marked development across the six dimensions of learning and the course strands. Demonstration of specific goals for the semester and good work toward and progress on these goals.

C

Represents acceptable participation in all course activities. Evidence of some development across the six dimensions of learning and course strands. Demonstration of some consideration of goals for the semester and some progress made toward these goals.

D

Represents uneven participation in course activities. Evidence of development across the six dimensions of learning and course strands is partial or unclear.

F

Represents minimal participation in course activities, serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work. Evidence of development is not available.

Paper Reflections

These assignments ask you to reflect on your work after each paper. These short reflections should address the following prompts:

- How have you developed with reference to the dimensions of learning and course strands in this unit? Keep in mind that development doesn't have to be "positive." Development can involve confusion, trying and failing, etc., just as much as it involves success. Be sure to point to specific examples from your work.
- Where was your writing most and least successful this unit? What made this work particularly effective or ineffective? What were the main comments you received on your work, whether from peers, your instructor, or other outside help? What steps did you take to address these comments? How effective were the revisions?
- How would you describe the efforts you made during this unit? Consider both the amount of effort you put into your work and how productive and effective this effort was. How much time did you spend on different aspects of the writing process – reading, researching, brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, etc.? Which efforts felt most productive and effective? Least so?
- How would you describe the context of your writing process? What was your writing environment like? What technologies did you use? How long did you spend on writing at a given time? How many writing sessions did you have for the papers?
- What changes and interventions can you make in your writing process to continue improving?

Midterm Reflection

This assignment gives you an opportunity to reflect on the work you have done this semester and to think about ways you can continue to improve throughout the rest of the semester. This paper will not have a direct impact on your grade, but it will help you prepare for your final Critical Reflection Paper at the end of the semester. To complete the Midterm Reflection, you should complete the following steps.

- 1) Look over the dimensions of learning and the course strands. These categories and concepts will give you a framework for thinking about your development this semester.
- 2) Look over all of the work you've done so far this semester, from assignments to in-class activities.

3) Write a 3-5 page paper (double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins) that examines and demonstrates your development so far this semester. Your paper should address the following questions and prompts.

- How have you developed with reference to the dimensions of learning and course strands? Keep in mind that development doesn't have to be "positive." Development can involve confusion, trying and failing, etc., just as much as it involves success. Be sure to point to specific examples from any of the work you have done for this class, formal or informal.
- Where was your writing most and least successful this semester? What made this work particularly effective or ineffective? What were the main comments you received on your work, whether from peers, your instructor, or other outside help? What steps did you take to address these comments? How effective were the revisions? Did your approach to revisions change?
- How would you describe the efforts you made in this class? Consider both the amount of effort you put into the course and how productive and effective this effort was. How much time did you spend on different aspects of the writing process – reading, researching, brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, etc.? Which efforts felt most productive and effective? Least so?
- How would you describe the context of your writing process? What was your writing environment like? What technologies did you use? How long did you spend on writing at a given time? How many writing sessions did you have for the papers?
- What do you hope to take away from this class? What are the three most important/helpful things you learned about writing this semester? What aspects of your writing do you want to continue to improve upon in the future?
- In your last paragraph, you should evaluate yourself using specific grading criteria and explain the reasoning behind your evaluation. Give yourself a specific letter grade (feel free to use + or – grades if you fit between two different categories) and explain why this grade is appropriate. NOTE: The grade that you give yourself at this point will not affect your final Reflection grade. It will only give you a sense for where you stand at this point and what you can do to continue improving throughout the semester.

I will offer you feedback on your reflection, and we can both use this as a foundation to think about your development for the rest of the semester.

Final Reflection

This assignment provides you an opportunity to reflect on the work you have done throughout the semester. To complete the Final Reflection, you should complete the following steps.

1) Look over the dimensions of learning and the course strands. These categories and concepts will give you a framework for thinking about your development this semester.

2) Look over all of the work you've done so far this semester, both in terms of assignments and in-class activities. Look over your midterm reflection as well (you are welcome to incorporate material from the midterm in the Final Reflection).

3) Write a 5-7 page paper (double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins) that examines and demonstrates your development this semester. Your paper should address the following questions and prompts. You might not be able to address all of these thoroughly, but try to touch on all of them in some way.

- How have you developed with reference to the dimensions of learning and course strands? Keep in mind that development doesn't have to be "positive." Development can involve confusion,

trying and failing, etc., just as much as it involves success. Be sure to point to specific examples from any of the work you have done for this class, formal or informal.

- Where was your writing most and least successful this semester? What made this work particularly effective or ineffective? What were the main comments you received on your work, whether from peers, your instructor, or other outside help? What steps did you take to address these comments? How effective were the revisions? Did your approach to revisions change?
- How would you describe the efforts you made in this class? Consider both the amount of effort you put into the course and how productive and effective this effort was. How much time did you spend on different aspects of the writing process – reading, researching, brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, etc.? Which efforts felt most productive and effective? Least so?
- How would you describe the context of your writing process? What was your writing environment like? What technologies did you use? How long did you spend on writing at a given time? How many writing sessions did you have for the papers?
- What do you hope to take away from this class? What are the three most important/helpful things you learned about writing this semester? What aspects of your writing do you want to continue to improve upon in the future?
- In your last paragraph, you should evaluate yourself using specific grading criteria and explain the reasoning behind your evaluation. Give yourself a specific letter grade (feel free to use + or – grades if you fit between two different categories) and explain why this grade is appropriate.

