

## ENG 225: Rhetorics of Privilege

- Tuesday/Thursday 10am-11:20am
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"Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress."

-- Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form*

## Introduction

In essence, the goal of this class is to improve your writing skills, specifically in the area of persuasive argument. For content, we will focus this semester on areas of inequity in the United States, especially those of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Throughout the semester, you will choose a topic within this general area and become a specialist in it. By the end of the semester, you should be able to explain the topic in simple language, and make a compelling arguments about it to a wide range of audiences.

## Trigger Warning

It is entirely possible that students will find themselves distressed by some of the topics we will be discussing this semester. Each day's topic is laid out on the syllabus; students are invited to engage in self-care in whatever ways they find necessary. If you do not think you are able to attend a discussion of a certain topic, or if you are unable to write about a certain topic, please see me; alternate assignments can be worked out.

## Daily Expectations

**Reading:** There are no required texts to purchase for this course. Students will be expected to read, watch, or listen to various pieces which will either be provided on or linked via our Canvas site.

**Writing:** This is an advanced writing class, so writing will be expected. On days when papers are not due, you will turn in a brief piece of writing: 250+ words unless otherwise noted. Prompts for these will be assigned based on our class discussions.

**Participation:** Your active participation in class is expected. We will discuss in our first meeting the various ways in which one might actively participate in a class.

## Papers

1. **Personal Essay:** You'll begin by talking about your personal relation to your topic, if any. If there isn't one, why did you pick this topic? What benefit do you get from the argument you are making?
2. **Research Paper:** Learn more about your topic, and write about what you can find.
3. **Refutation Essay:** Find an argument you disagree with. Prove it wrong.
4. **Digital Essay:** Make an argument in digital form—a video, a podcast, etc.

## Grading

Assignment	Grade %
Participation	10%
Reading/Writing/Listening Responses	17%
Personal Essay (Paper #1)	18%
Research Paper (Paper #2)	20%
Refutation Essay (Paper #3)	18%
Digital Essay (Paper #4)	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Policies & Procedures

**Attendance:** It is Miami University policy that every student is expected to attend every class meeting. Since this is a discussion-oriented course, your attendance is crucial, and key to successfully completing assignments. Regular attendance will greatly elevate your chances of performing well. Simply showing up for class, however, will not be enough. I expect this class to be the site of lively intellectual activity, discussion, debate, and critical but respectful exchange. Accordingly, timely arrival is crucial. That said, I will allow you to miss three classes, after which your grade will drop one tier (C+ to C or A- to B+) per absence. Two late arrivals equal an absence. If you miss more than 25% of the class (20 minutes) you are considered absent. Please note that this not “three free skips plus excused absences,” this is three absences. Use them wisely.

**Plagiarism:** The assumption in English 225 is that the writing you submit is your own original writing—that is, produced originally for this class. To copy someone else's writing without acknowledging that use is an act of academic and professional dishonesty, whether you borrow an entire report or a single sentence. The most serious forms of academic dishonesty are to "buy" an entire paper, to have someone else write an assignment for you, or to turn in someone else's entire paper (or significant portions of an existing piece of writing) and call it your own. These forms of dishonesty constitute serious breaches of academic integrity. If you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically, ask the instructor. For further details about

Academic Integrity at Miami University—including a detailed list of examples of academic dishonesty and procedures and penalties for dealing with instances of academic dishonesty—see <http://www.muohio.edu/integrity/undergrads.cfm>.

**Assignment Format:** Papers should be in MLA format. There is a thorough guide to MLA style online at the Purdue Owl and we will review this information in class; no excuses will be accepted for incorrect citations or formatting. **MLA formatting guidelines no longer require URLs. Do not use URLs in your MLA citations.** Additionally, papers must be submitted in universally readable formats—PDF, RTF, DOC, or DOCX are all acceptable; Pages format is not.

**Submission/Grading:** All essays will be submitted via Canvas or Google Docs, as appropriate to each assignment, and must be submitted before the start of class on the day they are due. All assignments must be turned in on time. Final grades on papers will be downgraded one whole grade for each day late--for example from A to B--unless you have made prior arrangements for an extension. First, please note that "a day" is each period up to 24 hours--the penalty begins as soon as the paper is late. Second, please note that extensions are available for exceptional circumstances only.

**Backing up Work:** Make sure to have a plan for backing up all of your digital work in multiple places in case of computer failure. Please also make sure to save all of the writing you complete for class. You are responsible for data loss! Consider a real-time backup program such as Dropbox.

**Accommodations:** I assume that all of us have different ways of learning, and that the organization of any course will accommodate each student differently. For example, you may prefer to process information by speaking and listening, so that some of the handouts I provide may be difficult to absorb. Please communicate with me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them. You may also obtain additional information and support from the Office of Learning Disabilities Services 513-529-8741 or The Office of Disability Resources 513-529-1541.

**Canvas/Daily Schedule:** The daily course schedule and more detailed assignment prompts will be available on Canvas. The course schedule is subject to change based on the needs and interests of the class. You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas for updates, as well as regularly checking your Miami email address.

**Distractions:** Please silence your cell phone and refrain from texting. While we will regularly use laptops for in-class writing, research, and collaboration, please refrain from using your laptop for non-class activities. Additionally, side conversations are not acceptable.

**Respect:** Since this is a discussion-based class, it is vital that you listen and speak

respectfully to others at all times. I encourage you to express your opinions, of course—they will help inspire good discussions. In other words, you are allowed and expected to speak your mind at all times, as long as you can do so without being a jerk.

**Problems:** If you run into problems or emergencies, talk to me as soon as possible!

## Resources

**Classmates:** Rely on one another for the questions you have regarding the readings, the work we're doing in class, software we may be using, etc. You all, both individually and as a collective, embody a vast bank of knowledge and experiences.

**Instructor:** I will do all I can to assist you in succeeding in this course. Feel free to meet with me during my office hours or another scheduled time. Email is a reliable way to contact me and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner.

**IT Support:** The IT support desk is the main point of contact for technology questions at Miami, including issues with connecting to MU wireless. You can call 513-529-7900, email [ithelp@muohio.edu](mailto:ithelp@muohio.edu), or go to 317 Hughes Hall.

**Writing Centers:** The Howe Writing Center is located on the main floor of King Library. The Center is staffed with writing consultants from many different academic areas. In a one-on-one workshop, a staff member will consult with you concerning work-in-progress, final drafts, research style, and many other aspects of writing. It is best to schedule an appointment ahead of time, but you may also walk in on days when they have consultants available. For further information, visit the student resources site at <http://writingcenter.lib.muohio.edu/>.

**The Student Counseling Service:** Located in the Health Services Center, this office provides a wide range of counseling services. For more information, call 513-529-4634. Also, they have therapy dogs that you can hang out with. No kidding. Call them.

## Tentative Schedule

Tuesday 8/25	Syllabus; Privilege
Thursday 8/27	Argument Workshop; Personal Essay Assigned
Tuesday 9/1	Triggers
Thursday 9/3	Imitation Workshop
Tuesday 9/8	Women
Thursday 9/10	Copia Workshop
Tuesday 9/15	Peer Review of Personal Essay
Thursday 9/17	<b>Personal Essay Due</b> Research Paper Assigned
Tuesday 9/22	Race

Thursday 9/24	Citation Workshop
Tuesday 9/29	Marriage
Thursday 10/1	Style Clinic
Tuesday 10/6	Trans*
Thursday 10/8	Conferences (Optional)
Tuesday 10/13	Peer Review of Research Paper
Thursday 10/15	<b>Research Paper Due</b> Assign Refutation Essay
Tuesday 10/20	Harassment/Assault
Thursday 10/22	Language Workshop
Tuesday 10/27	Mental Health
Thursday 10/29	TBD
Tuesday 11/3	Relationships
Thursday 11/5	Conferences (Optional)
Tuesday 11/10	Peer Review of Refutation Essay
Thursday 11/12	<b>Refutation Essay Due</b> Digital Essay Assigned
Tuesday 11/17	Men
Thursday 11/19	Conferences ( <b>Mandatory</b> )
Tuesday 11/24	<b>No class! You won't be here anyway.</b>
Thursday 11/26	<b>No class! Thanksgiving.</b>
Tuesday 12/1	Other
Thursday 12/3	Donuts, evaluations, peer review of Digital Essay.
Thursday 12/10	<b>Digital Essay due @ 10am (handed in online; no meeting)</b>