

**HONOR 2211: Writing in Honors**  
**Critical Thinking and Constructing Arguments**  
**Policy Statement and Syllabus**  
**Spring Semester, 2019 M/W/F**

**Instructor:** Dr. Paul Ketzle  
**Online:** <http://utah.instructure.com>

**Office:** MHC 1201  
**Office Hours:** Wed 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
(By appointment)

**TEXTS**

*They Say, I Say* 3rd Edition. Graff & Berkenstein, eds.  
*The Warmth of Other Suns*. Isabel Wilkerson  
Plus various articles, books, and videos available online.

**FOCUS**

Throughout our lives, we are exposed to a variety of writing styles and genres. We use it for communication, for entertainment, for personal expression and distraction. Within an academic environment, formal writing serves particular purposes, primarily making arguments. Anyone can have an opinion. Anyone can argue. But the purpose of academic arguments is not to affirm conclusions we've already drawn but rather to determine what we know, what we don't know, and try to plot a course for how to know better. Academic writing, a principle focus on writing in the Honors College, is at its core about making arguments that do more than state a position: they advance our understanding of the world.

This semester, we are going to focus on trying to do just that. In this country, there are few issues that are more difficult to discuss in public than racial inequality and the reasons for this are myriad. Incidents like those that have roiled our country, from Ferguson, Missouri, to New York City, highlight the fact that a problem exists, even as people from different social, cultural, economic, and political backgrounds argue over what the problem is and how to solve it. Majority populations resent being told to "check their privilege" or being made to feel guilty for situations they themselves may have initially inherited. Minority populations resent the generalizations they must perpetually deny and the institutional (and individual) obstacles they encounter.

Quality research and discussions will likely make everyone uncomfortable at some point—and that's good. It should. That is how we know our assumptions have been challenged and our serious exploration of a topic can begin. Reaching consensus about seemingly intractable problems like racial inequality, however, should never be confused with unanimity. You will always find clusters of knowledgeable people who continue to disagree and offer skeptical counterarguments. That's also a good thing. Knowledgeable and difficult questions should always be asked and orthodoxies questioned. Research into this topic is especially difficult because the problems we investigate cannot often be measured directly. We will need to be thoughtful and creative about what data might be useful to answer our questions—and those answers will likely span a wide variety of fields, from economics to history to sociology to urban planning and so on. Implications exist for—and contributions are likely needed from—both the humanities and the sciences, and I want to encourage each of you to utilize your own individual expertise and academic focus to move this analysis forward. In truth, there is likely no simple solution or solutions. But that's an important lesson for us as well: success often can only be measured by how well we advance a discussion into a difficult problem. We need to be satisfied at times that we've asked better questions.

Academic knowledge is collective. It's essentially a conversation between people who have studied topics very closely for a very long time—and like any conversation between experts, the subject can often be highly detailed and difficult for others to follow. So, as we progress, we are going to need to learn a good deal about what is already known before we can enter into that conversation with any confidence. To help with this process, we're going to work together to generate a body of knowledge that will serve as the basis for your own researched argument. That research process will not be a competition, but rather a true academic collaboration to obtain the best possible information for the individual arguments we will make based upon it.

We will be working together, arguing with each other, often disagreeing, as we both work to develop our own skills and to learn to construct knowledge. Through our engagement with the material and each other, we have the potential to see how learning is an active verb and discover ways that we can claim our own education and in the process help us all obtain a better understanding. This is, after all, the purpose of academic writing in the first place.

## OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

### *General Education*

This course meets the Upper Division Communication/Writing (CW) Requirement.

This course addresses the following Essential Learning Outcomes: Critical Thinking, Written Communication and Teamwork.

*Critical Thinking:* Student writers will use sources to develop a complex understanding of expert viewpoints and then comprehensively analyze or synthesize them; thoroughly analyze own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates relevant contexts; articulate a specific position and demonstrate the contextual necessity of arguing it, its limitations and implications; prioritize information and organize effectively, accurately presenting alternate explanations, even when contrary to your own opinions/conclusions; and draw conclusions based upon the provided evidence that are logical and well-supported.

*Written Communication:* Student writers will engage in an extensive written academic research project that involves the synthesis of at least 10 scholarly or primary sources. In addition, students will compose a comprehensive annotated bibliography, along with numerous other small papers and responses that are designed to help progress toward completion of the researched argument.

*Teamwork:* Student writers will use the input of peers via the writing workshop to develop their own critical thinking about issues and problems crucial to being an engaged scholar and citizen. As workshop participants, student writer/researchers will participate as team members in the evaluation, critique and revision strategies of peer work.

## GRADING SCALE

93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	00-59 E
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

## BASIC COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1) Active participation in the class is required.
- 2) Follow all assignment and course directions. Failure to do so will result in a loss of credit and lowering of your grade.
- 3) Regular attendance is mandatory; You are allowed to miss five classes without penalty.
- 4) EACH ABSENCE OVER FIVE LOWERS YOUR FINAL PARTICIPATION GRADE BY ONE-THIRD OF A LETTER.
- 5) Four tardies will be counted as an absence. (Arriving to class more than five minutes after it has started counts as being tardy.)
- 6) Come to class prepared. Failure to come to class with the expected assignments or being unprepared to discuss the assigned reading will have you marked absent.
- 7) Late papers will be marked down two full letter grades for each day they are late. (If you have printer or other problems, email your work to me before it is due, not matter how “finished” it is. Turning in your best work by the due date is *always* a better option than turning in something more complete and late.)
- 8) All out of class assignments must be typed.

## GRADED ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

- Participation 10%
- Brief Argument I (Critique) (700-900 words) 5%
- Brief Argument II (Synthesis) (700-900 words) 5%
- Research Proposal 5%
- Individual Annotated Bibliography (6 sources) 5%
- Collaborative Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Researched Argument (2200-2500 words) 60%  
+ 2 additional annotated sources

## PARTICIPATION

What’s expected of you is to contribute to the debates, discussion, and analyses that we are doing in this class. I expect you to challenge each other—and so you should expect to be challenged. I expect you to challenge me, as well, and you should never take the fact that I try to explain why I think you are wrong as any kind of insult or lack of respect. (I’ll also try to make a point of explaining why I think you are right, too.) Rather than feeling disrespected when people disagree with you, recognize that we seriously argue with those we respect, otherwise we wouldn’t waste our time. There’s nothing wrong with disagreement; however, simple disagreement will not be sufficient in this class and shouldn’t be sufficient really anywhere else. Having an opinion is fine, but sharing and arguing one necessitates that you support it with reasons that can persuade a critical audience, not merely one that agrees with your conclusions. As we’ll learn this semester, having information that conforms to a belief doesn’t necessarily count as evidence supporting it. We’re going to be challenging ourselves as much as (and, hopefully, more than) each other. And I’d argue that you should never be merely satisfied yourself with conclusions that you cannot defend to others.

How you conduct yourself in this class, including your attendance, tardiness, and behavior in class will all factor into this portion of your grade. **Your mere presence in the classroom does not automatically qualify you to be marked present.** You must come prepared with that day's assignment to be considered present. Unruly or unprofessional behavior may result in your being asked to leave and marked absent.

## **CANVAS SUBMISSIONS & FEEDBACK STUDIO**

Most of your major assignments will need to be submitted to the Assignment in Canvas as a Word, PDF, or RTF file format. You won't receive credit for your assignment until you submit it in the proper location and format. I will be evaluating your papers using the Feedback Studio, as well as providing you with a separate grade sheet (as a PDF) that will identify more general strengths and weaknesses of your assignment so you can determine what areas you need to focus on. (Points will be taken off for grammatical issues, so if you are weak in this area, I recommend that you focus extra energy in this area.)

## **WRITING CENTER**

The University Writing Center is a free service available for all students of the University of Utah. It provides one-on-one assistance for all stages of the writing process, from generating ideas for topics, to improving analysis and clarity, to polishing finished drafts. The Center's staff are trained to work with student writers from first semester freshmen through graduate school, and writers of all levels of ability are welcome. To schedule an appointment, call 587-9122 or stop by Marriott Library to schedule an appointment.

## **PLAGIARISM POLICY**

**Punishment for plagiarism is an automatic *E* in the course.** See sections II and V of the Student Code for details and consult your instructor and your textbook for explanations and examples so that you don't run into trouble. Aside from the moral issues involved with cheating, you are only hurting your own development as a writer by not completing the assignments yourself.

## **INCOMPLETES**

The Honors College offers Incompletes only under extraordinary circumstances.

## **COURSE WITHDRAWALS**

See this semester's *Class Schedule* for deadlines and procedures.

## **ADA ACCOMMODATIONS**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Accommodation — <<http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/index.html>>

Academic Honesty — <<http://www.sa.utah.edu/code.html>>

Drop/Withdrawal and Other Important Dates to Remember —

<<http://www.sa.utah.edu/regist/calendar/datesDeadlines/deadlines.htm>>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule is subject to change: please be sure to pay attention in class for announcements of additions, deletions, rearrangements or substitutions

Date	Discussion Subject	Readings / Assignments Due
Mon 1/7	Overview — Academic Arguments	
Wed 1/9	Critical Reading / Critical Thinking Writing about Arguments	<i>They Say/ I Say</i> (Part 1) “Check Your Privilege” Readings (Canvas)
Fri 1/11	Argument Claims and Warrants	<i>They Say/ I Say</i> (Part 2) <b>Writing Analysis Due, 10pm</b>
Mon 1/14		King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (Canvas)
Wed 1/16	Mass Incarceration	Coates, “Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration” (Canvas)
Fri 1/18	Introduction to Critique	<i>They Say/ I Say</i> (Part 3) Kahlenberg, “Affirmative Action” (Canvas)
<b>Mon 1/21</b>	<b>MLK BIRTHDAY — NO CLASS</b>	<i>Post draft and participate in Online Discussion (Canvas, 10 pm)</i>
Wed 1/23	Workshop	<i>Bring draft and notes to class for reference.</i>
Fri 1/25	Drafting Day — <b>No Class</b>	<b>Critique Due</b>
Mon 1/28	Critique Discussion	
Wed 1/30	Introduction to Synthesis Collaborative Bib	Hannah-Jones, “Class Action” (Canvas)
Fri 2/1	On-Line Discussion — <b>No Class</b>	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i> (pp. 1-94)  <i>Discussion Post</i>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Subject</b>	<b>Readings / Assignments Due</b>
Mon 2/4	Move Structures/Research Questions Collaborative Bib	Sample Annotated Bibliography (Canvas) View Peer Review Tutorials (Canvas)  <i>Post draft and participate in Online Discussion (Canvas, 10 pm)</i>
Wed 2/6	Workshop/ Collaborative Bib	<i>Bring draft and notes to class for reference.</i>
Fri 2/8	Drafting Day — <b>No Class</b>	<b>Synthesis Due, Canvas, 10pm</b>
Mon 2/11	Synthesis Discussion / Research Orientation	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i> (pp. 95-179)  <i>Discussion Post</i>
Wed 2/13	Bibliography	
Fri 2/15	Bibliography	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i> (pp.180-259)  <i>Discussion Post</i>
<b>Mon 2/18</b>	<b>President's Day — NO CLASS</b>	
Wed 2/20	Bibliography	
Fri 2/22	Bibliography	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i> (pp.260-350)  <i>Discussion Post</i>
Mon 2/25	Bibliography	
Wed 2/27	Group Bibliography Presentations	<b>Group Annotated Bibliography Due</b> <i>Assignment Dropbox (class time)</i>
Fri 3/1	Group Bibliography Presentations	
Mon 3/4	Group Bibliography Presentations	

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Subject</b>	<b>Readings / Assignments Due</b>
Wed 3/6	Research Impressions/ Creating Arguments Proposal Exercise	<b>Research Questions Due, 10pm</b> Sample Papers
Fri 3/8	Drafting Day — <b>No Class</b>	<b>Proposals Due (10pm)</b>
<b>Mon 3/11-3/15</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Mon 3/18		Proposal Revision Workshop <i>Bring revised proposal to class</i>
Wed 3/20	Paper Structure / Introductions  In-Class Structure Exercise	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i> (pp.351-553)  <i>Discussion Post</i>
Fri 3/22	In-Class Structure Exercise / Outlines	
Mon 3/25		Coates, “The Case for Reparations” <i>Discussion Post</i>
Wed 3/27		<b>Outline Due</b> <i>Assignment Dropbox (10 p.m.)</i>
Fri 3/29	Drafting Day — <b>No Class</b>	<i>Post Rough Draft to Discussion, 10 p.m.)</i>
Mon 4/1	Workshop Discussion	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Wed 4/3	Workshop Discussion	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Fri 4/5	Workshop Discussion	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Mon 4/8		Coates, “Letter to my son”
Wed 4/10		Obama, “50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Selma”

<b>Date</b>	<b>Discussion Subject</b>	<b>Readings / Assignments Due</b>
Fri 4/12	Revision Day — <b>No Class</b>	<b>Research Permissions Due</b>  <i>Researched Argument Revision Due, Sat, 10pm</i>
Mon 4/15	Draft In-Class Revision Workshop	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Wed 4/17	Draft In-Class Revision Workshop	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Fri 4/19	Draft In-Class Revision Workshop	<i>Bring Draft of argument for workshop, plus any comments on group papers</i>
Mon 4/22	Introduction of Writing Analysis & Research Narrative Wrap-up	
Tues 4/23		<b>Researched Argument Due</b> <i>Assignment Dropbox (10 p.m.)</i>
Sat 4/28		<b>Writing Analysis Due</b> <b>Research Narrative Due</b> <i>Assignment Dropbox (10 p.m.)</i>