**College Writing II**

**Nature, Aliens/Outsiders, and Superheroes: Engaging with the World**

Spring 2022

WRIT 106-XX

Instructor:

Email:

Classroom:

Class Meetings:

Office:

Office Hours:

Welcome to WRIT 106-XX. This course is designed to provide you with a solid foundation for college-level writing and critical thinking. Writing is not the transfer of thought onto paper; rather, writing *is* thought. With this in mind, WRIT 106 both teaches how writing functions as a means of critical inquiry and stresses the importance of writing to your college coursework, careers, and life. This course works under the assumption that the best way to become more adept at writing is to write frequently. For this reason, we will engage with writing as a process that involves multiple drafts, brainstorming activities, editing, peer revision, and conferences. I will ask you to do a good amount of writing in class, and to share these exercises with your classmates. You should bring a pen and paper or laptop to each class.  Much of this in-class writing will be quick, informal, and experimental. It is intended to help you move forward with the longer, graded essays you will write for this course. You will have multiple and varied ways of sharing your points of view through small group work, class discussion, and peer workshops. You should expect to spend roughly eight hours a week outside of class time on your course work for this class.

We will use readings to explore different ways of thinking about the human relation to nature, about aliens/ outsiders, and our relationship with the “other” (or being the other), and the idea of “superheroes” and how they help us think about power and responsibility. In so doing, we will read literature and articles that address these big ideas from different perspectives. I’m hoping these topics will both spark critical thinking and writing, and at the same time be engaging and even fun!

I look forward to working with you all, and I invite you to talk with me at any point about your progress in the class.

**Required Text**

All texts are linked from the syllabus.

**Important Dates**

January 17: Martin Luther King Holiday (No Classes)

January 18: Classes Begin

March 7-13: Spring Recess

April 15-17: Easter Holiday (No Classes)

May 3-4: Reading Days (No Classes)

May 12 (R): Last day of classes. End of term. **Meets Friday Class Schedule** (i.e.

Thursday Classes don’t meet.)

**Course Objectives:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Description** |
| 1. **Critical reading and writing about diverse and interdisciplinary texts**
 | Students will learn to read and write critically using a range of texts that represent diverse interdisciplinary approaches to and theories of knowledge-making. |
| 1. **Writing and analysis of disciplinary genres**
 | Students will gain familiarity with writing in multiple genres and disciplines and will develop the ability to interpret and analyze a diverse range of texts. |
| 1. **Writing Process**
 | Students will understand and be able to execute the key elements of a writing process: a series of rigorous, thoughtful revisions which re-imagine and rework any—and likely all—of the key criteria of good writing. |
| 1. **Close reading**
 | Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to closely read text (i.e., be attentive to finer details of content, argument, rhetorical moves, audience, social/cultural/historical context, and reader/author assumptions), through analytical writing that draws on these skills of close reading to advance their own arguments. |
| 1. **Citation & Referencing**
 | Students will be able to appropriately document and integrate external research into their writing, and be familiar with an appropriate, professional style of citation. |

**Assignment Breakdown:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Assignment** |
| Nature/place final draft |
| Aliens/Outsiders final draft |
| Superheroes document essay final draft |
| Portfolio or Final Reflection |
| Homework (Discussion board posts) |
| Early and middle drafts (6) |
| Writer’s letters (3) |

All major assignment prompts are located at the end of this syllabus.

**Contract Grading:**

**[Faculty: We are implementing labor-based contract grading as an anti-racist approach to writing assessment. The approach outlined below is taken from Asao Inoue’s book, *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies*:** [**https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/inoue/ecologies.pdf**](https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/inoue/ecologies.pdf)**. Feel free to adapt the labor contract or introductory language to meet your instructional needs.**

This class will follow a labor-based model, meaning that you will be rewarded for the time and effort that you devote to the class. Your final grade will be determined by the expectations outlined below (i.e., a grading contract that we will follow together). I am using this approach because I believe in a growth model of writing instruction: you will all be starting from different places/levels, and what matters most in this class is how much you grow as a writer during the course of the semester. I find this approach to be a more compassionate approach to assessment; I hope that it encourages you to take risks in this class without fear that your grades will be negatively impacted.

 Do not worry: you will receive lots of feedback on your writing and other work during the semester from your peers and me. Use these assessments (written and verbal) to rethink ideas and improve your writing and practices, to take risks, and to fail and learn from that failure. Always know that I will read your writing and shape our classroom assessment activities and discussions around your work, but you will not receive grades from me.

**The default grade for this course is a B.** If you do all the labor asked of you, then you’ll get a B course grade. If you do not participate fully, forget to do assignments, or do not follow the labor instructions precisely, you will get a lower course grade.

The following chart will guide you as to how your grades will be determined. If you do not meet all the criteria for a particular grade, a +/- grade will come into play. We will revisit the contract part-way through the course to determine if we want to amend it in any way.

**LABOR CONTRACT**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade you want: |  | # of non-participation days: | # of missed discussion boards/homework: | # of missed projects (4 total) | # of mastery assignments |
| A |  | 3 or fewer | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| B |  | 3 or fewer | 2 | 0 | optional |
| C |  | 4 | 3 | 1 | optional |
| D |  | 5 | 3 | 2 | optional |
| F |  | 6+ | 4+ | 3+ | 0 |

\*Participation is not defined only as speaking, but also contributing in writing during various activities during our sessions

All students in this course begin with a B, and in order to maintain that grade, you must follow the terms of the contract above. Based on criteria such as missing assignments (see above), you can slip to a C or below. In order to earn an A grade, you must complete a “mastery” activity. These activities are listed below; additionally, you may propose one to me if you want to create your own.

* **A lesson/activity/handout**: These handouts are on a topic and material that you research for the class’s benefit and will need at least 2 weeks lead time, working with me on the materials.
* **Revise one of your individual projects an additional time.** Include a memo addressed to me detailing the changes that you made.
* **Record a how-to video on some element of our class** (technology, writing techniques, etc.)
* **Respond to at least 10 other students during two separate Canvas discussion threads (20 responses total).** You must respond to the current discussion thread, not one from a previous module/unit.
* **Some other labor that benefits the class** and our mutual learning. Do you want to write about and report to us on a cultural event related to the class? Or maybe you would like to read an article for us and summarize some of its findings or ideas that you think will help us do our work in class? If you have an idea, come to me early.

 Note that the mastery assignments are **optional**—you should only complete them if you want an A in the class. You may not substitute a mastery assignment for another assignment in the syllabus. They must be completed no later than two weeks before the end of the semester.

I realize that this method is a different way of thinking about grades, so reach out to me any time if I can provide clarification.

**Drafts**

Revision through multiple drafts is the foundation of this class. Your drafts will be the focus of this class, so it is critical that you complete them according to the schedule on the syllabus. We will use your drafts to practice various techniques for effective writing during class time. You will complete three drafts (early, middle, final) for each major essay assignment and will submit them to me via Canvas. The syllabus will indicate when you should bring a copy of your draft to class. If you are having trouble making progress on an essay, let me know right away. We will help you make forward progress.

**Do We Have Your Name Correct?**

If your name is not listed accurately on Canvas, please [update your name in Campus Lab Engage](https://montclair.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/421483). Please also inform me of any changes.

**A Note on Personal Pronouns**

Please let me know your pronouns at the start of the semester. We will have on-going conversations about which pronouns we should use for each other and for the writers that we read in class. If we are using the wrong pronouns to refer to you, please let me know via email or in person. Stop by the LGBTQ Center located in the Office for Equity and Diversity, Student Center, Room 113A, for strategies for discussing pronoun usage.

**Attendance**

[Faculty: in creating your policy, remember that a student cannot lose more than 15 percentage points due to attendance \*and\* a student’s grade cannot drop below a C- due to attendance. Students cannot fail based on attendance.]

**Late work**

[Faculty: Embrace flexibility around deadlines. Deduct minimal points for late submissions and even consider full credit. Or give students a certain number of “gimmes” during the semester, which allows them to hand in a late assignment without penalty up to any number of days that you choose. Handing in all major projects guarantees a passing grade.

A student will not automatically fail for not handing in the final draft of an essay.]

**Class Cancelation**

If a class must be canceled due to an emergency, I will contact you via email. Make sure that you check and empty your MSU mailbox frequently to avoid missing important emails. (Once it is full, it will not accept further email).

**Academic Integrity**

Students and faculty at Montclair State University depend on academic integrity to build the University-wide community that they share. The First-Year Writing program applies the [University Academic Dishonesty Policy](https://www.montclair.edu/faculty-handbook/academic-policies/academic-requirements/academic-dishonesty-policy/), which includes plagiarism, and the [Campus Climate for Civility and Human Dignity policy](https://www.montclair.edu/policies/student/human-relations-statement/) as part of its approach to teaching and community-building. We will review these policies and their consequences throughout the semester. It is always a good idea to talk to me or take advantage of other provided resources if you are having trouble with a classroom discussion, a topic in class, or an assignment. Always reach out to me first if you have any questions about how to use or cite sources properly.

**Accommodations**

If you require accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the [Disability Resource Center (DRC)](https://www.montclair.edu/disability-resource-center/) in Webster Hall, Room 100 to receive a letter requesting accommodations. This office will work with you to assure that you are given the services necessary to equalize access.

**Title IX Policy**

It is the policy of Montclair State University to investigate any report of gender-based misconduct, including sexual assault and sexual harassment. Any reports made to the following groups on campus will be held in the strictest of confidence: ([Counseling and Psychological Services](https://www.montclair.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services/), [Campus Clergy](http://www.msunewman.com/staff), the [Women’s Center](https://www.montclair.edu/student-development-campus-life/womens-center/), and the [University Health Center](https://www.montclair.edu/university-health-center/).)  These groups will connect you with support services and help to explore your options.

As a faculty member, I am required by the University to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality if you report it to me.  However, I will respect your privacy and only share this information with those who have a duty to investigate and respond. All reports of sexual misconduct will be investigated by the University’s Title IX Officers with sensitivity. A request for confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible to protect the privacy interests of those involved and balanced against the University obligation to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment to all students.

For more information, including contact information to make a report of gender-based misconduct, and the University’s investigation procedures: <https://www.montclair.edu/sexual-harassment/sexual-harassment-complaint-procedures-students/>

**Completion of Course Evaluation**

A link for an online evaluation of this course will be sent to you from the Office of the Provost late in the semester. As a program, we consider your evaluation of the course to be part of your participation as a student in your own learning. Once you complete the survey, you will receive a confirmation of completion through email, which you should email to me. Course evaluations are a valuable part of the First Year Writing Program as they help to maintain standards of excellence. These surveys are anonymous, and I will not know the results until I have submitted grades for the semester.

**Resources**

* Your classmates. Rely on one another for the questions you have regarding the work we’re doing in class. You all, both individually and as a collective, embody a vast bank of knowledge and experiences.
* Me*.* I will do all I can to assist you in succeeding in this course. Feel free to make an appointment with me, or just talk before or after class. Email is a reliable way to contact me and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner.
* The [First Year Writing program](https://www.montclair.edu/writing-studies/programs-of-study/first-year-writing-program/) website offers information about aspects of the program such as the Exemplary Essay Awards, faculty contact information, and other news.
* [The Center for Writing Excellence](https://www.montclair.edu/center-for-writing-excellence/) is available for online or in-person consultations at any part of the writing process.
* The [Registrar](http://www.montclair.edu/registrar/) offers information about adding, dropping, or withdrawing from a class.
* [OIT](http://www.montclair.edu/oit/)  (Office of Information Technology) provides help with Canvas and computer issues.
* [Peer-led discussion groups](https://www.montclair.edu/social-justice-diversity/get-involved/discussiongroups/) provide an environment for students who share similar identity markers and interests to build community.
* [CAPS](http://www.montclair.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services/) (Counseling and Psychological Services) offers short-term individual and group counseling, including the [Let’s Talk](https://www.montclair.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/lets-talk/) program that includes multiple weekly drop-in sessions around campus.
* [Dean of Students Office](http://www.montclair.edu/dean-of-students/) offers services and information that enables you to reach your academic and personal goals.
* [Community resources](https://www.montclair.edu/dean-of-students/support-services/) offer support to students who are facing a variety of personal challenges.
* [OWL (Online Writing Lab) at Purdue](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/) offers information on MLA/APA style, grammatical questions, and other writing issues.
* [Center for Student Development](https://www.montclair.edu/student-development-campus-life/) offers support for Veteran students.
* University Hall (5th Floor) offers [a laptop lending service](https://www.montclair.edu/information-technology/borrow-a-laptop/).
* [Acade](https://www.montclair.edu/academic-success-center/)[mic Success Center](http://www.montclair.edu/student-development-campus-life/academic-success-center/) offers tutoring and workshops in several subject areas.
* [LGBTQ Center](http://www.montclair.edu/student-development-campus-life/lgbtq-center/%29) sponsors workshops, events, and group meetings throughout the semester.
* [Office of Social Justice and Diversity supports the community in building and enhancing an inclusive campus climate at Montclair State University.](https://www.montclair.edu/social-justice-diversity/about-us/)
* [Tara Reinecker](https://montclairathletics.com/sports/2015/2/12/GEN_02121501.aspx?id=253) can answer advising questions for those students enrolled in athletics.

**Assessment Criteria for Written Work**

*Central Claim*The central claim is a debatable, complex stance or position that establishes your argument for an intended audience. Your high school teacher might have called this a “thesis statement.” You should further explore, support, and advance the central claim or “set of ideas” throughout the composition (the word “composition” represents both an essay or multimodal project). The central claim is the foundation upon which you build the essay or multimodal project and which you use to drive the discussion forward. Successful compositions consistently demonstrate attention to and focus on the central claim.*Development*An effective argumentative essay or multimodal project integrates evidence and analysis into an extended discussion that engages in sustained and expanded conversation.  Effective development uses examples and evidence from other writers, primary and outside sources, scholarly and popular research, anecdotes, and lived experience. Effective development means going beyond listing examples by exploring the implications of the central claim and taking your audience through the building of your ideas.

*Analysis*Analysis is the innovative heart of a composition where you synthesize the connections and relationships between texts, ideas, evidence, and the central claim. Analysis explores and answers the questions “So what?” or “How?” or “Why?” These questions push you as the writer to offer reasons for the connections between ideas and available supporting evidence. The most successful analysis affirms and furthers the central claim by demonstrating its complexity and significance.

*Organization*Two main criteria define organization: (1) a core argument that is presented consistently throughout the essay and (2) sub-claims, supported by logically connected and structured paragraphs, that move through the argument as it is developed and substantiated. The organizational logic of a composition relies on a series of sub-claims designed to support and advance the central claim. The composition moves from one sub-claim into another in a cohesive way. You may have in the past used the word “flow” to describe this movement and cohesiveness. With good “flow” the progression of ideas makes sense to readers as they follow your argument. In a composition with effective organization, each sub-claim builds on what comes before it and transitions smoothly to the next in a logical progression.

*Clarity of Prose*A successful essay demonstrates clarity of prose, which requires proficiency with English grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as MLA formatting and citations. Such proficiency may also involve varied sentence structure, accurate word choices, and careful proofreading that serve the rhetorical purpose you are exploring.

*Revision*Adrienne Rich defines revision as a process of “re-seeing”: you make some new discovery or build further on an existing idea in ways that ultimately create a more sophisticated, expanded, and complicated composition. You successfully accomplish this level of revision by making decisions about the feedback and responses you receive from peers and instructors; ultimately you must incorporate, interpret, and translate this feedback in productive ways that reshape the original composition.

**Grading scale**

A 100-94

A- 93-90

B+ 89-87

B 86-84

B- 83-80

C+ 79-77

C 76-74

C- 73-70

D+ 69-67

D 66-64

D- 63-61

F 60-0

**Benchmark Language (if using a grading system on essays)**

WRIT 106

\***A\***papers present powerful, engaging arguments and central claims that present the author’s original interpretations of texts. In an A paper, the writer’s central claim is clear and yet also complex and sophisticated. The central claim and core ideas of the essay are supported by compelling evidence, logical reasoning and analysis. The author demonstrates sophisticated close reading of the text(s), with appropriately documented and integrated external research. The essay is highly readable because it is organized for the reader’s ease of understanding, and the paragraphs and sentences are clearly, articulately written and enhance the overall effectiveness of the essay.

**\*B\***papers present strong central claims and arguments that are well supported with evidence, logic and analysis. The author demonstrates close reading of the text(s), with appropriately documented and integrated external research. The essay is organized appropriately and the prose is clear though it likely does not have the articulateness of an “A” paper.

**\*C\***papers present central claims and arguments that a reader can follow but that may be only partially supported by evidence and examples. Organizational focus and analysis may be weak, suggesting that significant revision is needed. Often there is evidence that the author has either misread or only superficially read the text or sources under analysis; sources may not be properly documented. The prose is generally readable, though sentences are not always clear and errors are sometimes distracting.

**\*D\***papers are either unsuccessful in presenting central claims and arguments, or present arguments that are essentially unsupported. D papers may vary in length, but the paragraphs are frequently organized in a way that confuses rather than guides readers. External research is likely not incorporated as appropriate and documentation is often incorrect. Papers that are written in prose that is confusing will receive Ds, though not all D papers will have confusing prose.

\***F**\* papers are unsuccessful in presenting and supporting arguments, either because they contain no central claims or, if they do, these claims are poorly developed. Essays are organized and written in a confusing manner, and prose is often inaccessible for the reader. Often the essay does not meet the expectations outlined in the assignment.

**Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **What’s going on in class** | **Reading and assignments due this date** |
| **Class 1** | **Class and Syllabus Introductions** Writing exercise, review of FYW assessment criteriaInstructions to download Free MS Word; signing up for WC Online | Bring yourself, and your sense of curiosity about the world. Also bring something to write with/on, and, finally, it’s helpful if you bring a copy of the syllabus, either printed out or online on a device. |
| **Class 2** | **UNIT ONE: NATURE AND HUMANS**Topic: Nature as a PlaceDiscussion of FYW grade standardsDiscussion of readingsPlace exploration exercise |  “[Good Bones (Links to an external site.)](http://waxwingmag.org/items/Issue9/28_Smith-Good-Bones.php#top) ”--Smith“[Where I’m From”](https://montclair.instructure.com/courses/90267/files/4751032/download?verifier=G33lug30ZFsT3arwzCjhVwRmTU9p03j5JHCEkv8R&wrap=1)Preview the document--Lyon “[Eating Dirt](https://montclair.instructure.com/courses/90267/files/4751031/download?verifier=menBXxs9zcIDtgOLUqwmiD3Jp9u4AknZRF9Hz1JP&wrap=1)Preview the document”—Brian Doyle**HW 1 Due on Canvas** |
| **Class 3** | Topic: How we react to nature; how it reacts to us:Discussion of readingsReview of essay practices—claims, argument, use of evidence**Introduction of Nature/Place Essay** | “[Corson’s Inlet (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43073/corsons-inlet)”—Ammons[“I Sing the Meadowlands”--Sullivan](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/02/15/magazine/i-sing-the-meadowlands.html)**HW 2 Due on Canvas** |
| **Class 4**  | Topic: Reading and making maps.Thinking in three, two, or one dimensions—World, Map, GPS.Map exercise |   [Sea Story](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/mar/15/as-byatt-short-story-sea) -- Byatt “[To Improve Your Sense of Direction, Lose the Technology (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/09/science/walking-directions-mobile-phone.html)” –Mele**HW 3 Due on Canvas** |
| **Class 5**  | Topic: ObservationDiscussion and exercises, Review of academic integrity and good academic citizenship | [When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer”-- (Links to an external site.).](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45479/when-i-heard-the-learnd-astronomer)Whitman**HW 4 Due on Canvas** |
| **Class 6** | Peer ReviewRevision workshop—reverse outline and other techniques | **First Draft of nature/place essay due, on Canvas, and bring a paper copy to class** |
| **Class 7** |  Continued discussion of academic honesty, MLA formatting, and other writing issues revisited | Bring a copy of your essay either on paper or digital, for working with in-class |
| **Class 8** | Conferences—no class | **Mid-Process Draft of nature/place essay due**Upload to Canvas and bring two copies to your conference |
| **Class 9** | Conferences—no class | Upload to Canvas and bring two copies to your conference |
| **Class 10** | **UNIT TWO: ALIENS AND OUTSIDERS: WHO BELONGS AND WHO “DOESN’T?”** In-class work with a poem—its words and ideasReflection on nature/place essay  | [Water is Life: A Poem for the Standing Rock.](http://lithub.com/water-is-life-a-poem-for-the-standing-rock/)”—DinéYazhi' **Final Draft of nature/place essay due** |
| **Class 11** | **Aliens/Outsiders essay introduced**So, what is an alien? Who is an alien? How do we think about the “other,” the “outsider,” from far, far away, and not so far. | Saunders: “Semplica-Girls Diary” read first half until the entry dated Sept 22 (middle of page 18) **HW 5 due on Canvas** |
| **Class 12** | Connecting literature with real life issues and complications, using lenses | Finish “Semplica-Girls Diary”Also read James Berry’s poem “Outsider”**HW 6 due on Canvas** |
| **Class 13** | Techniques for expanding the writing.Learning not to hate the word count |  [Bradbury “All Summer in a Day](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cgiancatarinc%5CDesktop%5CSchedules%5Call%20summer%20in%20a%20day.pdf)”Raine “[A Martian Sends a Postcard Home](http://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/poems/a-martian-sends-a-postcard-home/)”Lux—“[The People In This Village”](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48485/the-people-of-the-other-village) **HW 7 due on Canvas** |
| **Class 14** |  Peer review |  **“**[Observational Bias](https://flyway.org/fiction/observational-bias/)**” –**Adams**First Draft aliens/outsiders essay due on Canvas, and bring a paper copy to class.** |
| **Class 15** | Group reviews and revisionEditing for clarity exercises | Bring laptops and current version of essay 2 for in-class workshop |
| **Class 16** | Review source use, quotation format | **Mid-Process Draft of aliens/outsiders essay due on Canvas.** |
| **Class 17** | **UNIT THREE: SUPERHEROES: POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY**Discussion of this topic, brainstorming on what it means to you, who your superheroes are, or aren’t.Mini-lesson on observed issues of grammar and mechanics. | Read: “[Why Superheroes are Bigger Than Their Stories](https://lithub.com/why-superheroes-are-bigger-than-their-stories/)” ProehlRead: “[Star Wars and the Fantasy of American Violence”](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/03/opinion/sunday/star-wars-and-the-fantasy-of-american-violence.html?searchResultPosition=36)Keep working on aliens/outsiders essay; bring questions to class for discussion, both about your essay progress, and about writing issues in general. Think about what still confuses you when you’re writing.**HW 8 Due on Canvas** |
| **Class 18** | Continued discussion of topic and essay possibilities. | **Final Draft of aliens/outsiders essay due**--upload to CanvasRead: Coates “[You Left Out the Part About](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/opinion/09coates.html)” |
| **Class 19** | Essay brainstorming and research, discussion of lenses and how they can help develop ideas.Review of academic integrity, evaluation of sources, and general research techniques. | Smith: [“The Revolutionary Power of Black Panther”](https://time.com/black-panther/)Barrett: [“Marvel Feminism: Real or Comic Fantasy?”](https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-44643477)**HW 9 Due on Canvas**Bring laptop to class for in-class work |
| **Class 20** | Discussion of plans and approaches, grouped by similar topics. MLA review | **HW Ten—Superheroes Essay Plan**Details in Canvas, upload to Canvas |
| **Class 21** | In-class workshop |  Work on your essay!Bring laptop to class for in-class work |
| **Class 22** | Peer reviewReview of argument structure | **Exploratory draft of superheroes essay due**Bring paper to class and upload to Canvas |
| **Class 23** | Determining reliable sources | Work on your essay!Bring laptop to class for in-class work |
| **Class 24** | Practicing paraphrasing | **Mid-Process Draft of superheroes essay due**Upload to Canvas  |
| **Class 25** | Working on transitions and passive/active voice | Keep working on your draft |
| **Class 26** | **Portfolio OR Final Reflection introduced**In class workshop—revisiting revision or assessing your learning for the Final Reflection |  Keep working on your draft |
| **Class 27** | Group Discussion of what you thought about, learned, and wrote.Portfolio OR Final Reflection Prep | **Final Draft of superheroes essay due**Bring laptop and earlier drafts and peer reviews of Essays One and Two OR if doing a Final Reflection, bring in draft of Reflection |
| **Class 28** | Portfolio OR Final Reflection Prep  | Bring laptop and earlier drafts and peer reviews of Essays One and Two OR if doing a Final Reflection, bring in draft of Reflection |
| **Class 29** | Portfolio OR Final Reflection Prep | Bring laptop and earlier drafts and peer reviews of Essays One and Two OR if doing a Final Reflection, bring in draft of Reflection**Due—Portfolio or Final Refection 6pm. Late portfolios or Final Reflections not accepted.** |
| **Class 30** | Reflection on class and writing |  |

**Essay One: Nature / Place**

Over the course of this module, we have read and discussed multiple texts that explore how we interact with “Place.” We are always located in some place. The authors we have read help us consider a lot of ways of looking at “place.” How does where we are affect us? How do we react to a place or the idea of a place, and how do we ignore it? Why do some places have more significance to us than others? Why are some often considered more important than others? What natural place matters to you and why?

**Assignment**

Your first formal assignment for this class asks you to make a claim, using a place of your choice (natural place, not your room) and some of our readings, concerning the relationship of individuals to place. What makes a place important to an individual? What can we learn from the experience of being outside? How does being in a place lead to some insight beyond that moment in that place? Of course, this topic is not argumentative in the sense of right and wrong positions, but more of a stance that is articulate, well-argued, and non-trivial (in other words, a viewpoint worth presenting.) Use two or three pieces we have read in this module (no more than that), as support for your position making a meaningful claim about **place**. In doing so, be sure that you are making useful links between readings, not just talking about one poem or prose piece, then another.

This can be a tough topic to wrap your head around at first. You do not have to cover everything—in fact, you should not. One way to approach the essay is to make ONE of the questions above your starting place to narrow your topic and concentrate on one argument. This is a suggestion, not a requirement. There are lots of ways to approach this. The best essays will make a coherent discussion on the topic with the sense of a unifying argument supported constructively by the readings used.

**Expectations**

* Have a clear and specific argument to drive your essay and its analysis. This argument should be reflected in your central claim.
* Make sure that your essay is consistently analytical, addressing how and why the ideas that you touch on have the meanings that you find in them. Use explanations and not simply statements.
* Ensure that the texts you choose are relevant to your arguments and that you explain that relevance in your essay. Make the connections between the texts and your position clear and, if possible, place them in dialogue with each other.
* Relevant personal experience can be used in conjunction with the readings to develop, support, or explain one of your subclaims.

**Requirements**

* This essay must be a minimum of 1100 words in length, and include a Works Cited.
* You must make use of at three poems, two prose pieces, or one poem and one prose piece, to support and develop your argument.
* Provide a Works Cited listing the works that you utilize, in proper MLA format.
* 12 pt. Times New Roman, one inch margins

**Essay 2: Aliens/Outsiders**

Over the course of this module, we have read and discussed multiple texts that explore the idea of what it means to be alien, both literally and metaphorically. Sometimes aliens come from outer space, and sometimes from not so far. Sometimes we feel alien ourselves.

**Assignment**

This assignment asks you to make a claim about the idea of the “alien,” or “outsider,” making connections within our readings and to the larger world. I’m leaving this fairly open as to how you want to approach it. You can discuss how the readings talk about aliens literally, making a claim through connections between them. You can connect the readings to a real-world issue, including light outside source use (but don’t let this take over the paper. The essay should center on readings and connections you make. Bring in outside material if you need it to explain, support, your thoughts. Of course, any outside research and/or quotes or references must be properly cited.) You can do a close reading of one reading, examining in detail how it uses literary techniques to make its point. So, this is pretty wide open as to how you want to approach the topic, but however you do, you should be making an argument, with a central claim and supporting sub-claims and evidence, as always.

**Expectations**

* Have a clear and specific argument to drive your essay and its analysis. This argument should be reflected in your central claim.
* Make sure that your essay is consistently analytical, addressing how and why the ideas that you touch on have the meanings that you find in them. Use explanations and not simply statements.
* Ensure that the texts you choose are relevant to your arguments and that you explain that relevance in your essay. Make the connections between the texts and your position clear and, if possible, place them in dialogue with each other.
* Relevant personal experience can be used in conjunction with the readings to develop, support, or explain one of your subclaims.
* Any outside research must be *credible* and properly cited.

**Requirements**

* This essay must be a minimum of 1200 words in length, and include a Works Cited.
* You must make use of at three poems, two prose pieces, or one poem and one prose piece, to support and develop your argument.
* Provide a Works Cited listing the works that you utilize, in proper MLA format.
* 12 pt. Times New Roman, one inch margins

**Essay 3: Superheroes**

**Prompt Overview**: Today superhero stories are crushing the box office and have even started to get more critical attention with Golden Globe awards and Oscar nominations. Writer Dani Di Placido observes, “Coincidentally or not, the superhero boom exploded right after the horror of September 11th, and the subsequent war on terror. Perhaps it’s not surprising that stories of American icons, imbued with power and hope, battling chaotic forces of evil who aim to destroy cities, became so wildly popular.”  Today, our world continues down a path of chaos and political spectacle. In perpetual search for hope, the superhero genre continues to boom. Dystopian stories may show us at our potential worst, but perhaps our culture’s superheroes stories show what we can hope for regarding the best in humanity.

For this assignment, you will need to select one superhero text (a comic, movie, or TV episode) as your primary source. You will then research how its narrative, directly or indirectly, reflects a current issue today. To do this, you will research both popular and scholarly sources to find your own secondary sources. Be sure that you are interested in the topic you will be researching, as you will be spending over about a month, learning more about the issue. Learning objectives for this paper will aim to further skills in literary analysis, to research and assess credible sources, and to synthesize the information with your own ideas. Other objectives: to construct and revise claims to be specific and clear in response to the prompt, develop evidence and analysis to support those claims, and organize ideas into a clearly written and cohesive paper.

**Question:** How does your chosen superhero storyreflect a current social issue or psychological question? What’s more, what is the significance and implications of engaging with and analyzing issues like these?

**Requirements**:

* Paper must be 1600-1800 words and include a Works Cited page
* Use only one superhero story as your primary text of your choice to analyze
* Central claim and subclaims should all be based on your paper’s focus (the selected text), taking a position on its effectiveness to discuss a specific issue, stating reasons for that claim as well as providing a significance
* Each subclaim should connect to a distinct analytical point about how that text effectively reflects on or examines your issue
* Each body paragraph should quote or paraphrase from the primary text at least once
* Each body paragraph should also quote directly from one secondary source
* You must cite and quote four secondary sources throughout the paper in total: one of which must be scholarly, peer reviewed sources from the library
* *Formatting*: Times New Roman, double spaced throughout, MLA formatting.