English 1301-021 and 024  Exposition: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking  Spring 2009

Instructor: Laura Mohsene  
Section 024 MW 1:00-2:20, 101 Science Hall  
Section 021, MW 2:30-3:50, 100 Preston Hall  
Office Hours: Monday 12:00-2:00 and 4:00-5:00 and by appointment, Office Carlisle Hall 610  
Email: mohsene@uta.edu  
Phone (Messages Only): 817-272-2692 (English Office, messages only)

Course Description. English 1301 is an integrated course in critical thinking, reading, and writing. Because these three processes are mutually dependent, we will spend our time in the course reading and analyzing texts, as well as writing them. The type of formal writing we will do in this class is generally known as expository writing, which is a combination of informative and argumentative writing. In this type of writing, you will show both your understanding of texts we have read and your own thoughts about the issues they discuss.

Student Learning Outcomes. After successfully completing ENGL 1301, students will be able to:

Rhetorical Knowledge
• Use knowledge of the rhetorical situation—audience, purpose, genre—to analyze and construct texts
• Compose texts in a variety of genres, expanding their repertoire beyond predictable forms
• Use conventions of structure, tone, diction, and syntax appropriate to the rhetorical situation

Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing
• Use writing, reading, and discussion for learning, communicating, and examining assumptions
• Summarize, respond to, and analyze texts
• Employ critical reading strategies to identify author’s position, main ideas, genre conventions, and rhetorical strategies
• Produce texts with a focus, thesis, and controlling idea, and identify these elements in others’ texts
• Provide appropriate support for claims
• Find, evaluate, and synthesize appropriate sources to inform and situate their own claims

Processes
• Practice flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing texts
• Practice writing as a recursive process that can lead to substantive changes in ideas, structure, and supporting evidence through multiple revisions
• Use the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes to critique their own and others’ works

Conventions
• Apply knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
• Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources using appropriate documentation style
• Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
• Employ technologies to format texts according to appropriate stylistic conventions
Required Texts.  
Reader:    McQuade, Donald and Christine McQuade; Seeing and Writing 3  
Rhetoric:  Graff & Birkenstein, They Say / I Say  
OneBook:  Nicole Krauss, The History of Love  

Required Supplies:  
Two 2 pocket folders: one folder for submitting essay projects, and one for class handouts, notes, exams, and your copy of the syllabus.  

Description of Major Assignments.  Class participation is a vital part of this course.  
English 1301 students will conduct an oral presentation, which consists of planning, preparing notes for, and leading a 20-30 minute class discussion on one reading assignment. Students are graded daily on active learning and class participation, which includes making thoughtful contributions to class discussions, asking and answering questions, and presenting a general attitude of interest in the course content. Students are asked to prepare for class discussion by writing summary-responses and by preparing a list of discussion questions that arise from reading assignments. Periodically, quizzes (both announced and unannounced) will test students' understanding of the reading material and the concepts taught in class. Major essay projects include the Literacy Autobiography, the OneBook Essay related to Nicole Krauss’s The History of Love, and one Visual Rhetoric Essay. In preparation for these projects, several homework and in-class writing activities will be assigned. Additionally, one In Class Writing essay will be required.  

Grades. Grades in First-Year Composition are A, B, C, F, and Z. The Z grade is reserved for students who attend class regularly, participate actively, and complete all the assigned work on time, but simply fail to write well enough to earn a passing grade. This judgment is made by the instructor and not necessarily based upon a number average. The Z grade is intended to reward students for good effort. If you receive a Z you will not get credit for the course, but a Z grade will not affect your grade point average. You may repeat the course for credit until you do earn a passing grade. The F grade, which does negatively affect GPA, goes to failing students who do not attend class regularly, do not participate actively, or do not complete assigned work. All major essay projects must be completed to pass the course. If you fail to complete an essay project, you will fail the course, regardless of your average. All essay projects must be turned in with a two-pocket folder containing all drafts, peer review sheets, and other materials for that project. Keep all papers until you receive your final grade from the university. You cannot challenge a grade without evidence.  

Grade Weighting.  
Your final grade for this course will be calculated in the following manner:  

Literacy Autobiography 100 points  
History of Love Essay 200 points
Visual Rhetoric Essay 200 points
Class Participation 150 points
In-Class Essay Exam 100 points
Response Essays 150 points
Class Discussion Leader 50 points
Oral Presentation 50 points

Total 1000 points

You must accrue a minimum of 700 total points to pass this class. All work is evaluated according to the following criteria:

90-100% - “A” work is excellent work that fulfills assignment criteria with exceptional skill, quality, style, persuasiveness, or sophistication;
80-89% - “B” work is good work that meets assignment criteria;
70-79% - “C” work is acceptable work that meets assignment criteria but contains notable flaws you should have remedied in planning, drafting, revising, or conferring with your instructor;
<70% - “Z” complete work that has numerous severe flaws or does not meet assignment criteria;
“F” is incomplete or unsatisfactory due to negligence or dishonesty.

You must earn a “C” or higher on all essay assignments in order to pass this class, regardless of your point total.

Late Assignments.
Both hard and soft copies of major essays are due at the beginning of class on the due date specified. Late papers will not be accepted unless I have agreed to late submission in advance of the due date. It is your responsibility to turn in work on time any way you can. I will not accept late essays unless there is a prior agreement.

Revision Policy: Re-writing is an important means for improving both the writing process and the final product. Students have the option of revising the Literacy Autobiography and the OneBook Essay after they have been graded. Students must request in writing a rewrite opportunity immediately upon receipt of their graded essay, and will have one week to revise and resubmit the paper. To be eligible for a revised grade, a re-written essay must be substantially changed in both form and content. Revision does not simply mean making grammatical and spelling corrections as they appear marked on the initial paper. The first and second drafts ( graded copy) of the essay must accompany the re-written copy, with all changes highlighted by the student. The initial grade and the revised grade will be averaged to arrive at the final grade for each of these essay projects. Note that the Synthesis essay is not available for re-writing. Also note that points lost due to missing process work (drafts, peer review, etc.) cannot be regained through revision.

Grammar and Error. College level work requires mastery of the conventions of the English language. Lessons in grammar are not a part of this course. Comments on grammar will occur in the first draft of essays. You will be expected to use your
grammar handbook on your own as a guide when you are unsure of what is and is not “good grammar.” I recommend that you visit the writing center or print out and proof your paper before handing in the final draft.

**Format.** All formal writings are to be double-spaced, regular Times New Roman font (not bolded and not italicized), size 12 point font, 1” margins. Papers should be titled and stapled every time. I am very familiar with technology and word processing and I will be able to tell if you adjust margins or spacing in an attempt to fill the page requirement. The result of the failure to follow the required format instructions is a lower essay grade.

**Workshop.** We will frequently hold peer workshops in this class. On workshop days you must have several copies of a good draft of your writing ready to share with your group and prepared comments for each member of your group. We will usually work in groups of two to four, and you must have one copy for me, one for each member of your group, plus one for you to take notes on. Workshop is a tool to improve writing. It allows you to view your writing from the reader’s perspective and to help others improve their work. A great deal of preparation goes into Workshop activities. Do not miss Workshop. Your participation in each Workshop will earn up to twenty points if you act responsibly toward your peers by offering genuine constructive criticism and work with peers to improve your own work. If you miss class on Peer Review Workshop days, you will lose participation points as well as points for out of class work due that day and several process points in your essay grade. In other words, you will lose 1/3 to ½ of your final letter grade if you choose to miss Peer Review Workshops.

**Attendance Policy.** Regular attendance is necessary for success in this course. Writing improvement occurs through a complex process that requires a great deal of practice and feedback from readers. Missing more than one week of class or the equivalent is unacceptable. I allow three (3) free absences – use them wisely. If you miss class entirely, show up unprepared for the day’s activities, arrive more than 20 minutes late, or leave more than 20 minutes early, you will be considered absent and earn no credit for that day’s assignment or participation grade. It is your responsibility to find out what was missed and catch up before the next class.

- You are responsible for signing the attendance log each class period. No signature means you were not in class, period.
- More than three absences will result in the loss of 100 points (one full letter grade) per occurrence. Consequently, a student with five absences will not be able to earn a grade higher than a “C.” A student with six or more absences will not pass this course.
- There is no such thing as an “excused” absence. However, consideration will be given to those who plan ahead and make immediate efforts to make up for missed work. Use your freebies wisely – hangovers and car problems count equally, as do doctor’s appointments, trips home, sick days, sleeping through the alarm, incarceration, pet appetites, traffic, work schedules, family emergencies, and so on.
A tardy is defined as arriving after class begins (3:30 pm sharp). 3:31 is tardy and will be recorded as such. You get four freebies. After that, every late arrival will deduct 33 points, or one third of a letter grade, from your final point tally.

**Drop Policy.** If you choose to withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so within the university's deadlines.

**The Writing Center**
The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, offers tutoring for any writing you are assigned while a student at UT-Arlington. During Spring 2009, Writing Center hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at www.uta.edu/owl/appointments, by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you become a better editor of your own writing.

The Writing Center will help you learn how to solve grammatical and organizational problems. I require all of you to use the Writing Center. You must attend your session prior to the due date. Please provide proof of your visit and a 1-2 page reflection on your experience on or before the appropriate due date. I highly recommend using the Center's services to assist you in this class (or any of your other courses), regardless of your writing level. Please be aware that tutoring sessions do take time, so be sure to allow sufficient time to complete a tutoring session and incorporate appropriate suggestions to your essay before it is due.

Help with grammar and mechanics is also available on-line at the following websites:
- http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/
- http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu

**Individual Conference.** We will schedule a conference at mid-term. This will be your opportunity to discuss your progress in class, your development as a writer, and to ask any questions you may not have thought of in class. You must come prepared to participate in an active discussion about your work. I will ask you to submit a 1-2 page reflection on this experience. We will also have two e-mail conferences. These are mandatory.

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism.** It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include
suspension or expulsion from the University. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2) You can get in trouble for plagiarism—even if you do not intend to cheat—by failing to correctly indicate places where you are making use of the work of another. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources. Read your handbook for more information on quoting and citing properly to avoid plagiarism. If you still do not understand, ask your instructor. You may also view the following websites: http://library.uta.edu/tutorials/Plagiarism/ and http://library.uta.edu/howTo/plagiarizing.jsp

Student Success Programs. The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admissions and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at (817) 272-3364.

E-Culture Policy. The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University email address as an official means of communication with students. Through the use of email, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information, designed to facilitate student success. In particular, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through email. All students are assigned an email account and information about activating and using it is available at www.uta.edu/email. New students (first semester at UTA) are able to activate their email account 24 hours after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington. Students are responsible for checking their email regularly.
I will contact you frequently at your UTA e-mail address. It is your responsibility to check your e-mail and respond. In short, if I send an e-mail to you, “But I didn’t get it…” will not be a sufficient excuse for missed work or notices. I check my own e-mail regularly, at least once per day. However, I will not always check it after 10 pm or before 10 am any day of the week. That means if you e-mail me at midnight the night before a paper is due, chances are very good that I either won’t get it before class or that it will be too late for you to get the help you need. Be smart, plan ahead.

**Cell Phones and MP3 Players.** Hopefully this goes without saying as we are all adults paying for education. Our class time is limited and therefore valuable. We can not afford interruptions and distractions due to inconsiderate behavior. I expect every student to come to class ready to participate fully. Please be respectful of yourself and others: **Turn off cell phones and MP3 players before class starts.**

**Syllabus and Schedule Changes.** I have tried to make this document as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. I reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. You will be informed of any changes in writing.

**Last Word.** I am here to help you learn. If at any time you have a problem with an assignment, a question, or just want to chat, please drop by during my office hours, e-mail me, or schedule an appointment. This class can be a positive and valuable experience for you. When in doubt or having problems, just ask for help!

### Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Homework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/21 W</td>
<td>Introduction to Course Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing (as a Process) Making an Argument</td>
<td>Read McQuade 3-11 Read Handout: Developing the Inborn Human Gift of Seeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/26 M</td>
<td>Class Discussion over Readings Observations and Inferences Group Exercise Take class to SUB for 15 minutes and have them observe and take notes.</td>
<td>Write Response #1 based on notes. Read McQuade 12-19 and 721-730.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/28 W</td>
<td><strong>Response # 1 Due.</strong> Critical Thinking and Seeing Critical Thinking ppt. Reading Visual and Verbal Texts</td>
<td>Read McQuade 681-694 (Berger). Write response to Berger essay (Response # 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2 M</td>
<td><strong>Response # 2 Due.</strong> Discuss Leaders Teach Berger Visual Rhetoric Assignment MLA</td>
<td>Read Resource: <a href="http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/node/69">http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/node/69</a> Read all bullets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Visual Rhetoric Group Exercise and Writing in Class</td>
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<td>Making a Claim and Supporting It with Evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Written Observation #1 Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discuss Visual Rhetoric Essay Images and write out claims</td>
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<td>Discuss Images (p 24, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Analysis of Images</td>
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<td>Freewrite about Visual Rhetoric Essay in Class</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>MLA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>First Draft of Visual Rhetoric Essay Due</td>
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<td>Peer Review Workshop</td>
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<td>2/18</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>What is Literacy?</td>
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<td>Literacy: Groups, Discussion, and Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Response # 3 Due</td>
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<td>Discussion of Icons</td>
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<td>In Class Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Observation # 2 Due</td>
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<td>Literacy: What Everyone Needs to Know</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Group Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Response # 4 Due</td>
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<td>In Class Writing: Response # 5</td>
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<td>Discuss Next Essay: Literacy Autobiography</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Reading: Books, Words,</td>
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<td>Graphic Novels, Letters, Emails, Blogs, Hypertext</td>
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<td>Freewriting for Literacy Autobiography</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Final Draft of Visual Rhetoric Essay Due</td>
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<td>Discuss McCloud</td>
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<td>Response # 6 Due</td>
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<td>Group Exercise</td>
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<td>Freewriting for Literacy Autobiography</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>First Draft of Literacy Autobiography Due</td>
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<td>Peer Reviews</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<td>3/16-20</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/23 M</td>
<td>Observation # 3 Due&lt;br&gt;OneBook Essay Assignment&lt;br&gt;Literary Analysis</td>
<td>Read Krauss 75-109</td>
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<td>3/25 W</td>
<td>Discussion&lt;br&gt;MLA&lt;br&gt;Assign Discussion Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/30 M</td>
<td><strong>Final Draft of Literacy Autobiography Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Literary Analysis</td>
<td>Observation # 4: Names&lt;br&gt;Read Krauss 153-169</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/1 W</td>
<td>CONFERENCE IN OHIO&lt;br&gt;Library Class&lt;br&gt;Observation # 4 Due</td>
<td>Read Krauss 170-202&lt;br&gt;Read article: The Nature and Purpose of Literary Analysis&lt;br&gt;Response # 7</td>
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<td>4/3 Friday</td>
<td>Last Day to Drop Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/6 M</td>
<td>Response # 7 Due&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Writing Introductions&lt;br&gt;Supporting Claims with Textual Evidence</td>
<td>Read Krauss 202-212</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/8 W</td>
<td>In Class Writing&lt;br&gt;Group Exercises (Lists)</td>
<td>Read Krauss 213-end of book&lt;br&gt;Observation # 5: Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/13 M</td>
<td>Observation # 5 Due&lt;br&gt;<strong>In Class Essay</strong></td>
<td>Read McQuade 256-260</td>
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<td>4/15 W</td>
<td>Discussion&lt;br&gt;MLA&lt;br&gt;Proofreading Exercises</td>
<td>Read McQuade 309-327&lt;br&gt;Response # 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/20 M</td>
<td>Discussion&lt;br&gt;<strong>First Draft of HoL Essay Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Take home Peer Reviews&lt;br&gt;Response # 8 Due</td>
<td>Complete Take Home Peer Reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/22 W</td>
<td>Peer Reviews Due&lt;br&gt;Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Read McQuade 264-290&lt;br&gt;Response # 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/27 M</td>
<td>Discussion&lt;br&gt;Annotated Bibliography Due&lt;br&gt;Revision and Proofreading</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/29 W</td>
<td><strong>2nd Draft of HoL Essay Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/4 M</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6 W</td>
<td>Response # 10 Due&lt;br&gt;Presentations&lt;br&gt;<strong>Final Draft of HoL Essay Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Last Day of Classes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
All assignments should be turned in on time with an MLA heading on the left hand side of the page. All pages should be numbered. All out of class writing must be typewritten. When an assignment is due, turn in both a hard copy and email a copy to my email address: Mohsene@uta.edu on the day the assignment is due. If you make arrangements with me prior to class time for turning in an assignment after the due date and time, then I will accept your late paper. However, if no arrangements have been made prior to the due date and time, I will not accept a late paper.

Major Assignments

Literacy Autobiography Essay
Tell the story of how you became part of a “literacy community.”
For the purposes of this paper, literacy is defined broadly as the ability to understand and make meaning through language. In this context, language can be taken to mean any symbol system used for communication within groups. It is not unusual to feel you have no literacy stories worth telling, when in fact, you may be thoroughly literate in visual or digital media, in sports, in music, in other areas of interest. Or you may have very interesting stories to tell about your struggles with literacy. Although you may ultimately choose to focus on school literacy (e.g. learning to read and write or do math), you are encouraged to think of literacy broadly and to imagine yourself and others as capable of multiple literacies.
Literacy communities are like clubs in that they tend to have insiders and outsiders. Knowing how to dress determines who is “in” and who is “out” of style for a specific group. In the same way, there are keys to membership in a literacy community, namely the knowledge and proficiencies that support the values of the group. Your literacy autobiography will tell the story of how you tried and perhaps succeeded at becoming a full-fledged member of a group. This membership could be official as in the case of a sports team or unofficial in the case of becoming an accomplished musician or lover of literature.
For this assignment, you must:
• Write an autobiography about how you joined a community by gaining knowledge and proficiency and accepting (at least to a certain extent) the values of that group. An autobiography is a narrative about one’s self. A good story has a good shape, usually formed through the development and resolution of some conflict. The authority in your autobiographical writing will come from the care with which you select your material and the richness of the details you choose to present. Relate important moments that show learning that helped you become a fuller member of the literacy community.
• Make the case that your proficiency in the subject you chose constitutes a form of literacy. For instance, if writing about your struggle to become a first string varsity football player, you could make this case by focusing on football vocabulary, shared knowledge about football history and current events, and knowledge of your team’s playbook.
• Show how becoming a member of the “literacy community” not only constitutes gaining proficiency, but also involves sharing or accepting certain values of that
culture or community. What values are common to the group you became a part of? Do you still hold those values?

- Write 3-5 pages in MLA Style (no Works Cited necessary unless you use quotes from outside sources) in 12pt. Times New Roman font.

**Visual Rhetoric Essay and Portfolio**

Draft due:
Portfolio due:
Length: 1000 words (not including Works Cited), 11- or 12-point font, double-spaced

Your Visual Rhetoric portfolio will include:

- the first draft of this essay
- the final version
- completed peer review worksheets

You will write an essay contextualizing a photo, advertisement, or storyboard that offers both an explanation and an analysis of its meaning. The image(s) must focus upon a political or social issue. Think not only of contemporary images, but also of images historically. This essay will require some research in finding the image(s) as well as interpreting and analyzing the chosen medium. Consider using the internet in your research, for example, visit (ffffound.com). I encourage you to integrate image(s) into the body of the essay. The essay will include a Photo Essay and a Photo Essay Portfolio.

Resource: [http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/node/69](http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/node/69)

**In Class Essay**

This essay will be a test of your ability to construct an essay within a given time frame. You will have the entire class period to write the essay. The topic will be one you choose from *The History of Love*. This essay can be the basis for the rough draft of your *History of Love* essay. You should make a claim and support it with evidence from the text using MLA in text citation rules. You will be graded on content and structure. There is not a length requirement, but I will look for a clear introduction, supporting points, and a conclusion that does more than repeat the introduction but does refer to the thesis. You can create a simple outline before class but you cannot have any of the essay written out prior to the exam.

**The History of Love Essay**

This essay is designed to be a part of the OneBook program as adopted by the University and the English Department. The text for this essay changes each year – Nicole Krauss’s *The History of Love* was chosen for the 2008-2009 academic year. Choose an important theme or issue from *The History of Love*. Possibilities include connections, love, identity, authenticity, authorship, assimilation, discovery, language, memory, mapping, and so on. Develop a thesis that takes a position upon that issue or theme. Your thesis should go beyond “This is a theme in *The History of Love*” to assert a substantial claim about the text. A substantial claim is arguable, specific, and significant: “arguable” means that the claim is not obviously true; “specific” means that the claim uses precise and clear language, avoiding overgeneralizations; “significant” means that the claim passes the “so what” test by making the importance of the argument clear.
Your essay should support your thesis through references to specific passages from the text. Pay special attention to passages that will help you identify contradictions, tensions, and multiple perspectives in the novel. In addition to evidence from *The History of Love*, you should also use at least three outside sources to develop your theme. You are encouraged to attend campus-wide OneBook programming and to incorporate information from those events into your essays.

As an option, you may also build upon what you have learned from this work by considering your topic and its complexities in another context. For instance, you may consider one or more of the following:

1. Does that topic clarify an experience you had in a group or social setting (religious, political, social, athletic, work related, etc.)?
2. Does that topic speak to a contemporary issue (political, social, ethical; local, national, or international)?
3. Is it related to other readings or outside research you’ve conducted?
4. Does it shed light on a family dynamic or a relationship that you have with a friend or family member?

For this assignment you must:
- Include a thesis statement that sets forth your issue or theme and takes a position that you will support.
- Analyze your issue or theme with textual evidence from *The History of Love* and information from at least three outside sources.
- Explain how each piece of textual evidence and information supports your thesis.
- Integrate sources effectively, distinguishing between *The History of Love*, outside sources, and your own voice.
- Define/describe your term(s). For instance, if you’re going to focus on identity in the novel, you’ll want to explain how you’re using the term. Use *The History of Love* and other sources—not a dictionary definition—to define your terms.

You must turn in the following in a folder:
- A first draft of the essay
- A second draft of the essay
- An Annotated Bibliography of 5 sources
- Peer Review Sheets
- A Final Draft of the Essay

**Response Papers**

Responses are 300-350 word focused arguments about a particular reading. Evaluate the writer’s claims. Establish your point from the beginning (i.e., in the first sentence) and support your claims with textual evidence.

Suggested strategies:
- Focus on a particular problem you see in the essay.
• Focus on an issue/point/claim you would like to defend, counter, or elaborate upon further.
• Understand the text as being “in dialogue” with another piece we have read, and write a mini-essay on how you think the essays “speak” to each other.

This essay must have a thesis statement that is supported by textual evidence. Write Response Papers using conciseness of language. Include Word Count at the end of the essay.

Observations
These are open-ended assignments which will not be graded on grammar, punctuation, content, or structure. That does not mean that you should not attempt to do your best writing, but the assignment is an opportunity for you to explore an idea or theme without worrying about mechanics. Write approximately 250-300 words on the given topic. You will receive either a √-, a √, or √+ depending on effort.

Grading of Essays:
Always proofread your essays before turning in a final copy. If you have difficulty with any of the following errors, learn the rules and visit the writing center for help. Tutors will help you learn the rules but will not edit your work. For online grammar help try the following websites: http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/GRAMMAR/quiz_list.htm and http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/

I will take points off for the following errors:
• No staple
• No original title (all essays must have a title that does more than name the subject or assignment)
• No MLA heading
• Missing or improper MLA citation in text and/or on Works Cited page
• Capitalization and punctuation errors
• Comma Splices and Run-on Sentences
• Misplaced or confusing modifiers and dangling participles
• Sentence fragments
• Missing or misplaced commas
• Misplaced or misused apostrophes
• Misuse of semicolons
• Incorrect prepositions
• Based off of (should be “based on”)
• Then/than errors
• It’s/its errors
• There/their/they’re errors
• Were/where/wear errors
• Lose/loose errors
• To/too/two errors
• Your/you’re errors
• Effect/affect misuse
• Could of, would of for could have, would have
• Awkwardly constructed sentences
• Filler phrases such as “Throughout history” or “Down through the ages” and “due to the fact that”
• Spelling errors that can be caught with SpellCheck
• Colloquial language or slang in academic essays: such as “well,” IMHO, etc.
• Bullet points in an academic essay