

Reflection

“Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.”

Soren Kierkegaard

Put simply, reflecting back on our own lives and experiences helps us learn and make meaning out of sometimes confusing or random events. When we reflect, we clarify our thinking, synthesize our experiences, and often move forward to new ways of understanding the world. The three writers we'll be reading together have each, whether through fiction or memoir, created narratives in which reflection plays a key role. In his memoir Trevor Noah reflects on his own life growing up under apartheid and comes to an understanding of how that system shaped his identity. Though Kazuo Ishiguro and Mohsin Hamid are writing fiction, they create narrators who come to understand their places in the world only after looking backwards. All three writers tell stories of people attempting to find meaning in memories.

First Year Writing Fall 2022

Instructor: Joanne Spiegel
Office: FH 171A
Office Hours: MWF 12:20- 1:15
Email: jspiegel@sandiego.edu

Required Texts:

Never Let Me Go Kazuo Ishiguru
Born A Crime Trevor Noah
The Reluctant Fundamentalist Mohsin Hamid

Course Description and Learning Outcomes:

First Year Writing is a literature-based writing course that is designed to help you with the academic work you'll do here at the university. Why will this class be so important to your academic success? Let's consider this question: Whether we are reading a short text message, a novel, an essay, or a journal article in our field of study, in order to successfully interact with others, we have to know how to respond to what we read. This involves first understanding what we read and then composing a persuasive response to what others say and write. And, of course, this is absolutely crucial while you're here at the university. FYW is designed to help you with these skills. Writing well helps clarify your thinking and thus helps you to become a more critical thinker and reader. This skill isn't something you'll just need in English classes but is essential in all academic disciplines and in life beyond and outside of college.

This class will focus on some key skills:

Contexts and Purposes:

- Learning to write persuasively and appropriately for your audience and each assignment
- Learning to write effectively in or about multiple discourses by distinguishing among and responding to different rhetorical contexts

Content:

- Applying relevant content based on your understanding of the assigned subject, in order to write effectively in multiple types of discourse

Mechanics:

- Learning to write clearly and fluently with few errors in syntax and grammar

Course Requirements:

Here are a few key requirements:

- * You keep your syllabus, read the course schedule regularly, and follow the assignments.
- * You read the announcements on blackboard and your email regularly. I use both to announce assignments and important information about class activities.
- * You come to class with your books/ handouts fully prepared to participate in class discussions.
- * You plan to spend the class time free from cell phones and all electronic devices.
- * You complete all writing assignments by their due dates.

Course Policies:

Late Papers:

Generally speaking, I find accepting late papers inherently unfair to other students who have worked diligently to complete their assignments while juggling other commitments. For this reason, I will take off a letter grade for each day a paper is late. (Please note: this is days, not class sessions.) I do, though, understand emergencies; if you have a compelling reason for turning in a late assignment, please see me in advance.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is an important part of the class. Think of our class as a collaborative learning experience in which your engagement in the class absolutely central. It just won't work to show up sporadically, take some notes, and then try to write an essay. You need to be present to get what the class has to offer. If you come to class consistently, are on time, and accumulate no more than four absences, you will have fulfilled the attendance requirement.

I understand occasional tardiness; however, if your tardiness to class is consistent, it becomes disruptive to the class and also affects your ability to participate fully in each class session. Four late arrivals equal one absence.

Because of Covid-19, please err on the safe side and don't come to class if you're sick. This will protect all of us. If you need to be out of class for more than one class session, please email me to let me know.

Masks:

In accordance with department policy, I require that masks must be worn correctly-completely covering nose and mouth-at all times during class. I prefer not to have to remind students, but if I see that you're not complying with this, I'll give you a gentle reminder. This rule is in place to protect all of us from getting sick. Surgical masks are preferred and are much more protective than cloth masks.

Blackboard: The syllabus and various assignments will be posted on Blackboard. In addition to email, I also use Blackboard to communicate with you, so you'll need to check announcements on Blackboard frequently. This is where I give information about meetings, discussion board assignments and other important information. It will be your responsibility to read the announcements to keep up with the class schedule.

Participation: Your participation is essential to both your success in the class and to the success

of the class as a whole. I recognize that for some of you speaking in class does not come easily, but I would like to encourage you to challenge yourselves both personally and intellectually in what I hope will be a friendly and lively environment.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is a serious offense and I don't take it lightly; neither should you. Be sure that all of the work you turn in is your own. Anything paraphrased or quoted from another source must be cited. If I determine that you have plagiarized any portion of your work, I will deal with the situation according to the guidelines set out by the university. This means that I report all instances of plagiarism to the Academic Integrity Committee and the Dean with a recommendation that you fail the class. Plagiarism just is not worth the certain embarrassment and penalty. If you're struggling with an assignment, there are better choices. The Writing Center is an excellent resource. **Please note:** this policy covers commentaries and other small assignments in addition to papers.

Accommodation for disabilities:

If you need special accommodation because of a disability, you should consult the Office of Disability Services in Serra Hall and then see me.

Course Organization:

The class is organized around both improving your critical reading abilities and learning the skills necessary to write well for college. You'll note on the course calendar that particular class sessions are scheduled for writing activities. These days will be devoted to aspects of writing that I will be evaluating in your papers as well as to revision. I allow about a week between rough drafts and final papers so you can visit the Writing Center as well as participate in revision activities in class. You can make appointments online with the Writing Center or walk in.

With regard to the pace of the reading I've tried, where possible, to alternate writing instruction with longer works, so you get short breaks from reading. Given the schedule, you'll want to look ahead and plan your time in order to keep up with both the reading and writing assignments.

Writing Assignments and Projects:

Core Essays and Projects:

Expect to write three papers over the course of the semester, each with a different focus. All papers must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the class. I will give you instructions including length guidelines at the time of each assignment. Your essays will all receive a letter grade along with my detailed evaluative comments. **Please note: Rough drafts are mandatory for class.** They are part of the writing and revision process.

There are also smaller writing assignments described below.

Commentaries:

These are short, closed-book writing assignments that will be written during the first fifteen minutes of class in answer to a particular question on the assigned reading. If you've read the entire reading assignment carefully, you should have no trouble writing an acceptable

commentary. Each question will require enough detail from the text that you will not be able to do acceptable work without having done your reading. Commentaries cannot be made up, but they are all listed on the course calendar; you'll know well in advance when they are scheduled. These assignments will be evaluated on an acceptable/unacceptable (+) or (-) basis. If you adequately address the question, your commentary gets a plus and counts toward your grade. If not, the commentary will be unacceptable, which means it will not count toward the total number of commentaries you complete. The commentaries along with the reading responses are worth 25% of your grade.

Reading Responses:

These are short writing assignments which vary in form and length, but all will be completed outside of class and be done by the beginning of class on the day the assignment is due. Like the commentaries, they will be evaluated on an acceptable/ unacceptable basis. If you complete these assignments with care and effort, you will receive credit for your work. I don't accept these assignments late; they must be turned in on the date they are due. Reading Responses are comprised of discussion board comments, wiki page posts and any other small written responses I assign for the readings. Keep in mind that just by completing and getting credit for these assignments, 25% of your grade could be an A. Your cumulative grade for these assignments will be based on the percentage of assignments you receive credit for. Not all of these assignments are on the syllabus, but I'll announce when they are due and you'll have plenty of notice. They're graded as follows: a + for acceptable work or a - for unacceptable work that I can't give credit for.

Grading: I don't use Blackboard for grading, but you will always know where you stand based on graded assignments. You can contact me any time during the semester to check on your grade.

Your grade is determined as follows:

Paper #1	25 %
Paper #2	25%
Paper #3	25%
Commentaries, Reading Responses	25%
Wiki page posts and discussion board	

Course Calendar:

Week 1

8-31 Introduction

9-2 Introduction/Short introductory writing assignment due: see details on Blackboard

Week 2

9-5 Holiday

9-7 **Read** *Never Let Me Go* pages 1-145 **Commentary #1**

9-9 *Never Let Me Go*

Week 3

9-12 **Read** *Never Let Me Go* -to end **Commentary #2**

9-14 *Never Let Me Go*

9-16 *Never Let Me Go*

Week 4

9-19 **Read Introduction Tip Sheet**

9-21 **Read: Quote Tip Sheet** Working with quotes.

9-23 **Rough drafts paper #1 due. Also, bring three copies of just your introduction to class.**

Week 5

9-26 Whole class workshop

9-28 Learning to revise

9-30 **Final drafts Paper#1 due** Ted Talk: The Danger of a Single Story

Week 6

10-3 Prep for Wiki pages **You need to be present for both days to get credit.**

10-5 Prep for Wiki pages

10-7 No Class: Discussion Board

Week 7

10-10 **Read: *Born a Crime* pages 1-159 Commentary #3**

10-12 *Born a Crime*

10-14 *Born a Crime*

Week 8

10-17 **Read: *Born a Crime* to end Commentary #4**

10-19 *Born a Crime*

10-21 *Born a Crime* **Reading Response due**

Week 9

10-24 **Writing:** Composing perfect sentences

10-26 **Writing:** Summary vs. interpretation

10-28 **Writing:** They say/ I say technique **Rough drafts Paper #2 due.**

Week 10

10-31 Bring three copies of rough draft to class **Peer review**

11-2 Whole Class Workshop

11-4 Developing Style **Final drafts Paper #2 due**

Week 11

11-7 **Read: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* pages 1-107 Commentary # 5**

11-9 *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

11-11 *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Week 12

11-14 **Read** *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* to end **Commentary # 6**

11-16 *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

11-18 *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Week 13

11-21 TBA

Happy Thanksgiving

Week 14

11-28 **Read:** “The Reluctant American” and “ The Reluctant Fundamentalist” review on Blackboard **Reading Response due**

11-30 **Creating Perfect Paragraphs**

12-2 **Developing Vocabulary**

Week 15

12-5 TBA

12-7 **Final Reflection**

12-9 **Final Drafts Paper #3 due**

There is no final exam; your final paper is your final.