



ENGL-1302-103CL
M-F 10:00AM - 11:50AM
Composition 2

Instructor Information:

Dr. Charlotte Pitts
Cpitts1@com.edu
832-487-5252

Office hours and location:

Please make an appointment with me before or after class. I am available Monday-Friday.

Required Textbook/Materials:

Students will need access to the internet and a laptop or computer.

- We'll be using OER texts for this course. All materials will be provided on D2L or linked in the syllabus.

Required Technology

1. Internet service and access to D2L. You will access course materials and post assignments through D2L, so you will need readily available internet access, preferably high-speed access.
2. Your computer needs to have video and audio recording capabilities. The library also has computers for you to use in the mornings, during lunch, and after school.
3. Access to Microsoft Word. COM provides you with free access to Microsoft Office 360 as long as you are part of the academic institution. Save all assignments to your device, a flash drive, and/or a cloud drive as a backup. You have access to a Google Drive while enrolled as a student.

ENGL 1302

Composition II

Course Description: Intensive study of and practice in the strategies and techniques for developing research-based expository and persuasive texts. Emphasis on effective and ethical rhetorical inquiry, including primary and secondary research methods; critical

reading of verbal, visual, and multimedia texts; systematic evaluation, synthesis, and documentation of information sources; and critical thinking about evidence and conclusions.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 with a grade of "C" or better

Learning Outcomes (ACGM)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative research processes.
2. Develop ideas and synthesize primary and secondary sources within focused academic arguments, including one or more research-based essays.
3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate a variety of texts for the ethical and logical uses of evidence.
4. Write in a style that communicates meaning, builds credibility, and inspires belief or action.
5. Apply the conventions of style manuals for specific academic disciplines (e.g., APA, CMS, MLA, etc.)

Additional Secondary Outcomes:

Composition 2 is a core requirement because learning to write developed, organized, and technically proficient research papers is an essential part of a university education. In addition, students also demonstrate effective oral expression and understanding of the varying writing requirements of different disciplines. By the end of ENGL 1302, students will be able to write at a level that signifies that they are ready for sophomore writing.

Additionally, Students learn how to develop an effective, logical, and critical argument. They continue to demonstrate that they have a command of the conventions of written English. The instructor will emphasize the importance of university-level reading and will demonstrate the relationship between the reading and writing processes, using a variety of texts such as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, essays, and examples of professional writing across disciplines. This emphasis develops students' perception in interpreting texts (oral, written, and visual). After completing the course, students will be able to express in analytical writing more verbally complex thoughts and relationships. Because of the in-depth readings and discussions, they will gain an enhanced ability to make responsible moral choices and ethical decisions. In short, the course teaches students that there is a definite correlation between reading, writing, and, in general, life experience.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook

https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf. An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.

Academic Success & Support Services: The College of the Mainland is committed to providing students with the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact:

Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending the College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 5-week session is July 1. The last date to withdraw from the 10-week session is July 30. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 5-week session is August 2.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of failure due to a lack of attendance, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, and housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.

Course Objectives

1. Build on Rhetorical Knowledge
 - a. Critically read a variety of source materials, including print and digital sources
 - b. Analyze new information from various sources
 - c. Synthesize new information into purposeful texts
 - d. Evaluate and interpret sources, including understanding arguments and perspectives
2. Develop more complex writing processes
 - a. Discover, explore, and reconsider new ideas through writing
 - b. Integrate source material using a variety of methods, including summary, quotation, and paraphrase
 - c. Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities
 - d. Incorporate complex methods into compositions, such as analysis, synthesis, critique, interpretation, and argument
3. Integrate critical thinking skills into writing and multimodal compositions
 - a. Locate and evaluate appropriate, credible source material dependent on writing contexts and content
 - b. Provide productive feedback for peers' compositions.

Course requirements:

Professionalism: As this is a college course, students are expected to approach class time and the coursework with maturity and professionalism. This includes taking an active part in class discussions and activities, coming to class prepared, attending regularly and punctually, and responding to other students and the instructor respectfully and professionally.

Classwork:

I expect all students to participate in class. The classwork grade will account for consistent completion of style and grammar practice exercises, assigned responses to readings, drafts, and revisions, online discussions and assignments, peer critiques, and

overall contribution to the workings of the class.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:

*Plagiarized student work will not be accepted for a grade.

Late Work: Due dates for each assignment are listed in D2L and discussed in class. These deadlines are created to help you keep pace with the course, but if an extension would be helpful, please email me and request one.

A note: If you turn in a paper after the deadline, you may receive minimal to no feedback from me.

Extensions can usually not be given for the final project, as I have to submit final grades to the registrar's office.

Attendance Policy: You should plan to spend 9 to 12 hours every week on this course. Attendance and punctuality are both requirements of the course. This course meets on campus and is delivered in a face-to-face modality. You are expected to regularly attend class in person. Failure to attend class regularly (missing class or regularly coming to class late or leaving early) can impact your grade.

Professor's Introduction: Welcome to English 1302. My name is Dr. Charlotte Pitts, and I have been teaching for over two decades. I'm excited to share this course with you as we work to "develop rhetorical knowledge" (we'll talk more about what that means), refine our own writing processes, and develop our composing skills. In reaching these learning goals, we'll also be talking about American ideology through robots, and music videos, and thinking about the rhetorical impact of memes and blogs along the way.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email or via Brightspace. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Academic Dishonesty: Student work must be original and produced by the student who turns it in. Any work copied from other students (even if revised), created by online text generators, or copied from published writers (even if revised) will not be credited. Students will not be given chances to redo plagiarized assignments. Repeated instances of academic dishonesty will result in a reduction in the Professionalism score and/or discipline referrals.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after

discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Dr. Brian Anderson (College of the Mainland) at 409-933-8186, banderson@com.edu.

Course Outline: Note: this is a tentative schedule. Things may change as the semester develops. Follow D2L for due dates.

➔Major Assignments

For the first week, there will be a mini-essay, and most weeks will have in-class writing activities (that connect to our larger writing projects).

Writing Projects

Throughout the semester, we will compose a series of three essays, described below. For each essay, we will compose a rough draft, workshop the essay with peers, craft a revision plan, receive instructor feedback from me, and submit a revised essay. These essays are

1. *Americans in Conversation, Synthesis Essay*
2. *"This is America," Analysis Essay*
3. *American Contexts, Researched Position Essay:*

GRADE SCALE

A = 100 to 90	B = <90 to 80	C = <80 to 70	D = <70 to 60	F = <60
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➔Tentative Course Outline

*Notice that this is subject to change. I'll also be sure to update with readings, etc., throughout the semester. The outline on the syllabus is truncated, but a full outline/due dates for individual assignments are located on D2L.

Week One (week of June 3rd): Introduction I

Monday, June 3rd	Read: Course Syllabus Lesson Topic: Class Introduction
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	<p>Due: Syllabus Quiz on D2L</p>
<p>Tuesday, June 4th</p>	<p>Read (Warm-Up): It takes more than hard work to achieve the American Dream</p> <p>We will read this in class and discuss it in class.</p> <p>Class Discussion: Discussion relating to the “It Takes More Than Hard Work to Achieve the American Dream” reading we did during the first part of class.</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Assignment explanation/expectations for the Mini-Essay: “My American Dream”</p> <p>Homework: Read and be prepared to discuss in class What Students Are Saying About: The American Dream NYT as well as the short student essays included there.</p>

<p>Wednesday, June 5th</p>	<p>We will revisit the homework reading: this short article from the New York Times as well as the short student essays included there.</p> <p>Class Discussion: Relating to the NYT article, “What Students are Saying About The American Dream”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Writing workshop: your mini-essay “My American Dream” We will spend the majority of class writing our essays today. They are due at the start of class tomorrow. Please submit your work on D2L before class tomorrow.</p>
<p>Thursday, June 6th</p>	<p>Due: Mini Essay “My American Dream”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Synthesis Essay explanation/expectations.</p> <p>Read Three essays for the synthesis essay (see the synthesis essay assignment sheet located at the end of this document to find the three essays).</p> <p>Homework: Read Jory, “The Rhetorical Situation” and complete your online</p>

	discussion post answering the prompt in D2L (100 points) Due tomorrow by Midnight.
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Synthesis I

Friday, June 7th	<p>Read (Warm-up): Jory, "The Rhetorical Situation"</p> <p>Reminder: Class Discussion Post in D2L (100 points): Rhetorical Situation Discussion Post. Please post your discussion on the discussion post. We will occasionally use the discussion post format instead of a verbal class discussion. This discussion post is due today by Midnight.</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Synthesis Essay Continued We will start/continue writing our synthesis essays in class today. Please have your draft completed and submitted in D2L before class on Monday.</p>
Monday, June 10th	<p>Due: Synthesis Essay <u>Rough Draft</u> due before class today. Upload it to the D2L assignment.</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Synthesis Essay Continued-Writing Workshop We will continue writing our synthesis essays in class today. I will meet with you individually to review and discuss your review essays in class.</p>

Synthesis II

Tuesday, June 11th	<p>Read - Your feedback on your Synthesis Essay. Late submissions will have limited feedback notes due to time constraints in grading time turnaround. Turn it in on time for the best service from me.</p> <p>Read "Understanding Visual Rhetoric" I will project it in class for our discussion.</p> <p>Class Discussion: (face-to-face discussion about Understanding Visual Rhetoric.</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Writing Workshop - Work on completing your revised Synthesis Essay. It is due June 12th.</p>
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Wednesday, June 12th	Your revised synthesis essay is due today by the end of class. Today will be a Flex day to submit any missing work as well as complete and submit your Synthesis Essay. We will be moving on to the Analysis Essay starting tomorrow.
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Analysis I

Thursday, June 13th	<p>Read: This is an example of an Analysis Essay “Gangnam Style, Dissected” (if it is paywalled for you, a PDF is also on D2L).</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Discuss the reading in class. We will also discuss the Analysis Essay assignment expectations.</p> <p>Analysis Essay: Today, you will select your song/video from the choices provided and start working on a rough draft of your Analysis essay. The Analysis Essay rough draft will be due by Monday, June, 17th (before class on D2L).</p>
Friday, June 14th	<p>Lesson Topic: MLA revisited. The focus will be on citing videos, songs, and relevant sources. I will also include a talk about inclusive language according to the MLA handbook.</p> <p>Due: Homework; Work on your essay and read Using Feedback on Writing</p>

Analysis II

Monday, June 17th	<p>Read: “Using Feedback on Writing”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Class discussion about the reading, “Using Feedback”.</p> <p>Analysis Essay Continued: Writing time in class/teacher tableside conferences to discuss</p> <p>Due: The Analysis Essay rough draft will be due by Monday, June 17th (before class on D2L). I will write feedback on your papers for you to read and use in your final essay.</p>
Tuesday, June 18	Read: Feedback on your Analysis Essay

	<p>Lesson Topic: Analysis Essay Writing Workshop Please complete your revised essay. It is due Thursday, June 20th by Midnight.</p>
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Research I

<p>Wednesday, June 19th</p>	<p>Read: “Bad Idea: Research Starts with Answers”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Research Position Essay-work on gathering information for Research Step 1: Research Notes</p> <p>Due: Note that your “Research Notes” will be due Monday, June 24th. This will take time to complete. If any articles are paywalled for you, a PDF will be available for you on D2L).</p>
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<p>Thursday, June 20th</p>	<p>Due: Your <i>revised</i> Analysis essay will be due today by midnight.</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Research Essay-work on gathering information for Research Step 1: Research Notes If any articles are paywalled for you, a PDF will be available for you on D2L).</p> <p>Due:</p>
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<p>Friday, June 21st</p>	<p>Read: “The Credibility of Online Sources”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Discuss the reading.</p> <p>Due: Discussion Post for today’s reading on the D2L discussion post.</p>
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Research II

<p>Monday, June 24th</p>	<p>Read: “Annoying Ways People Use Sources”</p> <p>Lesson Topic: Writing workshop. Research Essay Part 2 Goal: Find sources for your research essay. We will also discuss the reading.</p>
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	Due: Research Step 1: Research Notes
Tuesday, June 25th	Lesson Topic: Writing Workshop Please use the entire class time to write your research summaries. They will be due on D2L by 11:59 pm June 26th. I will be in class to conference with students as needed. There will be no specific discussions. It will be time to conference and offer feedback on your papers on an individual basis. Please let me know if you will be working in the computer lab or remotely.

Research III

Wednesday, June 26th	Read Lesson Topic: Writing Workshop Due: Research Step 2: Research Summaries due on D2L by 11:59 pm
Thursday June 27th	Read: Your Research Summary Feedback Lesson Topic: Step Three: Work-in-Progress Drafts We'll be working on our essays. Bring your draft (and workshop notes!) with you to class. Due:

Research IV

Friday, June 28	Read: Lesson Topic: Tableside conferences for your Research Essay. We'll be working on our essays. Bring your draft with you to class. Due: Completed research essays will be due Monday
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Final Paper: Synthesis Essay Revisited

Monday, July 1st	Due: Completed research essays are due today by 11:59 PM Lesson Topic: This week's lessons will be abbreviated to ensure your success in this course. Please use this flex week to make up any missing work, or revised work.
Tuesday, July 2nd	Read: Feedback notes on individual assignments. Lesson Topic: Individual conferences in the regularly scheduled classroom. Due: July 2nd, 11:59 PM all missing or revised work is due

Thursday, July 4th	Holiday
Friday, July 5th	Last day of Summer 1. All grades will be submitted.

Finals (week of July 1st)

Final essays are due on D2L by 11:59 PM on July 2nd. No late assignments will be accepted. Plan accordingly.

Mini Essay
Dr. Charlotte Pitts
English 1302

Purpose:

Our first writing project for the semester will be a “mini-essay,” asking you to describe your own interpretation of the phrase “the American Dream.” I’ve asked you to complete a few short readings (detailed below) for context, but this assignment is meant to:

- a.) introduce me to you *as a writer*
- b.) introduce you to the writing, writing workshop, and review process we’ll use in the class.

Assignment:

This section of English 1302 asks us to consider American Ideology as a theme throughout the semester. While the *focus of the class itself* is on the writing process and developing “rhetorical knowledge” (something we’ll talk more about in class), this first assignment is meant as a low-stakes starting point to introduce you to the kind of work we’ll be doing in the class.

This semester, we’ll be thinking a great deal about American Ideology, that is ideas, ideals, and identities. One powerful American ideological concept is *The American Dream*: an elusive appeal that has meant different things to different people. In our first essay for English 1302, I ask you to:

a.) read [this short article from the New York Times](#) as well as the short student essays included there.

b.) In 300 to 600 words, I’d like you to write a short essay that answers the following prompt:

What does the American Dream mean to you?

Sample: The American Dream [mini-essay is linked here](#).

Due Dates:

- Posted on D2L
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Assignment FAQs

1. How will this assignment be graded?

At this point, please don't worry about your grade for the writing. We'll talk more about this in class, but your essay is graded on a *labor* basis, [a form of](#) "upgrading" designed to make the course more equitable and help you develop as a writer, meaning as long as you complete the assignment (and that it a.) responds to the prompt and b.) is between 300 and 600 words) you'll get full points.

2. I'm not sure how to get started: what should I write about?

This assignment is designed to be pretty open-ended. A few subtopics you *might* consider (though you don't have to write about any of them) might include:

- Social justice/injustice in America
- Learned Helplessness /Victim Mentality and the American Dream
- How do your own personal educational/professional goals fit within/push back against the American Dream
- The purpose of education/college and the American Dream
- Limitations of the "American Dream" Discourse
- Effort-Based Success and the American Dream

3. What is MLA Format?

MLA stands for "Modern Language Association" (and you'll never be asked to remember that), but they are a group of humanities scholars that have created formatting guidelines for college essays in the humanities.

American Conversations: "The American Dream" Synthesis Essay
Dr. Charlotte Pitts
English 1302

Purpose:

This essay is designed to help us meet the objectives of English 1302 in developing "rhetorical knowledge" and refining our writing process. Specifically, this assignment is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Critically read a variety of source materials, including print and digital sources
- Analyze new information from various sources
- Synthesize new information into purposeful texts
- Evaluate and interpret sources, including understanding arguments and perspectives
- Discover, explore, and reconsider new ideas through writing
- Integrate source material using a variety of methods, including summary, quotation, and paraphrase

You'll be asked to carefully read the source material, *synthesize* (a word we'll talk about more thoroughly in class) that information, and create your own argument in response.

Assignment:

Building on our conversations about *The American Dream*, this synthesis essay will ask you to further develop your ideas in response to other writers interested in the American Dream through economics and opportunities. You will be asked to carefully read three articles (linked below), *synthesize* and cite their arguments, and respond with your own argument.

Read, summarize, and synthesize the following three articles:

1. [“The Death of Horatio Alger”](#) by Paul Krugman
2. [“Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%”](#) by Joseph Stiglitz
3. [“The American Dream isn't for Black Millennials”](#) by Reniqua Allen

Your synthesis essay should do the following:

- Demonstrate synthesis of the articles, using all 4 of the “Harris Moves” (we’ll discuss these in class in week 3) as well as using paraphrase, summary, and (sparingly) quotation.
- Be in MLA format, including a works cited page with your three readings. I ask that you format your essay in MLA format. If you’re unfamiliar with MLA format, please consult your handbook [or this handy MLA guideline sheet](#). For this essay, you’ll also be asked to construct a works cited page.
- Have a clear “takeaway.” In this case, it should express your own argument that synthesizes and responds to the readings on the American Dream.

Your final review essay should have the following:

- a.) The essay clearly identifies the *main idea* and offers an objective summary of each of the articles you are writing about
- b.) The essay offers *your own view* on the topic
- c.) The completed essay is 800-1100 words in MLA format **including a works cited page.**

As always, I provide examples. **Example:**--synthesizing three different readings--[is linked here](#).

Due Date(s) Posted on D2L

Assignment FAQs

1. **How will this assignment be graded?**

In English 1301, you are graded on a *labor basis* and never *my opinion of your writing*. In other words, you are never graded on whether I personally enjoy your writing or if I agree (or not) with you. Labor grading [is a form of “ungrading,”](#) that I believe to be a more equitable approach.

2. Okay, but seriously, how will this assignment be graded?

Okay, I understand that because of institutional reasons like scholarships, etc., grades are a source of anxiety. You are graded as follows:

- For “Works-in-Progress” Assignments: You’ll get full points for turning in a draft of the specified length (see above) with the specified parts (see above).
- For the final draft: The rubric (below) gives an idea of what I’m looking for as I respond to your drafts. Remember, the point of the course is to *practice* certain writing skills: You’ll get full points if you show me where you are *trying* to make the changes/edits/additions/etc asked of you in the feedback to your “Work-in-Progress” draft.

Synthesis Essay Rubric

	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Main Idea/TakeAway	The essay presents a clear main idea on the topic that is well-supported by the readings and demonstrates how the readings influenced the main idea.	The essay presents a clear main idea on the topic, but it is not fully explained how the readings influenced this main idea.	The essay’s main idea isn’t clearly tied to the readings (besides being on the same topic) and it isn’t clear how the readings influenced the main idea.
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Synthesis	All three readings are well-explained, with a clear summary of the article or paraphrase of the main idea of the article.	At least one reading isn’t fully explained or summarized or you aren’t completely sure what the article was about from reading the	The essay ignores one or more of the three readings.

		essay.	
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Using Sources	The essay uses each of the four Harris Moves <i>at least</i> once (illustrating, authorizing, extending, and countering).	One of the Harris Moves is missing or the use of the Harris Move is unclear.	Two or more Harris Moves are missing from the essay.
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
“The Small Potatoes” (MLA Formatting / Citations / etc)	The essay is in clear MLA format, including the works cited page.	There are one or two mistakes in the MLA format. One entry on the works cited page is missing.	Not really in MLA format. Works cited missing or more than 1 entry missing.

Synthesis Essay Rubric

	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Main Idea/TakeAway	The essay presents a clear main idea on the topic that is well-supported by the readings and demonstrates how the readings influenced the main idea.	The essay presents a clear main idea on the topic, but it is not fully explained how the readings influenced this main idea.	The essay's main idea isn't clearly tied to the readings (besides being on the same topic) and it isn't clear how the readings influenced the main idea.
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Synthesis	All three readings are well-explained, with a clear objective summary of the article or paraphrase of the main idea of the article.	At least one reading isn't fully explained or summarized or you aren't completely sure what the article was about from reading the essay.	The essay ignores one or more of the three readings.

	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Using Sources	The essay uses each of the four Harris Moves <i>at least</i> once (illustrating, authorizing, extending, and countering).	One of the Harris Moves is missing or the use of the Harris Move is unclear.	Two or more Harris Moves are missing from the essay.
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
“The Small Potatoes” (MLA Formatting / Citations / etc)	The essay is in clear MLA format, including the works cited page.	There are one or two mistakes in the MLA format. One entry on the works cited page is missing.	Not really in MLA format. Works cited missing or more than 1 entry missing.

Making American Meanings: Music Video Analysis Essay
Dr. Charlotte Pitts
English 1302

Purpose:

To build on our skills in writing about and implementing source material, I've chosen an analysis essay as our second major writing project for English 1302. This project was chosen to meet the following learning outcomes of English 1302:

- Critically read a variety of source materials, including print and digital sources
- Analyze new information from various sources
- Synthesize new information into purposeful texts
- Evaluate and interpret sources, including understanding arguments and perspectives
- Discover, explore, and reconsider new ideas through writing
- Integrate source material using a variety of methods, including summary, quotation, and paraphrase

- Adapt composing processes for a variety of technologies and modalities
- Incorporate complex methods into compositions, such as analysis, synthesis, critique, interpretation, and argument

In short, the review essay is helpful in developing and refining our “rhetorical knowledge” which is the main goal of our class: that is, review essays push us to think more carefully about our audience to achieve our purpose.

Assignment:

For this assignment, you’ll ultimately create a 700-1100 (with at least 450 words ready for our *work-in-progress* drafts) word “Analysis Essay” in MLA format.

The analysis is a critical thinking skill that is often used in academic writing--though it is often utilized differently across academic disciplines. In English, it is often used as *literary* analysis that focuses on explaining and supporting the *meaning* of a text, and we’ll be using literary analysis in English 1301. But rather than analyzing a novel or a poem or a play, we’ll be analyzing a music video.

For this assignment, you’ll be asked to write an *analysis* of one of the music videos included in the list below--they cover a range of artists, genres, and viewpoints, extending our conversations on American Ideology. The focus of this essay assignment is to use *analysis*, that is, using a combination of textual and contextual evidence to support your interpretation (as we’ll discuss in class). As part of “contextual evidence,” You’ll also be asked to incorporate at least one outside source that you’ll find yourself (such as an interview with the artist or the director of the music video or other writing about your text).

Your Analysis Essay should include the following

- a.) An introduction that introduces the reader to the video, the main idea, and how you will organize your essay
- b.) Analysis--supported by “textual evidence”--that presents your main idea to the reader
- c.) Contextual analysis from a “secondary source” that helps support your analysis.
- d.) The completed essay is 700-1100 words in MLA format.

Sample: [Analysis Rough Draft is linked here.](#)

- **Note: some music lyrics may contain violence, sexually suggestive material, or profanity, while others do not. Please engage at your own comfort level.**
- Relatedly, some of these music videos contain Black artists using the “N” word, and I also ask you not to reproduce the “N” word in your writing or say it in class.
- **Again, some of these videos contain violence, sexually explicit lyrics/moments, or other things you might be uncomfortable with. I’ve tried to give a range of songs as well as American experiences. If one song has something you’re uncomfortable with, please pick a different song. If you’d like to learn more about the content before you watch, consider searching the video on IMDB first (they often include a “parents advisory” or include an explanation of content in the comments).**

- Due dates are all posted on D2L
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FAQs

1. I’m Confused: What is a “Takeaway” (or “main idea”) in Analysis?

Your essay should center on a *takeaway* that presents your interpretation of the *meaning* of the text (in this case, both the *visuals* as well as the *lyrics* of the music video), as well as your “secondary source.” In analysis writing, the takeaway for your reader should be what the song and music video *means* (or at least what you’re arguing

that they mean). While these videos don't necessarily have one, definitive meaning, it's important you can support your interpretation with "textual evidence" (that is, you should be able to demonstrate in writing what in the video leads you to your interpretation).

2. Isn't analysis writing just "our opinion?"

Yes and no. Literary analysis is somewhat subjective in that you and someone else may come up with different interpretations. That is fine, as long as you can support your interpretation with textual and contextual examples. **But analysis writing is not the same as a review:** you are not telling us if you liked the video or not, but you are telling us *what you think the video and lyrics mean*. To help:

- Be sure to incorporate textual and contextual evidence to support your takeaway.
- Think about how you're going to *organize* your analysis. Maybe you are going to talk about the visuals first and then the lyrics. Maybe you are going to try to focus on themes that support your interpretation of the meaning. Make sure your choice of organization helps the reader navigate your analysis.

Music Video Choices

(If you'd like to analyze a music video *not* on this list, please e-mail me to discuss it)

Rihanna, "[American Oxygen](#)"

Beyonce, "[Formation](#)"

Childish Gambino, "[This is America](#)"

Twenty-One Pilots, "[Stressed Out](#)"

Michael Kiwanuka, "[Black Man in a White World](#)"

Brooks and Dunn, "[Only in America](#)"

N.W.A., "[Straight Outta Compton](#)"

David Bowie, "[I'm Afraid of Americans](#)"

Kayce Musgraves, "[Merry Go 'Round](#)"

Lana Del Rey, "[National Anthem](#)"

Rage Against the Machine, "[Guerilla Radio](#)"

Janelle Monae, "[Turntables](#)"

Flobots, "[Handlebars](#)"

Lil Wayne, "[God Bless Amerika](#)"

Halsey, "[New Americana](#)"

Dove Cameron, "[Breakfast](#)"

Kendrick Lamar, "[N95](#)"

Lil Nas X and Jack Harlowe, "[Industry Baby](#)"

Billie Eilish, "[Male Fantasy](#)"

Kelsea Ballerini, "[Half of my Hometown](#)"

Mickey Guyton, "[Remember her name](#)"

Analysis Essay Rubric

	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Main Idea/ Take Away	The essay presents a clear interpretation of the text that is well-supported by evidence.	The essay presents an interpretation, but it does not fully explain how the readings influenced this main idea.	The essay's main idea isn't clearly tied to the analysis (besides being on the same topic) and it isn't clear how the text influenced the main idea.

	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Textual Analysis	The essay clearly presents multiple examples of textual evidence <i>both</i> from the visuals and the lyrics to support their interpretation.	The essay presents textual evidence, but it isn't fully explained/described how that evidence supports the interpretation.	The essay is missing textual evidence from the visuals and/or lyrics. Or the essay is a <i>summary</i> , not an <i>analysis</i> .
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
Contextual Analysis	The essay uses contextual evidence from an outside source to clearly support their interpretation of the text.	While the essay includes an outside source for contextual evidence, it isn't clearly explained how it supports the interpretation.	The essay is missing an outside source.
	Outstanding	Average	Poor
"The Small Potatoes" (MLA Formatting / Citations / etc)	The essay is in clear MLA format, including the works cited page. the MLA Header is correct.	There are one or two mistakes in the MLA format. One entry on the works cited page is missing.	Not really in MLA format. Works cited missing or more than 1 entry missing.

Researched Position Essay¹
Dr. Charlotte Pitts
English 1302

Purpose:

Our third writing project for the semester will be a “researched position essay.” This essay (easily the most difficult and time-intensive of the semester), is designed around the learning objectives for English 1302, namely:

- Critically read a variety of source materials, including print and digital sources
- Analyze new information from various sources
- Synthesize new information into purposeful texts
- Evaluate and interpret sources, including understanding arguments and perspectives
- Discover, explore, and reconsider new ideas through writing
- Integrate source material using a variety of methods, including summary, quotation, and paraphrase
- Incorporate complex methods into compositions, such as analysis, synthesis, critique, interpretation, and argument
- Locate and evaluate appropriate, credible source material dependent on writing contexts and content
- Provide productive feedback for peers’ compositions.

It’s a tall order: this assignment asks you to draw on your prior “rhetorical knowledge,” including what we’ve practiced through the other projects in the course. To help make this project more manageable, it is broken down into smaller steps along the way (described below).

Assignment:


For this assignment, you’ll ultimately create a 1200-1500 word “Researched Position Essay” in MLA format.

The purpose of this essay is to develop a *nuanced claim* about a topic that you will support with evidence, asking you to build on some of the same skills we practiced in our earlier synthesis and analysis essays.

¹ This project is based on the [National Writing Projects C3WP Program](#) -- the largest study of argument writing ever conducted.

Step One: Complete your Research Report Notes Template

For this essay, you'll choose one of the issues and accompanying *text sets* (a group of texts meant to offer an *introductory glimpse* into an issue and show how each issue is complex). Once you've chosen which option you're interested in writing about, you'll be asked to complete a **research report** assignment, a template that you will fill in and turn in on D2L.

Before you start reading, look over the template. **The Template for the [Research Report Assignment is linked here](#)**. Be sure to **start early**. This is asking you to *carefully read* each of the four sources and make notes about each one. It may take you up to a few hours to complete.  Dr. Pitts Filled-In English 1302 Research NotesTemplate

Text Set Options

Note: If the Links do not work or are pay-walled for you, the readings (except one with an asterisk, which are mostly interviews) are also available in a Google folder, [linked here](#).

Option A: "Student Loans in the US"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Abdelfatah and Arablouei* "The origins of federal student loans" 2.) Asare, "Student Loan Debt is a Racial Justice Issue" 3.) Hess, "How Student Debt Became a \$1.6 Trillion Crisis" 4.) Perry, et. al, "Student Loans and the Racial Wealth Divide"
Option B: "Solitary Confinement in US Prisons"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Mann* "How Solitary Confinement became hard-wired in US Prisons" 2.) Manuel, "I spent 18 Years in Solitary Confinement" 3.) SPLC, "Solitary Confinement: Inhumane, Ineffective, and Wasteful" 4.) Flahive, "Hunger Strikes in Texas Prisons"
Option C: "Censorship & US Libraries"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Clifford "Library Shakedowns: Book Bans and Censorship" 2.) Friedman and Johnson, "Banned in the USA" 3.) Beauchamp, "Why Book Banning is Back" 4.) NPR* "The Strain of Censorship on Public Libraries" <p>(note: the NPR resource is a panel conversation with experts, be sure to listen to it and not just read the blurb)</p>
Option D: "The US Opioid Crisis"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Arablouei and Abdelfatah* "A History of Opioids in America" 2.) Khazan, "The True Cause of the Opioid Epidemic" 3.) Graham "The Role of Despair in the Opioid Crisis" 4.) Lopez "Solving America's Painkiller Paradox"
Option E: "Animals and Ethics"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Worrall, "Yes. Animals can Think and Feel" 2.) Barrett, "Do Animals Have Emotions?" 3.) Samuel, "You May Be Thinking About Animals All Wrong" 4.) Torrella, "What is an Animal's Life Worth?"
Option F: "American Dreams (but literally this time)"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Eagleman and Vaughn "Why do we Dream?" 2.) North, "The Pandemic Has Created a Nation of Insomniacs" 3.) Forbes, "America the Sleep Deprived" 4.) Kluger, "What Your Dreams Mean, According to Science"
Option G: "Climate Change in/and Texas"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Mendez and Douglas, "Seven Ways Climate Change is Already Hitting Texas" 2.) Hargrove, "What the New Climate Change Report Means for Texas" 3.) Schester, "Texas has No Plans to Address Climate Change" 4.) Irfan, "Clean energy is taking over the Texas grid. State officials are trying to stop it."

Step Two: Research Summaries

Summaries of your research that present the work to your reader.

Based on your research questions for step one, research your topic and write a summary of your findings. This is a rough draft, but make sure you keep a record of your citations. If you use the COM library, remember the citation builder tool in each article is available to you.

Step Three: Work-in-Progress Drafts

For this stage of the project, you will share your works-in-progress draft, which should be **at least 800 words** (toward your 1200 to 1500 word total).

Your draft should include the following:

- a.) A clear, **nuanced** main idea about your topic, focusing on the more specific aspect of your topic you have chosen to research. (ie: if you started with “US consumption of meat” your new main idea might be “Curbing meat consumption in the United States would lessen the impact of climate change”).
- b.) Summaries of your research that present the work to your reader.
- c.) Textual evidence from your research that supports your main idea, cited properly from your 3 researched articles/essays and the 4 sources from your initial text set.
- d.) A works-cited page that includes *your* 3 researched articles/essays and the 4 sources from your initial text set.

Step Four: One-on-One Conferences

During week 12, we will have one-on-one conferences in class e to discuss your researched position essay WIP in more detail, working together to create a revision plan for your essay.

Step Five: Turn in your final Researched Position Essay

Your final researched position essay should have the following:

- a.) An introduction that makes the reader familiar with your topic, presents your nuanced main idea, and outlines the organization of the essay (signposting).
- b.) The essay includes properly cited supporting evidence from your source material.

- c.) The essay uses a combination of analysis and synthesis from your sources to support your main idea, including the four Harris moves and Summary, Paraphrase, and (sparingly) quotation.
- c.) A conclusion with a clearly defined purpose for your reader.
- d.) The completed essay is 1200-1500 words in MLA format **including a works cited page** (your works cited page should include your 4 initial sources and the 3 sources from your own research).
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Due Date(s) All posted on D2L

Assignment FAQs

1. How will this assignment be graded?

In English 1302, you are graded on a *labor basis* and never *my opinion of your writing*. In other words, you are never graded on whether I personally enjoy your writing or if I agree (or not) with you. Labor grading [is a form of “ungrading,”](#) that I believe to be a more equitable approach.

2. Okay, but seriously, how will this assignment be graded?

Okay, I understand that because of institutional reasons like scholarships, etc., grades are a source of anxiety. You are graded as follows:

- The templates are completed on a labor basis. If you turn the **completed** template in (and follow the instructions), you will receive full points.
- For “Works-in-Progress” Assignments: You’ll get full points for turning in a draft of the specified length (see above) with the specified parts (see above).
- For the final draft: You’ll get full points if you show me where you are *trying* to make the changes/edits/additions/etc asked of you in the feedback to your “Work-in-Progress” draft.

3. I missed one of the steps above and am overwhelmed! PLEASE HELP!?!

Please send me an e-mail **as soon as possible** letting me know you need some assistance and we'll work out a plan together. But reaching out early is important: the sooner you reach out, the better the chance we can get you caught up.

4. Dr.Pitts, I'm trying but I still don't get it.

Fair. Research writing *is hard*--you are balancing so many writing tasks at once, and that can be overwhelming for anyone, even your professors who do this work professionally. Please see me before class, during office hours, or email me to make an appointment. I spend *a lot* of my time doing my own research writing and have a few tricks up my sleeve to help us get "unstuck" in our writing.