Grading Criteria – ENG4422
Fall 2022

Essays will be marked holistically, with no specific percentage for any one aspect. The marker will thus be making an overall judgment of the quality of the piece of work as a whole. Weaknesses in one area of the criteria may be compensated for by particular skills in another, and vice versa. Independence of thought and evidence of analytical ability will be rewarded.

The main purpose of this term paper is for students to demonstrate their understanding of the key analytic issues, theoretical approaches, and literary texts presented over the course of the semester. All successful papers will be well-informed by the relevant secondary resources from the syllabus. In addition, each paper must be informed by the student's reading of *at least* three works not on the syllabus. These works can be other poems, stories, novels, or essays by the relevant author/s, or they can be secondary sources like scholarly articles or books on the author or work in question. The most successful papers will synthesize their sources in ways that shed critical light on issues related to race, identity, cultural forms, and/or violence.

Minimum length of the essay is 10 pages; maximum length is 12 pages (1.5-spaced, with 2.5 cm margins, 12 pt. font).

Good:

1. Work at the highest levels will present a precise and sophisticated thesis backed up by relevant evidence and clear, logical argumentation.
2. The essay has a clear structure. The student considers the flow of the argument from paragraph to paragraph and sustains the argument throughout. The various points made are relevant to the problem under consideration in the essay.
3. The essay has well-constructed and well-organized paragraphs. It also has transitions that provide logical and clear connections between paragraphs and between the different sections of the essay.
4. The essay engages in detailed analysis, developing a critical argument about the topic, problematic, or question announced in the thesis.
5. The essay is written in formal English of a high standard, with no mistakes of grammar or spelling.

Average:

1. Includes a central thesis, which assumes the form of an argument and is for the most part sustained throughout.
2. The essay adopts a clear structure and the points made are relevant to the problem under consideration throughout.
3. The essay engages in analysis, and demonstrates some awareness of the relevant theory and criticism. It presents and to some extent develops the student's own ideas.

4. The essay is written for the most part in correct English, with only minor mistakes of grammar or spelling.

Poor:

1. The student's thesis is excessively general or vague, or lacks substantiating evidence.
2. The structure lacks logic, and the points made are occasionally irrelevant to the problem under consideration.
3. The essay rarely engages in analysis, limiting itself to paraphrases of the literature or theories in question. There are few original analytic ideas, and there may be inaccurate or incomplete presentation of other's ideas.
4. There are errors in grammar and spelling, though these do not prevent understanding of the essay text.

Unacceptable:

1. The essay lacks a thesis.
2. The structure is illogical and confusing. The points made lack relevance.
3. The essay lacks analysis, simply providing more or less adequate paraphrases of the literature or theories in question.
4. The essay is uninformed by the relevant secondary literature from the course's syllabus.
5. The essay is poorly written with numerous errors of grammar and spelling.