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**ENGL 1501W-003 | SPRING 2018  
LITERATURE AND PUBLIC LIFE  
M/W 2:30-4:25, Akerman Hall 313  
Course Site: [moodle.umn.edu](http://moodle.umn.edu)  
Instructor: Dr. John Pistelli  
Email: [piste004@umn.edu](mailto:piste004@umn.edu)  
Office Hours: M/W 4:30-5:30  
Office: Lind Hall 254**

## Description and Goals

This section of Literature and Public Life will be an introduction to college-level English literary study with a focus on the political, historical, and cultural dimensions of creative writing. In short, we will treat the “and” in the course title as provoking a question: what *is* the relationship of literature to public life? We will explore how plays, poems, stories, novels, and films help us to conceive of ourselves as citizens, subjects, or individuals; allow us to think through questions of power and identity (such as race, gender, class, and sexuality); invite us to reflect on our relationship to nature and technology; and prompt us to ethical thought about our responsibilities to others. In the end, we will ask how the very concept of what it means to be human has changed in the last several centuries. Our study will be organized historically, moving from a 17th-century drama to a 2017 novel, to show how literature has affected and been affected by shifts in political and cultural consciousness. To aid our inquiry, we will also consult literary criticism and scholarship. This writing-intensive course also requires you to respond to the themes of the course in formal and informal written work; and to encourage your own participation in public life, a community-engaged-learning option will give you the chance to collaborate with others on projects that serve the common good. By the end of this course, you will have become familiar with the basic characteristics of drama, poetry, fiction, and film; you will have had an introduction to the major artistic and political currents of modern literature; you will have become familiar with the modes and methods of literary criticism; you will have reflected on the connections among political ideology, social organization, and fiction; you will have developed writing skills in several genres (narration, exposition analysis, reflection, argumentation); and you will have had the opportunity to think through the relation between imaginative literature and everyday public life in America.

## Required Books<sup>1</sup>

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Norton, ISBN: 9780393929584)

Toni Morrison, *Sula* (Vintage, ISBN: 9781400033430)

Eugene Lim, *Dear Cyborgs* (FSG, ISBN: 9780374537111)

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<sup>1</sup> The books are available in the University Bookstore; please purchase the specified editions. All required films will be screened in class. Other readings will be made available on the course website; I expect you to read these as carefully as you would study print documents and to bring them to class—in print or onscreen—on the appropriate day.

**ENGL 1501W satisfies the Literature Core requirement.**

First, the course focuses on the analysis of written works of literature with an emphasis on the overarching theme of citizenship. Second, through a study of the formal dimensions of literature, such as the function of dialogue in Plato's *The Republic* or the symbolic role of animals in Phillip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, students learn the fundamental connections between language, literary technique, and the meaning of texts. Third, the course examines the social and historical contexts of literary works beginning with Plato and then focusing on contemporary masterpieces.

**ENGL 1501W satisfies the General Core guidelines.**

Students in ENGL 1501W engage in close analysis of texts on civic life and ethics to form a basis of knowledge about citizenship and ethics, which helps them form identities as national and global citizens. Students receive an interactive lecture twice each week, and they also explore the ongoing questions and concerns the lecture raises in discussion sections that meet separately each week.

**ENGL 1501W satisfies the Civic Life and Ethics theme.**

Using primarily fictional texts as mirrors of different societies, ENGL 1501W requires students to explore how characters in these societies have developed with or against each other, sometimes in verbal conflict or debate, thereby embodying opposing ethical principles. The course encourages students to develop, deepen, and challenge their personal values through not only intellectual and literary contact with the texts, but also innovative assignments which catapult their personal beliefs into the public sphere. Every writing assignment provides students with opportunities to identify and apply their knowledge of ethical problems they discover in texts, which the instructor helps them connect with problems happening now in American society.

**ENGL 1501W and Student Learning Outcomes**

ENGL 1501W teaches students to identify and define good citizenship in the world and to pose solutions for our country and world. The readings expose students to and require them to understand diverse philosophies and cultures, including Greek philosophy of which they may be completely unfamiliar. Being a course in literature dealing sometimes with speculative worlds, ENGL 1501W develops creativity in students in the belief that creativity is necessary to world-changing leaders capable of great and imaginative solutions. Dedicated to the notion of citizenship, ENGL 1501W naturally helps students acquire skills for effective citizenship and encourages them to speculating about ways they can make a difference in the world.

**ENGL 1501W is a Writing Intensive course.**

This course meets the Council on Liberal Education guidelines for a Writing Intensive course. This means that the course:

- integrates writing into course content, through writing assignments that work toward specific course objectives and writing activities that take place throughout the semester
- provides explicit instruction in writing
- requires a cumulative minimum of 2,500 words of formal writing apart from any informal writing activities and assignments
- includes at least one formal assignment that requires students to revise and resubmit drafts after receiving feedback from the course instructor
- requires that at least one-third of each student's final course grade must be tied to written work and that a student cannot pass the course and fail the writing component

## Assignments

*Grade breakdown.*

<i>For service-learning students</i>		<i>For non-service-learning students</i>	
Essays	40%	Essays	50%
Exams	20%	Exams	20%
Participation	20%	Participation	10%
Paragraphs	10%	Paragraphs	10%
Discussions	5%	Discussions	5%
Colloquium	5%	Colloquium	5%

*Essays.* Students who choose the service-learning track will focus their writing for their course on a 2500-word document detailing their experiences; these will combine narrative, exposition, analysis, reflection, and argument into a total account of your community-engaged learning experience. The first portion of this project (1250 words) will be collected at the midterm; the midterm and final submissions will be worth 20% each of your grade. Students who do not choose the service-learning option will write two formal research papers in this course, each worth 25%. I will provide prompts and detailed assignments for these as the class progresses, but in general, they will be designed to give you practice in the basics of literary analysis in connection with contemporary social and political issues and your own community engagement; they will thus also combine narrative, exposition, analysis, reflection, and argument. The midterm and final essay will be worth 25% each of your total grade. More detailed criteria for this assignment will be given later in the course.

*Exams.* There will be a midterm and a final exam in this course. These exams will ask you to identify or produce vocabulary, facts, or passages, to write short explanations of their significance, and/or to answer essay questions. As long as you attend class regularly, pay attention, take careful notes, and answer the discussion questions, you should do fine on these. They cannot be made up without a documented reason.

*Participation.* I do not directly give an attendance grade but I do take roll. Be advised that there will be in-class exercises, assignments, and activities in this course that you will miss if you are absent. If you cannot be in class for any reason, please ask a classmate rather than the instructor for notes or a summary. If illness or other problems require you to miss more than a normal amount of class (1 or 2 meetings), please let me know. If you miss more than 2 meetings without a documented reason, your course grade may be affected. If you miss more than 4 meetings, you may be in danger of failing the course. Participation includes speaking up in class at least once a week, contributing to in-class activities, and/or attending my office hours or otherwise getting in touch with me. For service-learning students, an additional 10% for participation will be devoted toward your service hours themselves.

*Discussions.* For each meeting, one student will be tasked with writing four discussion questions for the class to consider. (The day on which you will have to prepare questions will be chosen by lottery at the beginning of the semester.) These questions should be primarily interpretative, not factual—the point is to provoke a conversation about the meaning or implications of the text under discussion. You will submit your questions to me on the day it is your turn.

*Paragraphs.* Five paragraphs in five different genres of writing—narrative, exposition, analysis, reflection, argumentation—will be submitted at various points and in response to specific prompts (given in the course schedule). More detailed criteria for this assignment will be given later in the course.

*Colloquium.* For both community-engaged learners' overall essay and non-community-engaged-learners' final essay, you will prepare a 10-minute presentation to the class detailing either your essay's argument or your journal's description of your service experience in a conference format; you will also be required to take questions from your classmates. This assignment will be graded both on your project's quality and on your public presentation of the material. More detail will be provided later in the course.

## Grades

*Grading Policy.* A (90-100): Outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements B (80-90): Significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements C (70-80): Meets the course requirements in every respect D (60-70): Worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully F (0-60): Work was not completed

*Incompletes.* A grade of incomplete (“I”) is given only in a genuine and documented emergency, and *only* for work which is due during the last weeks of the course. You must make arrangements for an incomplete before the last day of class.

## Disability Accommodations

Any student with a documented disability condition who needs to arrange accommodations should contact the instructor and Disability Services (612-626-1333) at the beginning of the semester.

## Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an “F” or an “N” for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University.

## Student Writing Support

Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall. See <http://writing.umn.edu/> for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.

## Student Conduct

To avoid disruptions, please observe the following policies. 1. During class, your attention should be directed toward whomever is speaking or to your assigned task. 2. Please address the instructor and your classmates respectfully. 3. All electronic devices should be used for class materials only.

## Offensive Material

In this course, students will be required to read words or view images that they may consider offensive. The ideas expressed in any given text do not necessarily reflect the views of the instructor, the English Department, or the University of Minnesota. Course materials have been selected for their literary, cultural, and/or historical value, in order to achieve specific learning objectives and course goals. These materials are meant to be examined in the context of intellectual inquiry and critical analysis, as appropriate for a university-level course. If you are easily shocked and/or offended, please contact the instructor to discuss whether this course is suitable for you.

## Other Policies

For extensive information about UMN policy regarding the above topics and others—Student Conduct Code; Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Class Room; Scholastic Dishonesty; Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences; Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials; Grading and Transcripts; Sexual Harassment; Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action; Disability Accommodations; Mental Health and Stress Management; and Academic Freedom—I strongly encourage you to visit the following link:

[http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS\\_APPA.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS_APPA.html)

**What is service-learning?** Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Students use what they learn in the classroom to address community-identified issues. They not only learn about practical applications of their studies, they also become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

**What does service-learning look like at the University of Minnesota?**

- Students either work individually or in small groups with a community-based organization to address a community need;
- Students work with one organization over the course of the semester, either in a direct service role or on a specific project tied to the content of their academic course;
- The experience is relationship-based;
- Students' work with the organization will be ongoing throughout the semester, averaging 2-3 hours per week for approximately 30 hours (a minimum of 20 hours total is required).

**Why participate in service-learning?** Many people learn as well or better by doing as by reading or listening. Education is a function not only of lectures and books, but also of experience, and especially of connecting what one reads and hears with ongoing experiences and observation. Service-learning provides a hands-on approach to learning while also contributing the public good.

**Why am I getting credit for volunteering?** Attendance and participation in class sessions may form part of your final grade for a class, but typically most of your grade comes from other assignments that allow you to demonstrate what you have learned from lectures, readings, discussions, etc. Service-learning works the same way – your instructor may determine part of your course grade by the time you spend working with an organization, but more significantly, you are receiving credit for the learning connected to your experience in the community. This makes service-learning different from volunteering, where the primary emphasis is on the service being provided and the primary intended beneficiary is clearly the service recipient. The learning in service-learning is equally important, and it primarily benefits you, the learner. Think of your service-learning experience as a text you are learning from, but instead of reading it, you are living it. Unless you are able to articulate and connect what you learn from your course texts, from lectures, and from your experience in the community to the course concepts to your instructor in an acceptable way, you will not get credit for your work.

**What doesn't count for service-learning?** Here are some examples of when volunteer or community work may not be used to fulfill a service-learning requirement for a course. If you have any questions about what does or doesn't count, contact your faculty member and your service-learning coordinator.

- **On-Campus Service:** An important component of service-learning is the opportunity to engage with communities outside of campus and learn from new and different environments, so work done with and for a student organization or campus office or program, even if it is unpaid, will not fulfill service-learning requirements. There are some on-campus experiences that can count as service-learning if the work includes partnering with off-campus communities or individuals.
- **Work Study or Paid Work:** The spirit of service-learning is that it is unpaid work that benefits the community and enhances student learning. This is also a matter of fairness:

while many students work, most students are not able to apply their paid work experiences to fulfilling service-learning requirements.

- **Working with immediate family:** Service-learning activities must adhere to all University policies. This includes the policy on Managing Nepotism and Personal Relationships, which prohibits individuals from teaching or supervising the employment of any member of their family or their partner. Since you are doing service-learning as part of an academic course, it would likewise be inappropriate for a member of your family or a significant other to serve as your service-learning supervisor.

**Does the time I spend traveling for service-learning count toward my required hours?**

No, just as time spent traveling to and from class does not count as instructional time, and time spent traveling to and from a job is not compensated. When you schedule service-learning into your weekly activities, you need to allow enough time to get to and from your organization, but you should only record the hours you spend working at the organization.

**Can I be reimbursed for the costs of traveling to my service-learning site, like my bus fare?**

No. Service-learning provides additional content for your class, just like any books you are required to purchase. Think of your transportation costs for service-learning as if you were assigned to purchase another book for the class instead.

**What if I'm doing service-learning in multiple courses this semester?** Most students in this situation want to know, "can I use the same placement for both courses?" The answer is often yes, as long as the work you'll be doing at your service-learning site has a clear connection to the course content for both classes. If you are in this situation, **contact your service-learning coordinator as soon as possible** and copy your instructors on the message to begin the process of making sure your organization is approved for both classes and discussing how many total hours of service-learning will be expected of you during the semester (students in this situation are asked to do more than the minimum number of hours required for one class). **You should only record the hours you spend at the organization once in the online system**, and your service-learning coordinator will also make sure that both of your instructors know how many hours you have completed by the end of the semester. If one of these courses is an internship, field experience or required for a professional license, it is unlikely you will be able to reduce your total hours and/or combine placements.

**Should I record the hours I spent at my pre-service training workshop?** You should record any time spent attending orientation and/or training sessions at your organization, but **do not record the hours you spend attending a pre-service training workshop offered on campus by the Center for Community- Engaged Learning** (Community Involvement in Practice, Critical Perspectives on Community Involvement, or the MLC Tutor Training), **even if your instructor is allowing you to count your workshop attendance toward your total hours for the semester**. All hours you record in the online system are submitted to your organization for your supervisor's approval, and s/he has no way of knowing whether or not you attended a training on campus. Your attendance at the pre-service training will be tracked in another part of the online system so your instructor can give you the appropriate credit.

**Academic integrity applies to community work done for academic credit** Any of the following actions constitute academic dishonesty within a community-based learning context and will be addressed in the same way as any other act of academic dishonesty. Incidents may also be referred to the [Office for Community Standards](#).

1. Misrepresenting hours completed at a community site or spent working on a community project. This includes documenting hours done in previous semesters or with an unauthorized organization.
2. Writing reflections or completing other assignments about events or activities the student did not actually participate in or attend at their community site. This includes drawing on community work done in previous semesters or with an unauthorized organization.

**The University of MN [Student Conduct Code](#) also applies to student behavior while doing community work for academic credit** Violations or potential violation of the student conduct code applies in any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or is related to University activities. Any potential violations reported to CCEL liaisons from community partners will be forwarded to the Office for Community Standards to be addressed.

**Accommodations for students registered with disability resource center doing community-engaged learning** If you are registered with the Disability Resource Center and use reasonable accommodations in your courses, you may also want to explore what accommodations may be useful in your community-engaged learning. CCEL staff can work with you on how to bring up accommodation needs at a community learning site, or assist you in finding a site that meets your health and/or accessibility needs. We can work closely with your instructor and/or your Access Consultants to discuss the type of work environment and structure you need to be successful during your community experience. Additionally, we also strongly suggest having a conversation with your community supervisor in order to allow them to understand what you need to be successful.

**Confidentiality and Privacy Issues in community work** Be aware that through your community-engaged learning, you may come to know information about individuals that is covered by policies and ethical guidelines about confidentiality. You should speak to your community supervisor about how confidentiality obligations apply to you. Examples of how these issues might arise in your community engagement include:

1. Photography: You should never take photos of anyone at your community organization without first knowing the organization's policy for obtaining consent.
2. Personal Identifiers: Be careful about revealing information that could be used to personally identify individuals you work with at your community organization. This includes changing the names of people at your organization when submitting assignments for class.

**Criminal background checks are required for many community organizations** If the organization's volunteer application asks about any convictions and you have a criminal record, be honest. Failure to state convictions that are then uncovered in a background check will likely result in your immediate dismissal from the organization. If you are concerned that your record could disqualify you from the approved community-engaged learning options, please be proactive and discuss your options with your community-engaged learning liaison.

**Non-Discrimination in community work** According to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents policy on *Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action*, the University shall,

Provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

All CCEL partner organizations have verified that the engagement opportunities they offer to students are in compliance with this policy. If your faculty member allows community-engaged learning at an organization that is not a CCEL partner, CCEL staff will contact the organization to ensure their compliance with this non-discrimination policy before it will be approved for class credit.

**Religious Service** Faith-based organizations, including religious institutions such as churches, mosques, synagogues, or temples, can be community-engaged learning sites as long as they comply with the U of MN's non-discrimination policy. However, service done as part of an academic course cannot include any of the following religious activities: providing religious education/instruction, worship activities, or any form of proselytizing.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

(\*) = text is located on the course website

### Prologue.

#### 01/17 – Introduction to the Course

- Syllabus

### 1. Literature, Thinking, and Acting: The Case of *Hamlet*

#### 01/22 – Humanism in the Rotting State

- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 1

#### 01/24 – Introduction to Community-Engaged Learning

- Community-Engaged Learning Presentations
- The Bible (*Hamlet*, p. 193)
- Dante (*Hamlet*, p. 215)

#### 01/29 – Truth and Play

- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, acts 2-3
- Seneca (*Hamlet*, p. 201)

#### 01/31 – Life and Death

- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, acts 4-5
- Saxo Gramaticus (*Hamlet*, p. 207)
- *Narrative paragraph due in class: narrate in chronological order the events of Hamlet and Ophelia's relationship.*

#### 02/05 – Romantic, Moral, and Psychoanalytic Criticism

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Lecture on *Hamlet*" (*Hamlet*, p. 245)
- Leo Tolstoy, "Shakespeare and the Drama" (*Hamlet*, p. 252)
- Ernest Jones, "A Psycho-analytic Study of *Hamlet*" (*Hamlet*, p. 264)

#### 02/07 – Feminist and Cultural Criticism

- Elaine Showalter, "Representing Ophelia: Women, Madness, and the Responsibilities of Feminist Criticism" (*Hamlet*, p. 281)
- Stephen Greenblatt, "Hamlet in Purgatory" (*Hamlet*, p. 298)
- *Expository paragraph due in class: summarize in logical order Showalter's or Greenblatt's argument.*

#### 02/12 – Postmodern *Hamlet*

- Michael Almeryeda, *Hamlet* (in-class screening)

#### 02/14 – Post-9/11 *Hamlet*

- Kim Fedderson and J. Michael Richardson, "Hamlet 9/11: Sound, Noise, and Fury in Almeryeda's *Hamlet*" (\*)
- *Analytic paragraph due in class: enumerate some major differences between Shakespeare's and Almeryeda's Hamlets and discuss their thematic consequences.*

## 2. Poetry: Nature, Culture, Politics

### 02/19 – English Romantic Poetry

- William Blake, “London” (\*)
- Percy Bysshe Shelley, “Ozymandias” (\*)

### 02/21 – American Romantic Poetry

- Walt Whitman, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” (\*)
- Emily Dickinson, “My Life Had Stood—A Loaded Gun” (\*)

### 02/26 – Modernist Poetry: War and Revolution

- W. B. Yeats, “Easter 1916” (\*)
- W. H. Auden, “September 1, 1939” (\*)

### 02/28 – Modernist Poetry and Totalitarian Politics

- Adam Kirsch, “To Hold in a Single Thought Reality and Justice: Yeats, Pound, Auden and the Modernist Ideal” (\*)
- *Reflective paragraph due in class: discuss what tendencies or events in modern politics Kirsch’s essay recall for you and why OR discuss what relevance Kirsch’s essay might have to your service-learning experience.*

### Interlude.

### 03/05 – Workshop

- Peer review and workshop for midterm essay

### 03/07 – Exam

- *Midterm exam*

### 03/09 – Midterm Essay

- *Midterm essay due to course site by 11:59PM*

### 03/12, 03/14 – Spring Break

- No class

## 3. Fiction: The Personal and the Political

### 03/19 – Realist Fiction and Romanticism

- Rebecca Harding Davis, “Life in the Iron Mills” (\*)

### 03/21 – Realist Fiction and Sentimentalism

- James Baldwin, “Everybody’s Protest Novel” (\*)
- *Argumentative paragraph due in class: do you agree or disagree with the ideology of sentimentalism and why? (Discuss with reference to contemporary political examples OR examples from your service-learning experience.)*

### 03/26 – Fiction and Race

- Toni Morrison, “Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation” (\*)
- *Toni Morrison Remembers* (in-class screening)

03/28 – Magical Realism

- Toni Morrison, *Sula*, Part One

04/02 – Beyond Good and Evil

- Toni Morrison, *Sula*, Part Two

04/04 – Art, Race, Gender, and Sexuality

- Toni Morrison, *Sula*, Foreword
- Sara Blackburn, *New York Times* review of *Sula* (\*)
- Barbara Smith, “Toward a Black Feminist Criticism” (\*)
- Gregg Santori, “Sula and the Sociologist: Toni Morrison on American Biopower after Civil Rights” (\*)

04/09 – Heroic Fiction

- Eugene Lim, *Dear Cyborgs*, pp. 3-69

04/11 – Posthumanist Fiction

- Eugene Lim, *Dear Cyborgs*, pp. 70-163

04/16 – Experimental Fiction, Popular Culture, and Contemporary Politics

- Eugene Lim, *Dear Cyborgs*, wrap-up

**Epilogue.**04/18 – Workshop

- Peer review and workshop for final essay

04/23 – Exam

- *Final exam*

04/25 – Presentations

- *Presentations due in class, last names A-M*

04/30 – Presentations

- *Presentations due in class, last names N-Z*

05/02 – Conclusion

- *Presentations due in class, wrap-up*
- Course evaluations

05/04 – Final Essay

- *Final essay due to course site by 11:59PM*

**ENGL 1501W – Discussion Question Assignment**

For each meeting, one student will be assigned—by lottery at the beginning of the semester—to bring (in writing) four questions for the class based on the day's assigned reading. These questions should not be merely factual—e.g., *what happens at the end of the novel?*—but raise questions of interpretation and meaning—e.g., *what does the novel's ending suggest about [X] thematic issue?* or *why does the poem allude to [Y] political event?* etc. You may also ask questions connecting the text at hand to topical events (though you might in this case avoid grandstanding) or even to your community-engaged-learning experience. On the day your questions are due, you will be asked to lead the class discussion; I also ask that you submit the questions to me on paper (they may be printed or handwritten; if the latter, please write legibly).

## ENGL 1501W – Paragraph Assignment

At various points during the semester, as specified on the syllabus, you will be required to submit a paragraph as a writing exercise in each of five modes of writing: narrative, exposition, analysis, argumentation, and reflection. On the day this assignment is due, please bring it to class on paper to be handed in (your paragraphs may be printed or handwritten; if the latter, please write legibly). You may also be required to exchange your paragraphs with a classmate for peer critique or to read them aloud to the class, so be prepared to share with the whole room and not just me. These will be graded on a check-plus (2 points), check (1 point), or check-minus (0 points) basis for a total of ten points. The paragraphs should be at least six sentences; the criteria for each mode of writing is as follows:

- **Narrative:** A narrative tells a story. Its essence is the communication of a meaningful sequence of connected events in time. Narrative writing should emphasize both the passage of time (words like *then*, *when*, *next*, *before*, *after*, *earlier*, *later* should appear) and the logic of the events' connection (here you should say *because*, *therefore*, *consequently*, *as a result of*, etc.) Events imply action, so active verbs should predominate in a narrative.
- **Exposition:** Expository writing conveys information. Its essence is the communication of facts. Often, it takes the form of a summary: a condensation of a larger body of knowledge into an overview. Unlike narrative, time is not a factor, but logic may remain so (see logic words above). Expository style tends to be drier, as it usually does not have action to relate, but you can compensate for this with a rich vocabulary drawn from the facts you are communicating as well as with verbs that put the facts into motion (you might write that the author whose views you are summarizing *assaults a cliché* or *vaults to her conclusion*, for example).
- **Analysis:** Analytical writing enumerates. Its essence is the explanation of how parts form wholes. Logic remains an issue and in fact replaces the function of time in narrative writing: an analysis says *first*, *second*, *next*, *finally*. Along with your enumeration should come explanation: what is the effect of these parts? how do they create the whole they make up?
- **Reflection:** Reflective writing is, unlike the above, personal and subjective. This does not mean it takes leave of facts, nor even that it may not mobilize narrative, exposition, analysis, and argumentation where appropriate, but that it is allowed to be autobiographical rather than objective, lyrical rather than impersonal, and partial rather than non-partisan. Here you are not only allowed but encouraged to say *I*.
- **Argumentation:** Argumentative writing makes a claim. As with reflective writing, it is *your* claim, but unlike reflective writing, it aims to convert your view into objective knowledge. It should begin with a thesis—a one-sentence statement of your position. The thesis should be followed not by lyrical rumination but by *proof*, which may take the form of exposition or analysis, this time tied to an overarching argument rather than offered for its own sake. In fact, argumentative writing simply *is* exposition and analysis organized as fair, objective support for your own considered stance: reflection solidified.

**ENGL 1501W – Midterm and Final Essay Assignment (1250 words each)**

*For non-service-learning students:*

Please write an essay on how one of the course texts<sup>2</sup> relates to an event, topic, person, or space in contemporary public life. The general form of the essay should be that of an argumentative essay: you are making a claim about how your chosen text helps you to understand an aspect of real life. You should, therefore, state your claim near the beginning and spend the rest of the paper providing reasons why we should believe you. These reasons should include examples and quotations from the texts (cited by page number) and citations of material you have researched, sourced as appropriate.

To gather material from public life to which to compare your text, you have several options:

- Read at least three news stories from reputable sources and discuss the relevance of the course text to the events they depict
- Read at least two editorial or opinion articles (from two differing points of view—though not necessarily left vs. right; intra-left or intra-right disputes are an option) about a pressing social or political issue and discuss how the course text helps you to understand the issue<sup>3</sup>
- Visit a public space or event (performance, lecture, rally, protest, etc.) and explain how your reading of the text informs or is informed by this experience
- Interview a public figure or stranger or two people from different generations or different places about public life or the issues raised by the course text and compare their views to those of the text

For one of the essays, I would like to you choose options one or two, while for another, I would like you to choose three or four. Please submit solid evidence of your research with your essay; this might take the form of links to relevant news articles, personal photographs of spaces or events, or recordings or transcripts of interviews. Please preserve the anonymity of anyone whose identity you do not have permission to disclose.

Your essay will also involve an interpretation of the text you are discussing—to understand how it relates to public life, you must also understand the text's meaning. Therefore, I also require you to consult and cite at least three literary critical sources; these should be either books (Wilson Library is your most likely source) or peer-reviewed articles in scholarly journals (many of which can be found by searching databases such as MLA International Bibliography, Jstor, or Project Muse).

Please cite all your sources in MLA style and include a "Works Cited" page as the final page of your essay.

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<sup>2</sup> The first essay should be about *Hamlet* or one of the assigned poems; the second should be about a text/film assigned after spring break.

<sup>3</sup> For the first two options, please consult me if you are unsure as to the appropriateness of a source. I would prefer you to rely on Internet or print publications that have some mainstream legitimacy, such as generally-cited newspapers, magazines, and websites. This is not, however, meant to be an ideological test. If I believe you have selected an inappropriate source, I will make every effort to point you toward a substitute of similar ideological character but better reputation for reliability.

**ENGL 1501W – Midterm and Final Essay Assignment (1250 words each), cont'd**

*For service-learning students:*

Please write a 1250-word reflection on your service-learning experience. This assignment will primarily be in the genre of personal writing; you will describe, in the first person, your service-learning activities along with what you have learned or thought about them. You might begin with a recounting of why you chose to do service learning and to sign up with your particular organization—here I expect a clear explanation of the organization and its mission. You might also describe your preparation, anticipation, and orientation—how did the university and the organization get you ready to serve? what did you expect? were your expectations met? Then you might describe your early experiences: what was it like when you first arrived? what kinds of people did you meet, what responsibilities were expected of you, and how do you think you are doing? Finally, what, overall, are you learning about our society or about general socio-political questions from this experience? You are, in other words, writing a narrative of your experiences alongside a reflection on—or, as you prefer, argument about—their meaning.

Both the midterm and the final reflections should discuss the relevance of one of the course texts to your experience: how has reading the text helped you to understand what you have seen and heard and done? by contrast, how has what you have seen and heard and done made you question the truth or authority of the text? (Please cite texts by page number in MLA format.)

Please do not disclose the real names, identities, or identifying information of any individuals you write about or work with; use pseudonyms or generalities instead.

*For all students:*

In general, please write in clear, edited prose; your style may be lively and even conversational, but should maintain a basic level of academic or professional formality. While I will not break down your essays into the modes of narrative, exposition, etc., I will look for evidence that you are using various modes where appropriate.

Late essays will be lowered by one letter grade for each 24-hour delay in submission. A grade of *A* will be awarded to any submission that does not meet the criteria (word count, correct number of sources, etc.) designated above.

All journals should be submitted before 11:59PM on the due date through the relevant assignment portal on the course website ([moodle.umn.edu](http://moodle.umn.edu)). The name of the file should take the following form: lastname-assignment. For example: pistelli-essay1.

**ENGL 1501W – Presentation Assignment**

Please prepare a 5-7 minute presentation of your final writing project. If you are writing a research paper, you should summarize your thesis and evidence; if you are writing a service-learning reflection, you should explain the organization with which you've worked, summarize your experience there, and reflect on what you've learned, preferably with reference to at least one literary text. You should use visual aids (a slideshow) as well as simply speaking; you should speak as if extemporaneously rather than reading from notes. The minimum time for your presentation is 5 minutes; please keep time and do not exceed 7. Prepare also for a brief Q&A—your entire presentation will probably last about 10 minutes. You will be graded on your adherence to the time frame, use of visual aids, the quality of your organization of information, and your public speaking (volume, eye contact, response).