Honors 1100: Freshman Composition Fall 2016

Instructor: Jennafer Alexander

**Unit Two: Position Paper**

For this essay assignment, you will summarize and then respond to a particular issue or idea from a text or collection of texts we’ve read in class. You may use any of the following texts:

* “I Tweet, Therefore I Am” by Lam
* “Hyper and Deep Attention: The Generational Divide in Cognitive Modes” by Hayles
* “Teaching Standard English: Whose Standard?” by Christensen
* “Nobody Mean More to Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan” by Jordan
* “Lessons from My Year as a Freshman” by Nathan
* “The Value of Higher Education Made Literal” by Fish

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: first, you should demonstrate your understanding of the issue; second, you must formulate and then articulate your own ideas on this issue.

**Process:**

First, start your position paper by selecting at least one source text. Then, re-read that text closely and critically, noting the author’s main argument and supporting evidence. Next, write a summary of the text(s), which may range from a few sentences to a full paragraph. Finally, formulate a response to the text(s) by focusing on a particular idea or issue raised in the source text(s), quoting and referring to the text(s), and bringing in personal anecdotes or opinions about the issue.

In this paper, make sure to present a thesis that clearly explains your argument and how that argument relates to the source text(s). Your argument should be supported with sufficient evidence, gathered from your personal experiences, your observations of others, and quotations from the source text(s). You should also acknowledge and respond to possible counter-arguments. Your final draft should be about **3-5 pages** in length, typed and double-spaced.

**Style**:

In terms of style, this paper should be relatively informal and written in a conversational tone, but still needs to adhere to the standardized rules of English grammar and mechanics.

**Calendar:**

**Monday, October 3**: Conferences (First draft due at your conference)

**Wednesday, October 5**: Second draft due (bring two copies)

**Monday, October 10**: Portfolio 2 due (along with the final draft of the Position Paper)

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| **Rubric**  **(Subject to change as announced.)**  **Essay Structure/Organization:**   * Follows prompt, use approved topic * Clear, focused purpose * Well-written thesis, represents essay in entirety * Brief summary of the original sources to help the reader(s) understand the topic * Introduction is attention-getting * Introduces the sources by providing relevant background information (author, title) * Clear organization that highlights the author’s strategies for development * Each paragraph clearly fits with purpose of essay * Paragraphs are structured clearly (MEAL Plan) * Utilizes effective transitions between main ideas and paragraphs (flows well) * Resolution/conclusion |
| **Essay Development/Detail:**   * Analysis is clear and fully explained * Analysis demonstrates depth of thought, going beyond surface meaning for each example * Each main point (paragraph) analyzes specific detail from text and connects to thesis * Quotations are smoothly worked into paragraph, not dropped in * Quotations and other examples are fully explained in connection to thesis * Essay demonstrates a certain level of maturity, professionalism and appropriateness * Makes significant revisions from draft to draft, not just sentence-level changes |
| **Polish:**   * Grammar * Active verbs, present tense * Clarity * Sentence structure and variety * Punctuation—commas, colons, dashes and semi-colons * Mechanics * Works-Cited page in MLA or APA format |