

Quest 1 IDS 2935
Conflict of Ideas: How To Fight Fair
Spring 2020

Instructor: Rodrigo Borges

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00 – 12:00 (and by appointment)

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1. Course Details

Time: Tuesdays 4:05—6:00, Thursdays 4:05—4:55.

Location: Little Hall 0127.

Quest 1 Theme: War and Peace

General Education: Humanities, Writing (2,000 words)

(Note that a minimum grade of ‘C’ is required for General Education credit)

Class resources, announcements, updates, and assignments will be made available through the class Canvas site (www.elearning.ufl.edu).

2. Course Description

It’s been suggested that war is the continuation of *politics* by different means. Some took that suggestion to mean that politics was the continuation of *war* by other means. But, if war and politics are simply different ways in which we handle disagreement between people, within nations, and between nations, the analogy seems reasonable. War and politics sit at different ends of the same spectrum – ways in which we disagree. But, if the choice between the conflict of ideas and *real* conflict is so obvious (politics harm ideas, while wars harm real people), why do *real* conflicts keep happening? How can we understand what happens when people disagree—especially when they disagree about important or emotionally powerful issues? How can we resolve our disagreements in a principled fashion? Since the issues are important, we cannot just agree to disagree: we must learn how to have a fair fight. But how do we fight fair on the battleground of ideas?

The focus of the course will be on the conflict of ideas, and on how students can make a positive and lasting impact on the conflicts they will encounter in their own lives. To that end, students will learn about multiple aspects of intellectual conflict: psychological aspects of conflict that stand in the way of conscientious dialogue, questions about rhetoric and its role in manipulation, facing and working with our own cognitive limitations, and structuring debate and dialogue in a way that should help us make progress without simply compromising for the sake of peace. They will also practice and witness intellectual disagreements as they debate their fellow students and observe others engage in intellectual disagreement. In virtue of the complexity of the social phenomenon that is intellectual disagreement, students will be exposed to readings in multiple disciplines. Those include the disciplines of economics, statistics, history, feminist ethics, psychology, linguistics, computer science, philosophy, biology, and theology (see schedule for details). Assignments include short argumentative essays, reports on observed conflicts, and practicing and evaluating in-class debates.

3. Course Delivery

This course is a traditional face-to-face class focused on the written and spoken exchange of ideas. Students will be engaged through class discussion with the instructor with one another, as well as through comments from instructor on their written work. Weekly office hours offer additional opportunities for personal engagement with the class materials.

4. Quest 1 and Gen Ed Descriptions And Student Learning Outcomes

Quest 1 Description

Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations of essential questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society a fair one? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or to the natural world? To grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self-reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students apply approaches from the humanities to mine works for evidence, create arguments, and articulate ideas.

Quest 1 SLOs

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).
- Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).
- Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).

- Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).

Humanities Description

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOs

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in the course (Content).
- Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking).
- Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively (Communication).

Writing Description

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. The writing course grade assigned by the instructor has two components: the writing component and a course grade. **To receive writing credit a student must satisfactorily complete all the assigned written work and receive a minimum grade of C (2.0) for the course.** It is possible to not meet the writing requirement and still earn a minimum grade of C in a class, so students should review their degree audit after receiving their grade to verify receipt of credit for the writing component.

Writing Evaluation

- This course carries 2000 words that count towards the UF Writing Requirement. You must turn in all written work counting towards the 2000 words in order to receive credit for those words.
- The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written work with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support (when appropriate), style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics, using a published writing rubric (see syllabus pages 12-14).
- More specific rubrics and guidelines for individual assignments may be provided during the course of the semester.

5. Course Objectives And Goals

Student Learning Outcomes

Reflecting the curricular structures of Quest 1 and these Gen Ed designations, after taking War and Peace students will be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine disagreement and conflict of ideas within and across philosophy, history, science, politics, and religion (Content SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1)
2. Analyze and evaluate essential questions about intellectual disagreement using logic and its argument-evaluation techniques, conceptual analysis, and the historiography of ideas (Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1)
3. Analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on connections between the philosophical, historical and moral aspects of intellectual disagreement and the student's intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection SLO for Q1)
4. Develop and present clear and effective responses to disagreement and intellectual conflict in oral debates and in written format (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1).

To see how assigned work advances each SLO, go to section 9 below.

6. Texts And Materials

Assigned readings will be made available through the Canvas page for the course.

Required

All readings will be made available in PDF format on Canvas.

Recommended

1. A terrific guide to general writing rules is Strunk and White's 'The Elements of Style.' The first edition is available online for free: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>.
2. A more recent style manual is Steven Pinker's 'Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century.' The book can be found anywhere books are sold.
3. The philosopher Jim Pryor (NYU) has made his suggestions on how to read philosophy freely available [here](#); he has also published suggestions on how to write philosophy [here](#).

7. Grade Distribution And Grading Policies

1. 3 Short Written Assignments 40%
2. 1 Group Debate 30%
3. 2 Written Reports 30%
4. Study Questions
 - a. They will not be individually graded, but failure to submit more than five of them will result in a one-step grade reduction; e.g., from A to A-.
5. Writing Exercises
 - a. They will not be graded individually, but failure to submit more than four of them will result in a one-step grade reduction; e.g., from A to A-.

Grading Scale

This course will employ the following grading scale:

A	4.0	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	64-66
D-	0.67	60-63
E	0.0	0-59

More information on UF's grading policies is available [here](#).

8. Course Policies And Student Resources

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, ‘We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’ [The Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of ‘E’ for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows:

‘A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.’

Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

Making Up Work

Work is due as specified in the syllabus. Late work is subject to a one-step grade reduction for each 24 hour period it is late (e.g., a paper that would’ve earned an A if turned in on Monday becomes an A- if received Tuesday, a B+ if received Wednesday, etc., with the weekend counting as two days). This requirements is consistent with university policies that can be found [here](#).

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open

during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Use of Electronics In The Classroom

Electronic devices must be turned off and placed in closed bags for the duration of the class.

Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online [here](#) or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Participation and Attendance

You must come to class on time and prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course website. It also means bringing the day's reading to class with you. Consistent high-quality class participation—in large and small groups—is expected. 'High-quality' in this case means:

1. Informed (i.e., shows evidence of having done assigned work),
2. Thoughtful (i.e., shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in readings and other discussions), and
3. Considerate (e.g., takes the perspectives of others into account).

If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

Attendance is required and will be taken. Students who miss more than two (2) classes without proper justification will harm their grade. However, attendance in week 1, during the add-drop period, will not influence student's grade.

All students get two (2) free, no-questions-asked absences. Three (3) unjustified absences will cause your course grade to be lowered half letter grade (i.e., from B to B-, C+ to C, and so on). Four (4) unjustified absences will cause your course grade to be lowered a whole letter grade (i.e., from B to C, B- to C-, C+ to D+, and so on). Five (5) or more unjustified absences will cause you to fail the course.

These expectations are consistent with university policies that can be found [here](#).

9. Required Work

[Rubrics for all graded work and assignments are appended to the end of this syllabus.]

[Due dates for all assignments can be found in section 9 (course schedule).]

Group Debates

The class will be divided into small groups of 3- 4 people. Groups will be responsible for preparing a class discussion on an assigned topic. The goal of the presentation is for students to articulate and defend an answer (thesis) to a specific question on an assigned topic. The goal is for groups to defend a very specific proposition during the debates.

Some readings are suggested in the schedule that might help inform those debates. But those should be taken as *background* readings, in the sense that students are not expected to engage with those readings during the actual debate -- students can and need to seek out other material for that.

The questions to be addressed in the debates will be posted on the Canvas page for the course.

See the end of the syllabus for the rubric.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Short Writing Assignments

Students will write three (3) short writing assignments (800-1000 words each), which will count towards the 2000 word General Education requirement. Those assignments are *argumentative* in nature and require students to *make their own case*. Grades will be assigned accordingly.

The first short writing assignment will be on one of the topics discussed in the course. A list of prompts will be provided for this assignment

The second writing assignment will be about the topic the student debated. In it the student **must take the opposite point of view** he/she took in the debate.

The third short writing assignment will require students to elaborate on how their own understanding of intellectual disagreements changed in light of the knowledge and experiences they acquired during the course. This assignment will tie into a discussion conducted at the beginning of the course in which students are asked about what they think (then) about intellectual disagreements. The idea is that students will reflect on their own views about intellectual disagreement and how those evolved in response to the course.

No outside reading is required in order for you to complete any of these assignments. However, if you do make use of an outside reading in one of your assignments, then you must ask your instructor if the source you plan on using is in fact adequate. Failure to do so might cause your grade to incur a grade reduction, for you might include an outside reading that is not appropriate for your assignment.

All writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your UF ID number. **Do NOT include your name on the assignment.**

Each writing assignment is to be uploaded onto the course's e-learning site in Canvas. You can log in and find the course web page [here](#). Assignments will be graded electronically, and returned to you electronically. The instructor will consider allowing you to turn in an assignment late without penalty only if you have a valid and documented reason for doing so. If you turn in a paper without a valid or documented reason, 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each day it is late (including weekend days!).

See the end of the syllabus for the rubric.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Reports

Students will write two reports (800-1000 words each), which will count towards the 2000 word General Education requirement. Both reports are *diagnostic* in nature and require students to *describe the debate as they saw it*; in particular they will describe *how and why debates like the one they witnessed go awry*. Grades will be assigned accordingly.

The first report will be on a debate of the student's choosing. For example, students might attend a town hall meeting (in Gainesville), a play (e.g., at the Hippodrome Theatre), or a movie where intellectual disagreement/conflict is featured. A list with some of the movies that are relevant to this assignment can be found [here](#). A full list of movies, plays, and town hall meetings will be made available through Canvas.¹

The second report will be on one the debates occurring in the course.

In order to make sure that students will actively engage in those activities, they will need to devise an intervention describing how the intellectual disagreement they observed could have gone differently. If the disagreement they observed went awry, then their intervention should describe what participants in the disagreements could have done differently in order to prevent that from happening. If the debate goes as expected (i.e., well), then students' intervention should identify ways in which one could plausibly see it going awry and what were the key moves the participants in the disagreement made that prevented it from going awry.

All reports must include:

- a. Abstract
- b. Introduction
- c. Main body
- d. Recommendations/reflections

¹ The Spring 2020 calendar for Town Hall meetings and theater plays is not available at the time of writing (8/25/2019).

All reports must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your UF ID number. Do NOT include your name on the report.

Each report is to be uploaded onto the course's e-learning site in Canvas. You can log in and find the course web page [here](#). Assignments will be graded electronically, and returned to you electronically. The instructor will consider allowing you to turn in an assignment late without penalty only if you have a valid and documented reason for doing so. If you turn in a paper without a valid or documented reason, 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each day it is late (including weekend days!).

See end of the syllabus for the rubric.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Study Questions

Students will submit answers to study questions on the readings discussed in the course. Each set of answers is to be uploaded onto the course's e-learning site in Canvas. Answers to study questions are not individually graded (though I review them to see how well students are understanding the material). Further, if a student does not complete at least half of them (that is, at least five out of the ten assigned), he or she will incur a severe penalty: a one-step reduction of his or her otherwise final course grade, e.g. from an A to an A-. There will be ten sets of study questions during the semester. You can log in and find the course web page [here](#).

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Writing Exercises

Students will answer to prompts on Canvas and sample answers will be analyzed in class anonymously (i.e., without the instructor revealing who wrote them). Like the study questions, writing exercises are not individually graded, but if a student does not complete at least half of them (at least four out of the eight assigned), he or she will incur a severe penalty: a one-step reduction of his or her otherwise final course grade, e.g. from an A to an A-. This is independent of the penalty for not doing at least five of the study questions; a student who fails to do at least half of the study questions and fails to do at least half of the writing exercise will have a two-step reduction in his or her otherwise final course grade (e.g. from an A to a B+). There will be eight writing exercises during the semester. You can log in and find the course web page [here](#).

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

10. Course Schedule (subject to change)

1. The Problem: Fighting To Think Well

Week 1 1/7 1/9	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psychology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chapter 1 of Daniel Kahneman's <i>Thinking Fast and Slow</i> - Informal Logic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chapter 1 of Stan Baronett's <i>Logic</i> (4th edition)
	Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set 1 of study questions is due 1/9 - Writing exercise 1 is due 11:59 pm 1/9

2. Fighting Fair: Lessons From History

Week 2 1/14 1/16	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient History (eristic, and sophistry): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Sophists (https://www.iep.utm.edu/sophists/) b. A pair of arguments on good and bad (<i>Dissoi Logoi</i>) c. A passage from Plato's <i>Euthydemus</i> (275e-278e)
	Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set 2 of study questions is due 1/16

Week 3 1/21 1/23	Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient History (primary sources, 10 pages): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Plato's <i>Republic</i>, <i>Gorgias</i>, <i>Phaedrus</i>. b. Excerpts from Aristotle's <i>Rhetoric</i>
	Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing exercise 2 is due 11:59 pm 1/21 - Set 3 of study questions is due 1/23

Week 4 1/28 1/30	Readings
	- Medieval History (secondary source, 20 pages): a. Excerpts from Alex J. Novikoff's <i>The Medieval Culture of Disputation</i>
	Assignments
	- Set 4 of study questions is due 1/30

3. Fighting Fair: Lessons From Logic

Week 5 2/4 2/6	Readings
	- Informal Logic and Psychology: a. Excerpts from Jack Lyons' and Barry Ward's <i>The New Critical Thinking: An Empirically Informed Introduction</i> (5 pages) - Excerpts from David Coady's <i>What To Believe Now</i> (10 pages) - Philosophy (epistemology): a. Excerpts from Brian Frances' <i>Disagreement</i> (10 pages)
	Assignments
	- Writing exercise 3 is due 11:59 pm 2/4 - Set 5 of study questions is due 2/6 - First short written assignment is due 2/7 11:59 pm

Week 6 2/11 2/13	Readings
	- Linguistics (pragmatics): a. Excerpts from Paul Grice's <i>Logic and Conversation</i> (5 pages) b. Excerpts from Henry Frankfurt's <i>On Bullshit</i> (10 pages) - Philosophy (philosophy of language and mind): a. Excerpts from William Lycan's <i>Philosophy of Language</i> (10 pages)
	Assignments
	- Set 6 of study questions is due 2/13

Week 7 2/18 2/20	Readings
	- Philosophy (philosophy of science): a. Massimo Pigliucci's 'The demarcation problem.' (20 pages)
	Assignments
	- Writing exercise 4 is due 11:59 pm 2/18 - Set 7 of study questions is due 2/20

4. Fighting Fair: Lessons From Psychology

<p>Week 8</p> <p>2/25 2/27</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psychology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Daniel Kahneman's <i>Thinking Fast and Slow</i> (10 pages) b. Timothy D. Wilson's <i>Strangers To Ourselves: Discovering The Adaptive Unconscious</i> (10 pages)
	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing exercise 5 is due 11:59 pm 2/25 - Set 8 of study questions is due 2/27 - Second short written assignment is due 2/28 11:59 pm
<p>Week 9</p> <p>3/3 3/5</p>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>3/10 3/12</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cognitive Sciences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Gary Marcus' <i>Kluge: The Haphazard Evolution of The Human Mind</i> (15 pages) - Psychology and Biology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Hugo Mercier and Dan Sperber <i>The Enigma of Reason</i> (10 pages)
	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing exercise 6 is due 11:59 pm 3/10 - Set 9 of study questions is due 3/12 - First report is due 11:59 pm 3/13
<p>Week 11</p> <p>3/17 3/19</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psychology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Richard E. Nisbett's <i>Mindware: Tools For Smart Thinking</i> (10 pages) - Statistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Excerpts from Nassim Taleb's <i>The Black Swan</i> (10 pages)
	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set 10 of study questions is due 3/19

5. Practice In Fighting Fair

<p>Week 12</p> <p>3/17 3/19</p>	<p>Debate Topic 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Science and Religion - Some non-required background readings that are relevant to the topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biology: Excerpts from Richard Dawkins' <i>Blind Watchmaker</i> (10 pages) 2. Theology: Robin Collins' 'The Teleological Argument' (15 pages) <hr/> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing exercise 7 is due 11:59 pm 1/17 - Groups 1 and 2 debate 3/19
<p>Week 13</p> <p>3/31 4/2</p>	<p>Debate Topic 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ethics of Reproduction - Some non-required background readings that are relevant to the topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feminist Ethics: Excerpts from Christine Overall's <i>Why Have Children?</i> (10 pages) <hr/> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups 2 and 3 debate 4/2 - Groups 1 and 2 written assignments on debate topic 1 are due 11:59 pm 4/2
<p>Week 14</p> <p>4/7 4/9</p>	<p>Debate Topic 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal Basic Income - Some non-required background readings that are relevant to the topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economics: Excerpts from Philippe Van Parijs' and Yannick Vanderborght's <i>Basic Income: A Radical Proposal for a Free Society and a Sane Economy</i> (10 pages) 2. Political Philosophy: Excerpts from Robert Nozick's <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> (10 pages) <hr/> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing exercise 8 is due 11:59 pm 4/7 - Groups 4 and 5 debate 4/9 - Groups 2 and 3 written assignments on debate topic 2 are due 11:59 pm 4/9

<p>Week 15</p> <p>4/14</p> <p>4/17</p>	<p>Debate Topic 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artificial Intelligence and Existential Risk - Some non-required background readings that are relevant to the topic: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Philosophy of technology: Luciano Floridi's 'Singularitarians, Atheists, and Why the Problem with Artificial Intelligence is H.A.L. (Humanity At Large), not HAL' (4 pages) 2. Philosophy of mind: David Chalmer's 'The Singularity: A Philosophical Analysis' (10 pages) 3. Computer science: Bill Joy's 'Why The Future Doesn't Need Us' (10 pages)
	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups 6 and 7 debate 4/17 - Groups 4 and 5 written assignments on debate topic 3 are due 11:59 pm 4/17 - Third short written assignment is due 4/18 11:59 pm

<p>Week 16</p> <p>4/21</p>	<p>Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluations. - Future plans. - Overview of students' performance in the course.
	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups 7 and 8 written assignments on debate topic 4 are due 11:59 pm 4/23 - Second report is due 11:59 pm 4/24

Grading Rubric For Short Written Assignments

A	B	C	D	E
Overall, the paper does an excellent job of responding to the topic question and reflects a more than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	Overall, the paper responds well to the topic question and reflects a competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	Overall, the paper provides a merely sufficient response to the topic question and reflects a less than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.	Overall, the paper only partially responds to the topic and reflects an incompetent command of the relevant texts and materials discussed in class.	Overall, the paper does not respond to the topic and fails to draw upon relevant texts and materials discussed in class.
The introduction does an excellent job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper.	The introduction does a good enough job of identifying the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper.	The introduction does not adequately identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper.	The introduction does not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper.	The introduction does not identify the issues raised by the topic to be discussed in the rest of the paper.
The main ideas of the paper are clear and convincing.	The main ideas of the paper are for the most part clear and convincing.	The main ideas of the paper are only partially clear and convincing.	The main ideas of the paper are only marginally clear and convincing.	It is unclear what the paper's main ideas are supposed to be.
All the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material.	Almost all the content of the paper supports its main ideas with no irrelevant material.	The content of the paper generally supports its main ideas, though there is some irrelevant material.	The content of the paper tends not to support its main ideas, and there is a good deal of irrelevant material.	How the content of the paper is supposed to support its main ideas is unclear, and there is far too much irrelevant material.
The paper's claims are all well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	The paper's claims are generally well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	Only some of the paper's claims are well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.	None of the interpretations on which the paper's claims are based are cogent.	None of the paper's claims are based on interpretations of the relevant textual evidence.
The argument advances in a manner that is easy to follow.	The argument advances in a manner that is for the most part easy to follow.	The argument is difficult to follow in places.	The argument is difficult to follow or incomplete.	The argument is very difficult to follow.
<p>Grammar: Grammatical errors will incur deductions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper formation of plurals and possessives (-2 points) • Failure of agreement between subject and verb (- 2 points) • Run---on sentence (<i>Basic Grammar</i> §2) (- 4 points) • Unclear Pronoun Reference (<i>Basic Grammar</i> §4) (- 2 points) • Confusion of <i>it's</i> and <i>its</i> (- 2 points) • Sentence fragment (<i>Basic Grammar</i> §1) (- 4 points) • Faulty Modification (<i>Basic Grammar</i> §3) (- 2 points) • Faulty Parallelism (<i>Basic Grammar</i> §5) (- 2 points) 				

Grading Rubric For Reports

	A	B	C	D	E
A D E Q U A C Y	The report does an excellent job describing the disagreement the student observed, and how that disagreement unfolded.	The report does a good job describing the disagreement the student observed, and how that disagreement unfolded.	The report provides a merely sufficient description of the disagreement the student observed, and how that disagreement unfolded.	The report provides less than sufficient description of the disagreement the student observed, and how that disagreement unfolded	The report does not describe the disagreement the student observed, and how that disagreement unfolded.
A C C U R A C Y	<p>The report reflects a more than competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.</p> <p>The report's claims are all well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the disagreement.</p> <p>The report contains no irrelevant material.</p>	<p>The report reflects a competent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.</p> <p>The report's claims are almost all well-grounded in cogent interpretations of the disagreement.</p> <p>The report contains no clearly irrelevant material</p>	<p>The report reflects a stilted command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.</p> <p>Some of the report's claims are positively ill-founded, and its interpretation of the disagreement is unsound in places.</p> <p>The report contains some clearly irrelevant material</p>	<p>The report reflects a mostly incompetent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.</p> <p>Most of the report's claims are positively ill-founded, and its interpretation of the disagreement is unsound in most places.</p> <p>Much of the material in the report is clearly irrelevant.</p>	<p>The report reflects an incompetent command of the relevant texts and material discussed in class.</p> <p>The report's claims are all ill-grounded in interpretations of the disagreement.</p> <p>The report contains mainly irrelevant material.</p>
F O R M	<p>The abstract does an excellent job summarizing both the events to be described in the report, and the conclusion/reflection.</p> <p>The main body of the report is clear, informative, and easy to follow.</p> <p>The conclusion contains a clear evaluation of the facts in the report, and those facts persuasively support the author's evaluation of those facts.</p> <p>The report is proofread and free of grammatical/spelling mistakes.</p>	<p>The abstract does a good job summarizing both the events to be described in the report, and the conclusion/reflection.</p> <p>The main body of the report is mostly clear, informative, and easy to follow.</p> <p>The conclusion contains a mostly clear evaluation of the facts in the report, and those facts support the author's evaluation of those facts.</p> <p>The report is proofread and free of significant grammatical/spelling mistakes.</p>	<p>For the most part, the abstract sufficiently summarizes both the events to be described in the report, and the conclusion/reflection.</p> <p>The main body of the report is, at places, unclear, uninformative, or hard to follow.</p> <p>The conclusion contains a somewhat unclear evaluation of the facts in the report, and some of those facts do not seem to support the author's evaluation of them.</p> <p>The report is only partially proofread and it contains some significant grammatical/spelling mistakes.</p>	<p>The abstract mostly fails to summarize both the events to be described in the report, and the conclusion/reflection.</p> <p>The main body of the report is mostly unclear, uninformative, or hard to follow.</p> <p>The conclusion contains a mostly unclear evaluation of the facts in the report, and most (or all) of those facts do not seem to support the author's evaluation of them.</p> <p>The report is mostly not proofread and it contains many significant grammatical/spelling mistakes.</p>	<p>The abstract does not summarize the events to be described in the report or the conclusion/reflection.</p> <p>The main body of the report is unclear, uninformative, and hard to follow.</p> <p>The conclusion does not evaluate the facts in the report.</p> <p>The report is not proofread and contains many significant grammatical/spelling mistakes.</p>

Grading Rubric For Oral Presentation (Debate)²

		A	B	C	D	E
K N O W L E D G E	Appropriateness	The speaker fulfills or exceeds all of the assigned content requirements.	The speaker fulfills the important content requirements of the assignment.	The speaker fulfills some of the important content requirements of the assignment.	The speaker fulfills few of the important content requirements of the assignment.	The speaker fails to address the important content requirements of the assignment.
	Accuracy	The speaker's knowledge of the subject is accurate throughout.	The speaker's knowledge of the subject is accurate throughout except in minor details.	The speaker's knowledge of the subject is generally accurate, though flawed.	The speaker's knowledge of the subject is somewhat accurate, though flawed.	The speaker's knowledge of the subject is generally inaccurate.
	Extensiveness	The speaker exhibits convincing range and quality of knowledge, having done appropriate research, if applicable.	The speaker seems informed on the subject, having done appropriate research, if applicable.	The speaker exhibits limited range or quality of knowledge, having done minimal appropriate research, if applicable.	The speaker exhibits very little range or quality of knowledge, having done minimal or no appropriate research, if applicable.	The speaker's knowledge of the subject lacks range or quality.
	Perspective	The information presented reveals the speaker's assimilation and understanding of the material. When appropriate, the speaker is convincingly aware of alternative points of view AND of implications beyond the immediate subject.	The information presented reveals the speaker's assimilation and understanding of view OR of implications beyond the immediate subject.	The information presented reveals that the speaker has only partially assimilated or understood the material. When appropriate, the speaker shows some awareness of alternative points of view OR of implications beyond the immediate subject	The information presented reveals that the speaker has assimilated or understood very little of the material. When appropriate, the speaker shows very little awareness of alternative points of view OR of implications beyond the immediate subject	The information presented reveals the speaker's failure to assimilate or to understand the material.

² Adapted from <http://ipr.sc.edu/effectiveness/criteria/oral.htm>.

		A	B	C	D	E
A U D I E N C E	Developme nt	The speaker's explanations and uses of evidence, illustrations, or other definitive details are highly appropriate for the listeners.	The speaker's explanations and uses of evidence, illustrations, or other definitive details are highly appropriate for the listeners.	The speaker makes some attempt to provide evidence, illustrations, or other definitive details for the listeners, but some information is either extraneous or insufficient.	The speaker makes little attempt to provide evidence, illustrations, or other definitive details for the listeners, and the little information provided is either extraneous or insufficient.	The speaker generally lacks an awareness of the listeners, for the discussion lacks evidence, illustrations, or other definitive details.
	Language	The speaker's word choices clearly demonstrate an awareness of the listeners. The language seems deliberately chosen to aid the listeners' understanding of the subject (including definitions where appropriate).	The speaker's word choices demonstrate an awareness of the listeners. The language is consistent and seems generally appropriate to the listeners' understanding of the subject (including definitions where appropriate).	The speaker's word choices indicate an awareness of the listeners, but the identity of the listeners is either unclear or inappropriate in some respects. Although the vocabulary seems fairly consistent, the language seems chosen more for the speaker's convenience than for the listeners' understanding.	The speaker's word choices indicate little awareness of the listeners, and the identity of the listeners is either unclear or inappropriate in many respects. The vocabulary is partially inconsistent, and the language chosen is mainly for the speaker's convenience rather than for the listeners' understanding.	The speaker's word choices fail to reflect an awareness of the listeners, because either the vocabulary or the reference to the listeners is inconsistent or inappropriate.
	Emphasis	The speaker's discussion or argumentation is consistently clear and appropriate to the listeners and to the purpose. In emphasizing important points, the speaker uses evidence logically and carefully.	The speaker's discussion or argumentation is generally clear and appropriate to the listeners and to the purpose. In emphasizing important points, the speaker generally uses evidence logically and carefully.	The speaker's discussion or argumentation is generally clear or appropriate to the listeners and to the purpose, but may be lacking in some aspect of the use of logic or evidence.	The speaker's discussion or argumentation is somewhat unclear or inappropriate to the listeners and to the purpose, and may be lacking in many aspects of the use of logic or evidence.	The speaker's discussion or argumentation is generally unclear or inappropriate to the listeners and to the purpose. The presentation lacks emphasis, or is seriously defective in the use of logic or evidence.
	Feedback-Monitoring	The speaker monitors the audience's responses and adapts the presentation accordingly.	The speaker monitors the audience's responses and adapts the presentation accordingly.	The speaker's interaction with the audience is limited.	The speaker's interaction with the audience is mostly limited.	The speaker fails to monitor the audience's responses.

		A	B	C	D	E
O R G A N I Z A T I O N	Structure	The speaker focuses and orders the material to convey a unified point or effect.	The speaker focuses and orders the material to convey a generally unified point or effect.	The speaker provides some focus or order to the material, but this structure is somewhat unclear.	The speaker provides little focus or order to the material, and this structure is mostly unclear.	The speaker provides no focus or order to the material.
	Coherence	The speaker provides clear and consistent movement within and between major points and from beginning to end.	The speaker provides movement within and between major points and from beginning to end.	The speaker provides movement within and between major points and from beginning to end, but this movement is at times either unclear or awkward.	The speaker provides little movement within and between major points and from beginning to end, but this movement is mostly unclear or awkward.	The speaker provides no movement within and between the major points and from beginning to end.
	Introduction	The speaker's opening comments attempt to reveal the purpose and major points of the presentation and motivate the audience to listen.	The speaker's opening comments attempt to reveal the purpose and major points of the presentation and motivate the audience to listen.	The speaker's opening comments attempt to reveal the purpose and major points of the presentation and motivate the audience to listen, but in doing so the approach seems somewhat artificial, weak, or unimaginative.	The speaker's opening comments partially attempt to reveal the purpose and major points of the presentation and motivate the audience to listen, but in doing so the approach seems mostly artificial, weak, or unimaginative.	The speaker's opening comments are either inappropriate to the presentation, or they are unlikely to motivate the audience to listen.
	Conclusion	The speaker's concluding comments are strong both in reemphasizing the purpose and major points of the presentation and in leaving the audience with an appropriate closing statement.	The speaker's concluding comments are appropriately related to the purpose and major points of the presentation, but they are not very strong or emphatic.	The speaker's concluding comments are related to the purpose and major points of the presentation, but they either bring in extraneous information or are unnecessarily redundant.	The speaker's concluding comments are mostly unrelated to the purpose and major points of the presentation, and they either bring in extraneous information or are unnecessarily redundant.	The speaker closes the presentation either abruptly with no apparent concluding statement or with inappropriate remarks.

		A	B	C	D	E
E N U N C I A T I O N	Clarity	Appropriate pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, and pace throughout. The speaker sounds genuinely interested in the topic. Delivery appears spontaneous throughout; notes may assist but do not interrupt or control delivery.	Appropriate pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, and pace are generally maintained, but occasionally the speaker's voice is lacking somewhat in the appropriate enthusiasm or energy level. Delivery appears spontaneous throughout; notes may assist but do not interrupt or control delivery. A few empty vocalizations are noticeable but are not distracting.	Enunciation is hampered by occasional lazy articulation (such as slurring or run-together words); some inappropriateness of pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, or pace may be noticeable, but such instances do not seriously hinder the speaker's audibility. Delivery generally appears spontaneous, but some moments of apparent recitation, reading of notes, or reference to notes occasionally interrupt. Empty vocalizations are somewhat distracting.	Enunciation is mostly hampered by lazy articulation (such as slurring or run-together words); inappropriateness of pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, or pace is noticeable, and such instances seriously hinder the speaker's audibility. Delivery rarely appears spontaneous, with obvious moments of recitation, reading of notes, or reference to notes occasionally interrupt. Empty vocalizations often distract.	Inappropriate or ineffective enunciation, pronunciation, volume, pitch, inflection, or pace seriously hinder the speaker's audibility or obstruct communication with the audience. Reading of or reference to notes, recitation, inappropriate display or lack of energy level, or empty vocalizations adversely affect the vocal delivery.

	A	B	C	D	E
D E M E A N O R	The speaker looks genuinely interested; facial expressions are consistently compatible with spoken content; physical presentation is appropriate and purposeful in enhancing the speakers comments; body movements and gestures are natural, appropriate, and relaxed; eye contact with the audience consistently maintained.	The speaker appears interested; facial expressions are consistently compatible with spoken content. Body movements and gestures are usually natural, appropriate, and relaxed. Any nervous movements do not interfere with the presentation. Any lack of eye contact is only momentary.	The speakers facial expressions seem either limited or occasionally incompatible with the spoken content. Inappropriate body movements or gestures are occasionally noticeable but do not obstruct communication. For the most part, the speaker maintains eye contact with the audience, but the inconsistency in eye contact is somewhat distracting.	The speakers facial expressions is somewhat limited and occasionally incompatible with the spoken content. Inappropriate body movements or gestures are often noticeable and do sometimes obstruct communication. The speaker rarely maintains eye contact with the audience, which is distracting.	The speaker's facial expressions are clearly limited and incompatible with the spoken content. Poor posture, distracting or inappropriate body movements or gestures, or lack of eye contact interferes with the delivery.
W O R D C H O I C E	The speaker chooses words and expressions for both maximum clarity and variety; the speaker manifests no grammatical errors; the speaker's sentence structure manifests stylistic strengths -- that is, the sentence structures distinctively create emphasis, dramatic impact, or more effective listening.	The speaker's word choices and expressions achieve both clarity and at least some distinctiveness; the speaker manifests no grammatical errors.	The speaker's expressions are accurate and clear, but rarely distinctive. An occasional sentence structure or grammatical error is noticeable.	The speaker's expressions are rarely accurate, clear or distinctive. The speaker's meaning is often muddled or his/her credibility undercut by distracting faults in sentence structure or usage.	The speaker's expressions are mostly inaccurate, unclear, and rarely distinctive. The speaker's meaning is mostly muddled and his/her credibility is often undercut by distracting faults in sentence structure or usage.

	A	B	C	D	E
L I S T E N I N G S K I L L S	The student's evident active attention to oral communications of others encourages further communication; student recognizes responsibilities for listening and for gaining clarification of incomplete communication. The student demonstrates an accurate and thorough understanding of communication content through oral and written responses.	The student's active attention to oral communications of others provides visual feedback to the other of respect and interest; the student's responses indicate understanding of information, opinions and ideas presented orally.	The student listens with physical and mental attention to oral presentation of others and demonstrates the understanding of the major points or threads of an argument through appropriate oral or written response.	The student's attention often lacks focus and is reflected in written or oral responses where meanings and information are mostly incomplete or inaccurately understood.	The student's attention lacks focus and is reflected in written or oral responses where meanings and information are incomplete or inaccurately understood.