

Blog Assignment

Because this class awards four credit hours and meets for only three hours per week, Emory requires an extra online component to supplement our in-class time that ostensibly stands in for an extra hour of class. With this in mind, we will have a classroom blog to which all students will be required to post weekly. You will also be required to post responses to other students' posts so that we can continue our conversations outside of the classroom.

Blog posts should be a chance to reflect on the course themes in general, connect the readings to other interests, classes, or experiences, thoughtfully present and reflect on your personal opinions regarding education, and work through questions inspired by our discussion. These posts should relate to our class themes, but can stray from our material in order to bring in other outside resources: books, theorists, stories, news, videos, poems, films, etc. These posts are an opportunity to be creative and reflective, and are a chance to think about your personal connection to the material.

While these posts may be of a more personal nature content-wise, and of a more casual writing style, they should still be professional, thoughtful, and critical. This is not an easy task. Blending our professional and personal voices to produce something interesting yet still polished will take practice, but is immensely useful: many successful blogs employ this style, and sections of investigative reporting, memoirs, essays, etc. I'm sure you can think of other examples.

Weekly Posts:

Students will be required to post weekly to the class blog by **8 A.M. Monday** morning each week, unless otherwise noted in the schedule. These posts should be approximately 250-500 words long.

They should be on a topic clearly related to the themes of the course: knowledge, education, and identity, and the relationship between the three. They can focus on outside materials, personal experiences, or opinions, but must be polished pieces that include support for your positions when applicable, proper citation of sources, and clear articulation of how your idea, story, or connection relates to something covered in our course.

Occasionally over the semester I will provide a more focused prompt for your blog posts, or require you to respond to a particular question or incorporate an example or piece of media in your post. I will announce these details ahead of time.

Weekly Comments:

Two comments on others' blog posts will also be due weekly, by **8 A.M. on Wednesday and 8 A.M. on Friday**. If a post already has several comments, I highly encourage you to respond to another post so that we can engage with everyone's ideas in class. I also encourage you to use one of your comments (most likely the one due by Friday) to respond to a comment made on your post, if possible. Many of these comments will include questions, suggestions, or critiques, and it will improve your own thinking and writing to respond to those directed at your work.

Rubric for Blog Posts and Comments

Blog Posts

3 – Will exhibit most of the following: Follows the guidelines set forth in the syllabus and directions given for that specific week’s post if provided; presents thoughtful reflection or critique of material or ideas explicitly related to class themes; asks critical questions; provides evidence for positions (refers to specific places in source material or clear connections to provided anecdotal accounts); writing is grammatically correct and flows well; thoughts and connections are clear; writing is engaging and interesting; strikes a good balance between “professional” and “personal” tone.

2 – Will exhibit some of the following: Follows all guidelines and specific directions, but does not clearly articulate a relation to course themes or ideas presented in readings or class discussions; ideas are muddled and positions are asserted without explanation or sufficient support; presents the ideas found in a source text accurately but does not provide own interpretation or critique of the ideas or explain why they are meaningful; too casual in tone; has significant grammatical problems.

1 – Will exhibit some of the following: Does not follow guidelines or specific instructions adequately; lack of significant engagement or thoughtful reflection; little or unclear connection to course themes; asks no questions, takes no positions, and provides little insight into why what is being discussed is meaningful; does not provide support for ideas; has severe structural or grammatical problems and weak transitions.

0 – Turned in late; does not follow guidelines or instructions; has no connection to course.

Blog Comments

1 – Asks a question, provides a substantial assessment of what the poster did well, or tells why or why not commenter agrees with a position or observation. Adds something new and does not merely agree or congratulate the poster on a job well done.

0 – Does not do the above. A repeated problem despite discussion with instructor.