INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

“Tragic Love Stories: Ancient and Early Modern” is a First Year Seminar (FYS) that I developed at Wake Forest University. The FYS program was developed to be:

- an intense intellectual interchange, both written and oral, in a seminar setting in which all participate...in critical thinking and analysis of arguments. [Seminars] should include discussion and debate on issues, examination of opposing viewpoints...and written and oral assignments that force students to make explicit their ideas and thoughts...

Every first year student must pass an FYS course; each seminar contains approximately 10-18 students. Three interrelated factors weighed heavily upon my development of this course: 1) as a Classicist, I wanted to expose students to seminal sources of our discipline without assuming prior knowledge, while also avoiding complete overlap with other offerings of our department; 2) my experience with survey courses as both a student and instructor has been that they too often err in the direction of a mile wide and an inch deep; 3) I wanted to pique the students’ interest with some link to modernity. The general FYS parameters requiring critical intensive reading and writing, combined with my own particular concerns led to exploring a course based upon a study of archetypal narratives. I ultimately chose to study the tragic love story. This archetypal narrative transcends time and genre, and its sources consist of a host of media in which both breadth and depth of study might be achieved.

The bulk of the course was focused around four relationships whose earliest expressions are Greco-Roman: Pyramus and Thisbe, Orpheus and Eurydice, Dido and Aeneas, and Antony and Cleopatra. The four relationships themselves offer distinctive points of departure as their Greco-Roman context represent myth proper (Pyramus and Thisbe; Orpheus and Eurydice), a founding legend (Dido and Aeneas), and an historical couple (Antony and Cleopatra). Numerous productions, versions, and variations of these relationships in the medieval and early modern eras have further promoted these stories. Each relationship became its own section in the course. Before continuing further the description, goals, content, and format of the course, I should, for the sake of the reader, briefly give an idea of the scope of the course itself.

For Pyramus and Thisbe we read Ovid’s story as it appears in his *Metamorphoses* IV.55-166, studied the famous paintings of Waterhouse and Pagani, read Chaucer’s *Good Women: Thisbe*, and read Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*—which includes a brief retelling of Pyramus and Thisbe. For Orpheus and Eurydice we read Apollonius, a Greek author, studied Greek vases depicting Orpheus and/or Eurydice, read Virgil’s account in the *Georgics*, Ovid’s in the *Metamorphoses* books X-XI, and read Plato’s version of this myth in his * Symposium*. For Dido and Aeneas we read selections from the *Aeneid*, Chaucer’s *Good Women: Dido*, watched Purcell’s opera *Dido and Aeneas*, and read Marlowe’s *Dido Queen of Carthage*. For Antony and Cleopatra we read Horace’s ode about Cleopatra, studied Roman coins featuring Antony and Cleopatra, read Plutarch’s *Antony* (in which Cleopatra is also featured heavily), read selections from Ovid’s *Heroides*, and read Dryden’s *All for Love*. We then concluded the course with two
famous medieval (tragic) love stories: Tristan and Isolde (by Gottfried and Thomas; additionally we watched Wagner’s magisterial opera *Tristan und Isolde*) and Lancelot and Guinevere (Chrétien de Troyes). These stories emanate from the classical traditions of our four main relationships and share many commonalities otherwise.

This seminar exposed students to foundational narratives of ancient and early modern tragic love stories through a variety of media but with an emphasis on literature. Because I was teaching first year undergraduate students, I was particularly excited to include the often neglected fine arts, including operas, sculptures, and paintings, but the cultural material of vases and coins as well. A Near-Eastern story and two medieval romances bookend the course to offer a breadth of exposure to various times and cultures but also illustrate the continuity of human concerns across time, though they do admittedly represent Eurocentric sources. Encountering these highly emotive narratives in multifarious media allowed for concentrated inquiry into long-standing concerns of humanity, while addressing broad critical and historical issues associated with each source.

One of the hurdles for students in survey courses is merely learning the elemental aspects of character names and plots of each new story. However, by limiting the content of the course to four relationships, the students were able to focus on the distinctions between the variety of genres, media, and contexts of the sources studied. On the one hand, the familiarity with the characters and plots bred confidence, however, the variations and diachronic representations offered fresh stimulation and welcomed change. Normally, traversing the different literary genres of classical literature alone is a difficult challenge for beginning students, but thanks to the limited content, this class effectively understood the conceptual differences, strengths, and limitations of the classical sources that we studied, including epic, didactic, lyric, and Alexandrian poetry as well as philosophical prose.

The variety of media including the study of coins, sculptures, paintings, and operas allowed for interdisciplinary discourse of surprising depth surrounding the critical issues and transcendent qualities of these narratives. Furthermore, as each new artifact was studied, the class also considered its context of composition. Thus, the students not only synthesized historical eras but engaged in cross-cultural dialogue by examining prior ones.

From a humanistic perspective, these stories offer varying perspectives on both love and tragedy, themes which often evoke humanity’s most emotive reactions. Studying these stories not only broadened the students’ rhetorical knowledge of powerful and influential cultural artifacts but increased their capacity for sympathy and ultimately augmented their understanding of the human condition. One aspect of the course, which seems obvious now but was not purely weighed in its development, was made apparent to me when reading the student reviews of the course after the semester. The students, almost unanimously, appreciated the opportunity to consider themes such as love and lust, selfishness and altruism, and common obstacles to relationships within ancient and early modern narratives because it allowed them to explore philosophically many of the same sensations and concerns that they were encountering in their first weeks on a college campus. Their feedback reminded me of recent studies on the use of classical literature for psychologically therapeutic gains. * Ultimately, I see the value too, through the reported outcomes of this course, in studying highly emotive works, charged with love and loss as students move away from their guardians and into more volatile, independent, living situations.

* For example, the federally funded program (Pentagon) of “Theater of War” has been performed over 250 times to 50,000 service members and veterans in order to begin a dialogue of shared experiences, allowing them to see, digest, and discuss their own issues in the third person. Similarly, the “Voices of Veterans” programs, run by Michael Meade, runs myth-filled retreats for veterans suffering from PTSD. The positive results of both programs are staggering with anecdotal and statistical data that supports the therapeutic value of this approach.
where the realities of behavioral and relational decisions have an intensely new and profound effect on their daily lives.

My original goals, however, pursuant with the aims of an FYS at Wake Forest University were to study powerful and influential narratives through a variety of media allowing the students to hone their hermeneutical skills, engage in meaningful discussion with peers concerning traditional academic inquiries and profound human issues, and improve their academic writing.

The format of the class was largely discussion-based led and moderated by me, the instructor. For each class, the students were assigned a set reading. At the beginning of the class I encouraged students to pose any questions they may have about the reading. If the question pertained to that day’s topics of discussion, we waited to address it until the other questions were answered. The discussions were directed by questions and issues that I posed related to that day’s reading. The class discussion, with my interpolations, developed to ensure the greatest comprehensiveness possible in a given session.

Because the course studied media beyond my expertise, I invited scholars from other departments when we ventured into the fine arts of painting and operas. These professors would provide an introductory lesson to lead into the reading/studying/viewing of a given medium. Having outside scholars engage the students not only changed the pace within the classroom but offered a more rigorous scholarly approach to these artifacts than I would have otherwise been able to provide. We met face-to-face two times a week for an hour and fifteen minutes. Portions of some classes were designated for organized debate on a particular issue to promote the construction of reasoned expression for a position not necessarily embraced by personal conviction.

While this syllabus was designed explicitly for the FYS, I think with some minor tweaks it could serve as the basis for a general literature course through any number of departments. Also, I named the course “Tragic Love Stories: Ancient and Early Modern” to attract interest from students likely familiar with the burgeoning field of recent novels and films that feature dystopias and tragic love stories. The more popular books and films such as *Hunger Games*, *Twilight*, and *Divergent* likely fed into their interest for this class, but I did not assign these works as part of the curriculum (nor were they tested on them or expected to know them). In fact, no recently modern texts from the 20/21st century were assigned. Many of the students had, in fact, read the above recent stories (and/or watched the movies) and occasionally alluded to them by way of comparison in the classroom discussions. While I tended to steer classroom conversations away from these works, they were occasionally useful markers (for many of the students who had read them) that underscored the staying power of the themes and formulae of the narratives that we were studying.

Overall, the course was at once an introduction to humanities, fine arts, and material culture. They received an overview of history from the Greco-Roman ages to the Italian Renaissance. New modes, genres, and media constantly offered change and stimulation, along with a desired breadth. Yet, by limiting our investigations to four primary relationships, the students’ familiarity with recurring characters and plots allowed for depth in their investigations of the similarities and differences of the same stories from varying sources. The stories were quickly familiar, which allowed insightful questions, illuminating discussion, and deep exploration as they were exposed to foundational human achievements in literature, art and culture spanning the intellectually formative millennia of “Western” history.

The annotated syllabus below provides a brief course description for the students, expected learning outcomes, the required texts, a detailed course schedule, examples of in-class activities, prompts, assignments and their descriptions, grading policies, procedures, and rubrics, and a substantial bibliography for research and further reading.
SYLLABUS: FIRST YEAR SEMINAR (FYS) – TRAGIC LOVE STORIES: ANCIENT AND EARLY MODERN

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is focused around four relationships whose earliest expressions are Greco-Roman: Pyramus and Thisbe, Orpheus and Eurydice, Dido and Aeneas, and Antony and Cleopatra. Numerous productions, versions, and variations of these relationships within different types of media in the medieval and early modern eras have further promoted these stories. Each relationship represents its own section in the course, which is unified by the theme of tragic love stories. That said, not all of the stories adhere to a single definition of tragedy, and this ambiguity will guide our thinking and discussion of definitions of both “love” and “tragedy”. Sometimes, the exceptions will help prove the rules. A Near-Eastern source and early medieval stories bookend the chosen relationships of focus to offer both a breadth of exposure to various times and cultures but also to note continuity in human concerns across epochs and cultures, though they are markedly Eurocentric.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is reading and writing intensive, pursuant with the goals of an FYS offering. The goals of this particular course are to study powerful and influential narratives through a variety of media allowing you to hone your hermeneutical skills, engage in meaningful discussion with peers concerning traditional academic inquiries and profound human issues, and improve your academic writing. Overall, you will be exposed to literature, art, and material culture including but not limited to operas, paintings, Greek vases, and Roman coins. Each of these productions require tools of reading similar to but also different from, a text. If you complete the entirety of coursework, you can expect to have improved your ability to read, listen to, and intellectually wrestle with great artists and thinkers of the past (from various cultures and backgrounds, nonetheless), while also having engaged in reasonably expressing your own thoughts and ideas through the delivery of oral and written compositions.

Art is often ambiguous. You will be exposed to a great variety of art; we cannot cover every topic or issue, scholastic or otherwise, which these works raise. Your mere exposure to these works during the formative years of your college education is perhaps the greatest value of this course. The various methods of interpretation—developed by readers and critics over time, some of which you will learn—are essentially different lenses to aid you in your exploration. The artist needs ambiguity for the prismatic effect of the productions. Some shine more brightly than others. In light of this, and to mirror in class what we experience through art: some (though by no means all) of the prompts are purposefully ambiguous. It is in the process of parsing, brainstorming and narrowing of ambiguous questions that we can experience a sharpening of our own thoughts and intellect through the medium of academic expression. I will not make these prompts “clearer”. I will, however, offer you some latitude in the direction you decide to take your answer. Moving from ambiguous to clear, particularly when discussing artifacts of renowned ambiguity and nuance, is an important educative process. The more exposure you have to these grand works of art, and the more you graciously listen to the manifold interpretations of your peers and the scholarly community, the more you will learn to embrace ambiguity, and then to wrestle with it. Think of art as the living parable of Proteus, the god capable of changing shapes. Though he constantly morphs, he is neither formless nor uncatchable, however evolving and elusive he may seem.
REQUIRED TEXTS:


*8) Course Pack: The Course Pack consists of the readings from Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Plato, Plutarch and Apollonius Rhodes, using published translations from the public domain, which I modified into modern vernacular and readable English.

GRADING:

I will use the standard ten-point grading scale, with the three numbers at the top and bottom of the decade as plus and minus. The weighted formula for determining grades follows:

The four short papers (1000 words) will account for 50% of your grade (12.5% each)

Your oral presentation will account for 15%

The final creative project will account for 25%

Class attendance and participation will account for 10%

Class participation:

There are 26 class periods of expected preparation and attendance, not including the first day of class. Each class is worth 4 points, allowing for 104 points. The following table explains my justification for the assignation of 0-4 points for a given day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance (if you are late, you only qualify for 1-3 points)</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 points if you do not attend class or</td>
<td>you make inappropriate and/or disruptive comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 point if you attend but...</td>
<td>are not prepared and do not participate</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 points if you attend but...</td>
<td>are only partially prepared and/or have sparing contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 points if you attend and...</td>
<td>are fully prepared, but perhaps your participation is only occasional, marked by distraction or disinterest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 points if you attend, are on time and...</td>
<td>are fully prepared, engaged as an appropriate listener and speaker, and your contributions are marked by thoughtful consideration of that day’s assignment prior to class</td>
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*Participation includes both listening and speaking, in an appropriately engaged manner.*
ESSAYS:

In accordance with the aims of the FYS, this course will be writing intensive to increase the students’ ability for critical thinking, mechanical competency in writing, and reasoned expression. Each student will produce four papers of 1000 words in length. Periodically throughout the semester you will be required to produce shorter essays of 300 words for both constructive practice in composition and to ensure preparedness for classroom discussions; these essays will receive constructive criticism and feedback from the instructor but will not be graded. There is a 10% window +/- for word counts; turning in work with a word count outside of that window will result in the loss of a letter grade. All papers must be formatted with the following conventions: only first and last name, page number, and a short title in the top right as a header, 12point, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, 0 pt spacing for “before and after”, and double spacing between lines. Failure to produce this format will result in the loss of a letter grade. Producing products according to prescribed conventions will be a requirement not only in your life as a college student but in your lives after college as well. It is the mark of a good student, employee, and citizen to note the rules and follow them.

ORAL PRESENTATION:

Each student once during the semester will be assigned a particular prompt related to that week’s topic and will conduct a formal but brief (15 minute) oral presentation using PowerPoint. On the second day of class, each student will sign up for a prompt on a given date. Each student will need to write their name and the date of their presentation at the top of their provided rubric. On the date of your presentation, you will hand me your rubric, which I will use to grade your presentation. (The rubric can be found at the end of the syllabus)

FINAL CREATIVE PROJECT:

The final project will be a rudimentary story-board created by each student of their ultimate tragic love story. Each story-board must include a setting, characters, timeline and general plot. The story-board will be appended with citations of influences from the stories we have discussed in class. If your story mirrors in any way the narratives we have discussed, then note those similarities. Likewise, discuss where you depart from the narratives we have studied and why.

* This assignment was a particularly successful capstone for the class. There are numerous helpful guides to creating a story-board available online, which I indicated to the students. The project initially sounds difficult, but as I told my students, they were welcome to create a virtual “greatest hits” or amalgamation to produce their perfect tragic love story. They were encouraged to take freely from the assigned readings for setting, characters, plot, etc., but they were required to justify their choices in a typed document that they turned in to me along with their story-board. Many of the students’ work transitioned in the process from simply recapitulating various strains from different sources (including literature, paintings, and the operas) into producing a well thought-out, almost “original” story. Once invested in the creative process, they exhibited considerable reflection as to why or why not they chose certain features from our sources of study. The creative aspect led to them taking ownership of their choices in a highly critical and analytical manner. I do not think I could have received the same effort and outcomes if I had merely assigned a final paper. Ultimately, the project served as a review of the course, while also requiring a final element of reasoned expression through the story-board poster and appended document.
REQUIREMENTS:

Complete all assignments, engage in appropriate class participation, write four graded papers, and complete the final creative project due at the time prescribed by the exam schedule. My policy on attendance and the honor code is that of the University: please see the sections in the Wake Forest Bulletin on “Class Attendance” and “Honor System”.

CLASS READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

Readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned.

WEEK 1

Day 1: Welcome and Introduction

WEEK 2

Day 1: Near Eastern/Semitic story of Samson and Delilah

Set Reading:  Judges 13-16 (readily available online)

*In Class Activity: we listened to Regina Spektor’s song Samson and discussed its similarities to and divergences from the Hebrew text.

* I provided a brief historical introduction to Ovid and Chaucer (and did the same throughout the semester at the end of a class for each new author as needed). The students were also told to read the introductions to the authors/works that they were assigned to supplement their awareness of historical context etc.

Day 2: Pyramus and Thisbe

Set Reading:  Course pack: Ovid, Meta. IV.55-166; Chaucer, Good Women: Thisbe

WEEK 3

Day 1: Pyramus and Thisbe

*Guest lecture — Art History Department

*In class viewing of Waterhouse and Pagani

Set Reading:  Begin Midsummer Night’s Dream

Day 2: Pyramus and Thisbe

Set Reading:  Finish Midsummer Night’s Dream

Student Presentation Prompt 1: What’s the role of comedy in this romantic plotline?

WEEK 4

Day 1: Orpheus and Eurydice

*Brief Lecture: Who is Orpheus? And: Brief introduction to ancient sources

Assignment:  Paper 1 due next meeting

In Class Activity: Viewing and analysis of Greek vases
Day 2: **Paper 1 Due: Prompt**: How does the genre of the primary source affect the narrative? Consider – are the tragic elements greater or less in a certain genre?

*I told the students their first paper was due this day but collected them then handed them back out for a writing workshop in which they peer reviewed each other’s papers and were then given a chance to add corrections/suggestions before turning them in the next class.

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**WEEK 5**

Day 1: Orpheus and Eurydice

**Set Reading:** Course Pack - Apollonius, Argonautica (selections); Virgil, Georgics bk. 4 (selection); Plato’s Symposium (selection)

*Student Presentation Prompt 2:* How and/or why do Apollonius, Virgil, and Plato differ in their presentation of Orpheus?

Day 2: Orpheus and Eurydice – and the inclusion of a homoerotic tragedy.

**Set Reading:** Course Pack - Ovid, Meta. X-XI

*Ovid, through Orpheus, tells the story of Apollo and Hyacinthus, a homoerotic tragedy. The other relationships read and studied in this course are heterosexual, but in the midst of the story of Orpheus and Eurydice we find the tale of homoerotic love. This class lecture and discussion approaches the issue of homosexual relationships in antiquity. I provide by lecture other examples of homoerotic relationships in “classical” texts. The class then briefly discusses this homoerotic example in view of previously read and discussed relationships.

*Student Presentation Prompt 3:* How does the story of Apollo and Hyacinth function within the narrative of Orpheus and Eurydice?

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**WEEK 6**

Day 1: Dido and Aeneas

**Set Reading:** Course Pack - Virgil, Aeneid (selections); Chaucer, Good Women: Dido

*Student Presentation Prompt 4:* What are the qualities of Aeneas? Are these different from previous male subjects?

Day 2: Dido and Aeneas

**Set Reading:** Marlowe, Dido Queen of Carthage

*Student Presentation Prompt 5:* How does Marlowe “receive” Virgil?

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**WEEK 7**

Day 1: Dido and Aeneas

*Guest Lecture from Music Department*
**Assignment:** Purcell’s Opera, *Dido and Aeneas*: we met on campus to view this opera as a class in the evening and then had a brief discussion after it.

Day 2: Dido and Aeneas in the performing Arts
*Beginning of class—we concluded our discussion from the viewing of Purcell’s opera, then had another writing workshop for the students to peer review papers again.

**Paper 2 Due: Prompt:** How does the dramatic sociopolitical setting (whether static or shifting) impact our interpretation? Consider – what does a particular setting add to the elements of narrative?

**WEEK 8**

Day 1: Review and Discussion of Dido and Aeneas

*Student Presentation Prompt 6:* What are some common obstacles in the 3 relationships studied so far?

Day 2: Antony and Cleopatra

*Set Reading:* Course Pack - Horace’s *Odes* 1.37; Chaucer, *Good Women: Cleopatra*

*In class activity:* Viewing and discussion of Roman coins

**WEEK 9**

Day 1: Antony and Cleopatra

*Set Reading:* Course Pack - Plutarch, *Antony* (and Cleopatra)

*Student Presentation Prompt 7:* To what do you attribute the difference in tone (between Horace and Plutarch)?

Day 2: Antony and Cleopatra

*Set Reading:* Dryden, *All for Love*

*Student Presentation Prompt 8:* How does Dryden receive Horace and Plutarch?

**WEEK 10**

Day 1: Rough Draft of Paper 3 Due: *Writing Workshop*

Prompt: What are the similarities and differences between the women subjects studied so far?

Day 2: Tristan and Isolde

*Turn in Paper 3

*Set Reading:* Gottfried and Thomas, *Tristan*

*Student Presentation Prompt 9:* What is a striking difference between this narrative and a classical narrative already studied?
Week 11

Day 1: Tristan and Isolde
**Assignment:** Wagner’s opera, *Tristan und Isolde*
*We met on campus/outside of regularly scheduled class (to constitute the meeting and time normally spent on homework) to view and discuss this opera.*

Day 2: Tristan and Isolde
*Class activity: Identify and discuss differences in media of same narrative: Tristan and Isolde

**Student Presentation Prompt 10:** How does Wagner “receive” Gottfried?

Week 12

Day 1: Lancelot and Guinevere
**Set Reading:** Chrétien de Troyes, *Knight of the Cart*

**Student Presentation Prompt 11:** What are the similarities between Tristan and Lancelot?

Day 2: Review of relationships
**Lecture and Discussion:** Identification of common plot structures

**Student Presentation Prompt 12:** Identify the narratives in which physical appearance is emphasized as a crucial aspect and analyze your findings (why or why not in a given narrative?)

Week 13

Day 1: Writing Workshop: Rough Draft of Paper 4 Due
**Prompt:** Identify and analyze the common obstacles to the relationships studied.

University Break

Week 14

Day 1: Turn in Paper 4; Story-Board Assignment and Discussion
**Lecture and Discussion:** What are the fundamental differences in the three major stages of a Narrative (setting, conflict, resolution) between the ages?

**Student Presentation Prompt 13:** Are there stock characters in tragic love stories?

**Student Presentation Prompt 14:** Is the role of a family important in these narratives?

Day 2: Value of Original Languages
**Assignment:** work on Story-Board
**Lecture and Discussion:** The importance of original languages
* I discussed what is gained through a reading of these texts in their primary languages and gave examples of artistic appreciation, meaning, and nuance perhaps lost in translation
Student Presentation Prompt 15: What are common deaths in these tragic love stories and why do we find them repeated?

Student Presentation Prompt 16: Discuss the connection between love and self-sacrifice as espoused in the narratives of your choosing.

WEEK 15

Day 1: Summary of Topics
Assignment: work on Story-Board

Student Presentation Prompt 17: Does love receive a diachronically different definition?

Student Presentation Prompt 18: Does tragedy receive a diachronically different definition?

Day 2: Synthesis and Conclusion
Assignment: work on Story-Board

Final Creative Project Due: Time of Scheduled Final Exam
## GRADING RUBRIC FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Very Poor*</th>
<th>Poor*</th>
<th>Average*</th>
<th>Good*</th>
<th>Excellent*</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing the prompt</strong></td>
<td>Does not identify a thesis</td>
<td>Presents an ambiguous thesis, or is loosely connected to the prompt</td>
<td>Thesis is stated but lacks coherence or complete development</td>
<td>Clearly established thesis, relates to the prompt and sustains focus</td>
<td>Thesis is clearly stated, developed and transitions into evidence of prompt well</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>No evidence provided</td>
<td>Evidence is too general, or overstated and/or lacks to convince</td>
<td>Evidence is related to thesis, generally organized but is overly simple</td>
<td>Each topic is sufficiently supported, demonstrates thoughtful application to topic</td>
<td>Evidence supports claims, presented systematically, and demonstrates superlative control of material</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitions/Organization</strong></td>
<td>There are no transitions</td>
<td>Incoherent movement from one point to another</td>
<td>A general continuity of material is evident but distinct movement from 1 point to next is blurred</td>
<td>Material is logically presented with clear markers for audience to note movements of argument</td>
<td>Lucid, logical thinking is evident in the organization, sign-posting, and transitions</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation/Delivery</strong></td>
<td>Audience cannot understand your words</td>
<td>Mumbling, erratic speech patterns; common fillers employed and/or distracting pauses</td>
<td>Generally coherent delivery; mostly void of pauses, and filler phrases; sometimes too loud or too soft or lapse into poor posture</td>
<td>Appropriate volume of speech, maintained eye contact, some reliance on notes, but overall smooth delivery</td>
<td>Captivating modulation of voice, constant eye contact, did not use notes, maintained ideal posture and positioning of hands</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language/Word choices</strong></td>
<td>Consistently used poor English; employed wrong words and inappropriate language</td>
<td>Occasional use of a wrong word; poor syntax; unclear sentences</td>
<td>Mostly clear, appropriate language, sometimes confused word choice</td>
<td>Void of grammatical errors; clear, correct word choices; succinct, lucid sentences</td>
<td>Clear word choices; sophisticated language; lucid and powerful sentences</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>No conclusion</td>
<td>Ended abruptly and lacked tie to previous material</td>
<td>Provided a conclusion but could have been more expansive</td>
<td>Appropriate review of topics</td>
<td>Clear closure with excellent review of topics</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Please write your prompt here:**

**Additional feedback and notes from the instructor:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis and audience (15 points)</td>
<td>No thesis, or it is ambiguous and/or vague; no sense of audience throughout</td>
<td>Establishes thesis; thesis may be mundane and/or struggles with “so what” question / rhetorically aware of but not entirely in-tune with intended audience</td>
<td>Clear, explicit thesis that is workable and sophisticated; understand your audience well and rhetorically address the situation with clear insight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and analysis (40 points)</td>
<td>Inadequate use of evidence, inserts personal opinion excessively, and/or overgeneralizes claims</td>
<td>Evidence exists, but not thoroughly or superlatively analyzed. May lapse into occasional superfluous content and/or not recognize where own comments converge or depart from consensus.</td>
<td>Ample evidence provided, thorough and accurate analysis, and appropriate pairing of own work with larger academic discourse concerning the issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization (15 points)</td>
<td>Unclear logical flow, no signposting at the outset, lacks transitions</td>
<td>Argument is logical but could occasionally be presented in a more lucid manner, though not problematic as is. Contains signposting and transitions</td>
<td>Paper begins with appropriate signposting, progresses in the same order as originally presented, utilizes topic sentences, transitions naturally into subsequent points</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics (30 points)</td>
<td>Excessive grammatical, stylistic, and infelicitous phrasing; distracting prose</td>
<td>Largely void of grammatical mistakes, typos, etc. but may include some verbose and or infelicitous phrasing; unsophisticated language; colloquial and/or vernacular phrasing</td>
<td>Void of typos, grammatical errors, etc.; utilizes succinct, sophisticated phrasing, vocabulary is expansive and accurate; the argument is advanced and persuasive because you have married form and content</td>
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**TOTAL**

Synopsis of Feedback and General Points for Improvement (see other side for additional comments):
GRADING RUBRIC FOR FINAL PRESENTATIONS

(10 points) 1. Did you include an abstract with a title, list of characters, and overview of setting, plot outline, conflict, and resolution?

Comments:

(80 points) 2. Have you adequately justified your inclusion, exclusion, reception and manipulation of precedents which we encountered in class?

Instructor comments re Title:

Characters:

Setting:

Plot:

Conflict:
Resolution:

(10 points) 3. Do the decisions you’ve made about the above elements work to provide a compelling, cohesive narrative?

Comments (see back for additional comments):

* The following bibliography is provided to you for further reading and/or for use in preparing your papers, oral presentation, and final project. You are welcome to use other peer-reviewed sources, but these sources seem to me to be particularly related to our course content and prompts.
COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING


