

Mastering the Liberal Arts I [MLA I]
50:606:301 Section 40, index 25448
Tuesdays 6:00 to 8:40 p.m., ATG 205

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425 Armitage 5:30 – 5:55 p.m.

Mastering the Liberal Arts I is a writing-intensive course required for Liberal Studies majors and may be opened, additionally, to those students who have received special permission from the program director.

The Power of Words . . .

Course description

A range of topics and methods used to challenge students to further develop the array of advanced skills needed to master the material taught in upper-division liberal studies courses. Emphasizes the reading and writing skills needed in advanced humanities courses. Regular writing and research assignments [Writing Intensive designation]

Required texts

- 1) Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say I say*. [They] Norton: 978039392409-1
- 2) Paul Eschholz and Alfred Rosa, *Subject & Strategy A Writer's Reader*. [S&S] Bedford/St. Martins: 978031246290-1
- 3) Access to postings on Sakai course management system: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>
--requires an email account and (RUID) [Rutgers User ID] – available at Impact Booth in Student Center

Course evaluation

Partnered facilitations of an assigned reading—critical analysis	10%
Three in-class writing assessments on assigned readings @5% each	15%
Two short papers; 3-4 pages, with Works Cited page:	
Analysis of Argument	10%
One's Own Argument	15%
Term Research Report of 5-6 pages with Works Cited page:	
Proposal and briefly annotated working bibliography	10%
Final draft with Works Cited page only	30%
Active and vocal participation in class and at Liberal Studies suppers	10%

Grade spread

>92 A >85 B+ >80 B >75 C+ >70 C >60 D <59 F

Class policies

- Assignments are to be completed before class.
- You are expected to be in class and on time for all sessions. As we meet only once weekly, three absences or more, regardless of reason, will result in failure for the course.
- If you have a serious emergency that prevents attendance, please let me know by email or call me at home as soon as possible but before the end of the work week.

- Partnered facilitations and in-class writing assignments will relate to assigned readings and cannot be made up. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get a synopsis of class activities from another student.
- I do not give “makeup” or “catch up” work for any missed, incomplete, or failed assignments. Your grade assessment will be what you earn during the semester.
- Unless you are dealing with an emergency situation that requires your immediate attention, cell phones are to be set to ‘stun’ and put away during class.

Assigned readings and in-class writing assignments

Each week, we will read and discuss several short works that are gathered under a generalized theme relating to the “power of words.” As you read, determine the author’s thesis, intention, support, style, and projected audience. Critically assess the author’s success by considering viewpoints other than those mentioned. You are expected to be prepared to engage in discussion with the topics addressed by facilitators.

Partnered facilitation

You and a partner will be responsible for leading class discussion on an assigned reading. Your facilitation should touch on the form, content, and larger implications addressed by the work, demonstrating that you have carefully read and critically evaluated the reading assignment. Your facilitation should not just summarize the work, as we all have read it, but should include observations, insights, and questions about specific passages. You are welcome to make connections to other readings or to real world events, or to ask leading questions, but you should be prepared to respond and keep the discussion lively. We will draw on readings and discussions for in-class writing activities. A sign-up sheet for facilitations will be available during the second class.

Formal papers

Unless you inform me of a major other than Liberal Studies, you are to write all formal drafts in MLA style, properly citing and documenting all used sources. MLA style, taught in most college writing programs, will be reviewed in class. **Plagiarized materials will fail and be reported. If you are not sure of when and what to cite, ask! An MLA template will be available on Sakai for your use.** Papers submitted a week late will receive a substantially lowered grade. Instructions for all formal papers will be given in class and posted on Sakai well in advance of due dates.

I will not, under any circumstances, open email attachments. If you must miss a class on a night when a formal written assignment is due, save your finished paper as a PDF file (using the pull down menu) and place your PDF version in your drop box on Sakai, or, as a last resort, give your paper to another student to submit. I will not print out your papers, so you will receive a grade without comments.

Paper #1, Analysis of Argument: Using Internet research, you are to locate an article of about ten pages, print and read the article, which will lead to your first formal writing assignment: You are to analyze the argument in your **first formal paper; final draft due October 6th.**

Paper #2, Your Own Argument: Using as your primary sources one of the clusters suggested by the “Thematic Table of Contents” in *Subject and Strategy*, you are to read three articles, and produce your own argument, based on instructions, and support your views with quotations, paraphrase, and summary from the three articles. Your Works Cited page will carry three entries.
Final draft of second formal paper due November 3rd, Election Day

Paper #3, Term Research Report: You may choose to enhance your research in the topic you chose for paper #2, or choose another area of inquiry for your final research report. Your final research report, an argumentative report, will include at least five documented sources. Leading up to the culminating paper, we will have a **library orientation on Tuesday, November 10th**, and you will be required to write and submit **a formal one-page proposal and briefly-annotated bibliography of at least five sources on November 17th**. You will share with the class your field of inquiry and topics you will consider on that evening, and explain your interest and your plans for completing the assignment. The final draft of your paper, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, will be **due on or before Tuesday, December 8th**. I will not accept any papers after the final class.

Liberal Studies Suppers

Two times during the semester, we will meet with the program director, Dr. Carol Singley, [singley@camden.rutgers.edu] for a Liberal Studies supper in the Dean’s faculty Lounge, 3rd floor Armitage, and will return to class, briefly, after the supper.

The first supper is on **Tuesday, September 29th** at 6. Our guest speaker is Dr. Habib, who will give a talk on *Islam: The Power of Words to Combat Stereotypes*. Dr. Habib will read poetry from his soon to be published manuscript and will address the class about assigned Internet research that class members have conducted.

The second supper is tentatively set for **Tuesday, October 27th**, at 6 p.m. and held the week before spring registration commences. Dr. Singley will give overviews of academic advising for your major, and sign off on necessary classes.

Your success at Rutgers is important to me. If you have any questions about the class, or the syllabus, or any other areas where I might be able to help, please do not hesitate to contact me via email: piccolo@camden.rutgers.edu

During the work week, you can expect a response within hours; if I haven’t answered your email, I haven’t received it. Any questions about your major and minor concentrations should be forwarded to Dr. Singley, the program director, or, as applicable, to your advisor.

Syllabus of Assignments

N. B.: Relating to your participation grade, you are responsible for creating at least one discussion question or one observation for each reading

9/01	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Reason</i> . Pre-Labor Day! Course Introduction. From [S&S] Chapter 1 over view of “Reading process.” Critical reading. Mapping and Outlining. Brief writing sample.
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9/08	No class; follow Monday schedule
9/15	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Relate.</i> Read [They] Chapters 1 & 2 and in [S&S] all of Chapter 2 and <i>Narration</i> readings: Lamott p. 44, Flower p. 49, Malcolm X p. 76, Facilitation #1 on Parenti p. 492. Quotation, paraphrase, and summary
9/22	Read [They] Chapters 3, 4, and 5. [S&S] Chapter 10 <i>Description</i> readings: pp. 359-72, Parker p. 376, and Facilitation #2 on Cannon p. 437. MLA style, pp. 657-58. Think about Internet topic related to Islam
9/29	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Heal.</i> Liberal Studies Supper #1: Dr. Habib, guest speaker. Read [S&S] Chapter 12 <i>Argumentation</i> pp. 454-63 and [They] Chapter 6; pay close attention to the models offered in the templates, as they will assist in the discussion with Dr. Habib
10/06	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Reflect.</i> Paper #1, Analysis of Argument, due; further instructions will be given. Read [S&S] Argument Pair: Should English Be the Law? pp. 519-35 Facilitation #3 on Krauthammer; Facilitation #4 on King
10/13	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Revise.</i> Papers returned. Grammar, Mechanics, and Style Workshop. [S&S] Read Chapter 14, Editing for Grammar, Punctuation, and Sentence Style. In-class writing assignment
10/20	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Challenge.</i> Read [They] chapter 7. Pay close attention to the templates for “why your claims matter.” Read [S&S] Argument Pair: Is Genetically Engineered Food Safe? pp.535-61, Facilitation #5 on Carson p. 567; Facilitation #6 on Mairs p. 575
10/27	Liberal Studies Supper #2 (tentative.) Bring your scheduling sheet from Academic Advisor and your tentative course selections. Read [S&S] Comparison and Contrast pp. 258-71. Discussion of Comparison/Contrast models and conferencing about paper ideas.
11/3	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Create.</i> Read [S & S] Chapter 15 “Writing a Researched Essay.” Facilitation #7 on Iyer p. 280; Facilitation #8 on Tannen p. 293. Read [They] Chapter 9; in class writing assignment based on exercise #1 p. 122.
11/10	Paper #2 due. Library Orientation. Meet in Robeson Library lobby at or before 6 p.m. Bring a general topic idea and some research terms, as shown in [S&S] Chapter 15
11/17	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Learn.</i> Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due. Be prepared to discuss your field of inquiry leading to your research project. In [S&S] read Robbins and Wilner p. 398 for Facilitation #9 and Sullivan p. 432 for Facilitation #10, if needed. In-class writing assignment about technology and isolation
11/24	Proposal and Annotated Bibliography returned. I will address global errors and questions. Individual conferencing about final papers. Read [They] Chapter 8
12/01	<i>The Power of Words . . . to Convince.</i> Read: [S&S] Lutz p. 341 and [They] Chapter 10 “The Art of Metacommentary.” Presentation of final research project to class; oral peer assistance.
12/08	Final paper due with self-addressed envelope and sufficient postage. Closing comments and a look forward to next semester
12/16	-W- Final examination period; papers returned by or on this date