

Instructor: Dr. Erik M. Bachman / embachman@gmail.com
Office Hours: Room TBA, Fridays 11AM-NOON

English 1B, Section 10: Composition, Critical Reading, & Thinking

Course Topic: Neo-Slave Narratives

This course will help students to develop their expository and argumentative writing along with their critical reading and writing skills as we examine the historical contexts and compositional features of antebellum slave narratives and twentieth-century neo-slave narratives. Often considered the first authentically African-American mode of writing, slave narratives were popular (and controversial) models for the twentieth-century American novel. After closely reading Frederick Douglass' *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), we will analyze four texts that adopt and/or negate the first-person perspective and formal conventions of the antebellum slave narrative in order to formulate argumentative essays addressing the interrelationship of history, race, identity, literary form, and intertextuality.

Course Meeting Times: MW 10-11:50AM, F 11-11:50AM

Course Room: 6707

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to make logical inferences to arrive at an interpretation.
2. Students will be able to formulate an arguable thesis.

Course Requirements

- *Journal assignments
- *Four 1,200-word essays
- *Five reading quizzes
- *One mid-term exam
- *One final exam
- *Good attendance (**no more than five absences allowed**) and participation

Required Texts

- Sylvan Barnet and Hugo Bedau, *Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing: A Brief Guide to Argument* (9th Edition)
- Octavia Butler, *Kindred*
- Frederick Douglass, *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*
- Charles Johnson, *Oxherding Tale*
- Ishmael Reed, *Flight to Canada*

Goals of the Course

1. Learn to write University-level essays, including analysis, interpretation, and argument.

2. Learn strategies for reading and comprehending challenging texts. Students will analyze fiction as well as nonfiction that employ argument and analysis.
3. Learn to identify and analyze rhetorical devices in connection with a text's main theme. Students will also draw comparisons to other texts and contexts.
4. Develop strategies to improve writing skills, including techniques for invention and revision. Students' essays will formulate an arguable thesis and substantiate it through analysis, logical and systematic organization, supporting evidence, and clarity of expression.

A Note on Plagiarism

Don't do it. Foothill College's Academic Honor Code is quite specific with regard to cheating and plagiarism, and those guidelines will be taken very seriously in this course. **In a nutshell, plagiarism will adversely affect your grade in this course and your standing at this school.** For Foothill's Academic Honor Code, please see <http://www.foothill.edu/services/honor.php>.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

(texts marked with * will be handed out the class meeting before they are to be read)

Week One

- 01/09 M Introductions / First Day Rigmarole
- 01/11 W Barnet and Bedau, 3-34
Journal Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, pp. 28-29, "Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing," 1-5; p. 34, "Exercises in Critical Thinking," 3
- 01/13 F Douglass, Preface – Chapter 5
In-Class Reading Quiz

Week Two

- 01/16 M **MLK Day (NO CLASS)**
- 01/18 W Barnet and Bedau, 35-61
Douglass, Chapters 6-10
Journal Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, p. 61, "Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing," 1-6
- 01/20 F Barnet and Bedau, 62-79
Douglass, Chapter 11-Appendix
Journal Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, pp. 70-71, "Topics For Critical Thinking and Writing," 1-7

Week Three

- 01/23 M Barnet and Bedau, 221-60
Students will write the First Draft of Essay 1 in class.
- 01/25 W *Assignment (due in class):* Complete Revised (and Typed) Draft of Essay

01/27 F Barnet and Bedau, 80-116
Essay 1 Due

Week Four

01/30 M Barnet and Bedau, 116-38
 Reed, 3-41
Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, p. 119, “Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing,” 1-5; & pp. 125-26, 1-5

02/01 W Barnet and Bedau, 181-96
 Reed, 45-89
Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, p. 190, “Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing,” 1-6

02/03 F Reed, 90-137
In-Class Reading Quiz

Week Five

02/06 M Barnet and Bedau, 196-220
 Reed, 139-79
Assignment (due in class): Barnet and Bedau, p. 216, “Topics for Critical Thinking and Writing,” 1-8

02/08 W **Students will write the First Draft of Essay 2 in class.**

02/10 F *Assignment (due in class):* Revised (and Typed) Draft of Topic Paragraph for Essay 2

Week Six

02/13 M *Assignment (due in class):* Complete (and Typed) Draft of Essay 2

02/15 W Mid-Term Exam Prep
Essay 2 Due

02/17 F **Presidents Day (NO CLASS)**

Week Seven

02/20 M **Presidents Day (NO CLASS)**

02/22 W **Mid-Term Exam**

02/24 F Barnet and Bedau, 325-34
 Robert Crossley’s essay in *Kindred*
Assignment (due in class): Handout

Week Eight

02/27 M Barnet and Bedau, 335-52
 Butler, 9-51
Assignment (due in class): Handout

03/01 W Barnet and Bedau, 352-72
Butler, 52-107
Assignment (due in class): Handout

03/03 F Butler, 108-88
In-Class Reading Quiz

Week Nine

03/06 M Butler, 189-264
Students will outline Essay 3 in class.

03/08 W *Assignment (due in class):* Complete Draft of Essay 3

03/10 F Johnson, ix-xix
Essay 3 Due

Week Ten

03/13 M Barnet and Bedau, 438-45
Johnson, 3-53
Assignment (due in class): Handout

03/15 W Barnet and Bedau, 445-58
Johnson, 54-97
Assignment (due in class): Handout

03/17 F Johnson, 101-51
In-Class Reading Quiz

Week Eleven

03/20 M Johnson, 152-76
Students will outline Essay 4 in class.

03/22 W *Assignment (due in class):* Complete Draft of Essay 4

03/24 F Final Exam Prep
Essay 4 Due

Final Exam: Thursday, June 23rd from 10:30AM – 12:30PM