

ENGL 496: Capstone for Literary & Cultural Studies

W 4:00-6:50, Colson G 10

Professor Farina

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The “capstone” is so called because it builds on the knowledge and skills that you have acquired in your English classes but challenges you to take your expertise to a new level. In this course, you will learn how to pursue an extensive research project in literary or cultural studies, culminating in a substantial scholarly essay. We will take a step-by-step approach to discussing what needs to happen for you to produce a knowledgeable, articulate, and interesting research essay. Topics to be covered include:

- choosing a text and topic
- devising research questions
- researching textual criticism and historical context
- reviewing sources and compiling bibliographies
- citation formats and scholarly standards
- outlining, drafting, and revising longer essays
- presenting work for peer review



With enough coffee, anything is possible!

Course Texts

Rather than shared readings, you'll be expected to acquire a quality edition of the primary text you choose. We'll talk about how to find the best edition as your base text.

You will also need access to an MLA style guide. If you have your copy of *Easy Writer* from your 102 class, that will do. You can also find condensed versions of the style guide online, including at the [Purdue OWL website](#), which we will use as a resource for editing.

Other materials will be put on ecampus or are freely available online.

Required Work

- class participation (10 points)
- article review (5 points)
- annotated bibliography (15 points)
- three, 5-page "progressive" essays (30 points: 10 points each)
- draft and revision of 20-page essay (30 points)
- oral presentation of research (10 points)

All your written work will focus on the same project unless you choose to change your text or topic at some point in the semester.

You must complete the progressive essays, the annotated bibliography, and the 20-page essay to pass the course. Failure to submit any one of these will result in failure of the course. There are no "extra credit" opportunities for you to make up missed work.

Course Policies

Late Work: Because large projects depend on making consistent progress in advance and keeping to a timely schedule, late work will be stiffly penalized. Missing a deadline will incur a full grade deduction, and another full grade will be deducted each day the work is late thereafter. If you miss your oral presentation time, you may not do the presentation later.

Attendance: While there is no point deduction for absences, you miss class at your own peril. Not showing up will mean that you miss opportunities to workshop your material, receive editing help, and figure out how research efficiently. Your

class participation grade also depends on your being in class and contributing to discussion or to workshop activities.

Academic Honesty: All written work submitted for credit in this class must be produced by you for this class and must be in your own words. Any language you use from other sources, including your own previous work, must be properly cited. Familiarize yourself with [WVU's plagiarism policy](#). Plagiarism on the 20-page research essay will result in failure of the course. Plagiarism on other assignments will result in a zero on the assignment and possibly failure of the course.

Social Justice: WVU is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Disruption of this environment may lead to dismissal from the class.

Learning Accommodations: Students requiring specific kinds of support should discuss these needs with me at the beginning of the semester. You may also want to contact the WVU [Office of Accessibility Services](#).

Contact Information:

My office is 335 Colson Hall (3rd floor, front corner). I encourage you to come see me individually about your projects. My regular office hours will be before class on Wednesday from 2:30 to 3:30, but I'm available for an appointment many other times, most times M-F.

Lynne Stahl (lynne.stahl@mail.wvu.edu) is the designated librarian for the English Department, and can help you with research queries. You might also want to take advantage of the Eberley Writing Studio in Colson Hall (<http://speakwrite.wvu.edu/writing-studio>).

Schedule:

Date	Topic	Reading/Prep	Due
8/17	Recollection		
8/24	Choosing a text; Critical editions	Review of possible text	One paragraph on choice of text
8/31	Writing Practices; Passage exploration	<i>How We Write</i> : Sharp, Holsinger	
9/7	Working outward;		Progressive Essay 1

	Research Questions		
9/14	Locating Secondary Sources; Summarizing	WVU Library search Sample reviews (ecampus)	
9/21	Zotero Workshop; Building a bibliography	Database Search	Article Review
9/27	Structuring Arguments; Paragraph Organization	OWL: Paragraphs	
10/5	Editing	OWL Conciseness & Voice	Progressive Essay 2
10/12			Annotated Bib
10/19	Individual Conferences		
10/26	Refining Theses; Defining Stakes		Progressive Essay 3
11/2	Audiences & Counterarguments		
11/9			Draft of Research Essay
11/16	Presenting Research		
11/30			Presentations
12/7			Research Essay