**The UnEssays**

This semester you will be creating two “UnEssays”. This assignment, in a similar manner as the Up-Goer Five, is meant to help you solidify your understanding of concepts and class themes using an outside of the box, creative approach.

With your UnEssay you will aim to show or illustrate a concept presented to you in class. **You can present it any way you please.** There are no formal requirements. Your UnEssay can be anything that will help you (and others, who view/watch/read the UnEssay!) better understand an idea/concept. You can use whatever style of presentation, media, or writing (as long as it is not in traditional class research paper format) that you would most enjoy and would help you develop your understanding of the concept from the class that you are illustrating or building on.

**You will be evaluated on how effective your UnEssay is** **in illustrating your topic/concept of choosing.** Your UnEssay should have high production quality regardless of the medium used, and would help others develop or build on their understanding of the topic, while being enjoyable.

Some *examples* of what you can do (but you are absolutely not limited to!):

Art: paintings, sculptures, drawings, digital art, etc.

Board games: i.e., Dungeons & Dragons style role playing game

Multimedia: video, blogpost, podcast, etc.

Creative writing: poems, short stories, screen plays, etc.

**A more detailed example:**

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated

Let’s say that genetically modified organisms was the topic of my choosing for my unessay assignment. I chose this topic because based on what I have learned there seems to be tons of misinformation about GMOs and I wish others could become better informed regarding genetically modified organisms. Next I begin to think of creative ways to present this process, considering what I am good at creatively and whether or not that would be the most effective way to present the concept. I decide to illustrate the process of how GMOs are made mainly because I enjoy drawing in my free time and know that I can make a cool comic-like illustration about the process that me and my peers will remember. So, I come up with:

**Another example**: The first week of class we will discuss genome organization. An unassay assignment could be a song with a catchy chorus that specifically describes how the genome is organized, maybe even set to the melody of an already existing song, all you have to do is come up with clever lyrics will help understand how the genome is organized.

Check out the following videos that demonstrate the above example:

[The DNA song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5gEIViVAPw)

[Evo-Devo (Despacito Biology Parody) | A Capella Science](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydqReeTV_vk)

[CRISPR-Cas9 ("Mr. Sandman" Parody) | A Capella Science](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k99bMtg4zRk)

**\*\*These are just two examples out of many, many different possible mediums and manners in which you can choose to present your concept of choice!\*\***

**Your assignment topics and due dates**

**UnEssay 1. DUE October 6 by 11:55 PM**

Choose a topic/concept from one of the following lectures:

Human variation and race – part 1

Human variation and race – part 2

Recent human evolution – human evolution & disease

Recent human evolution – biocultural and local adaptation

Ancient DNA and human evolution

**UnEssay 2. DUE November 17 by 11:55 PM**

Choose a topic/concept from one of the following lectures:

Simple trait mapping

Environmental effects on complex human traits

Complex trait mapping

Medical genetics & pharmacogenomics

Ethics assignments small groups discussions

Ethics of human genetics and full-class discussion

Human evolutionary medicine

Behavioral genetics

Cancer genetics

**Submission:**

You will upload your file to the corresponding assignment link on Canvas, and the file named as follows: LastName\_FirstNameInital: (e.g. Hernandez\_D.xxx)