**CORE106-10 Fall 2015**

**October 5, 2015**

**Prompt and Instructions for Paper #2**

**Prompt:**

Start with the premise that slavery survived in the United States much longer than we might have expected when the country was founded in the 1770’s.

Using evidence presented by Douglass in the Narrative and the Fourth of July Address, explain why American slavery persisted into Douglass’s lifetime.  Where appropriate, use reasoning from Plato’s *Crito* and Crito’s dialogue with Socrates to support your argument.

Use only Douglass and Plato as sources.

**Additional instructions:**

1. You must include page numbers on the bottom right corner of your paper.
2. Your paper should have:
   1. 1 inch margins on the left and right, and top and bottom.
   2. The text on page 1 should begin two-inches from the top.
   3. Use 12-point Times Roman of Times New Roman font. You can use bold and italic versions of this font at your discretion.
   4. Text other than the header should be doubled spaced, and paragraphs should be indented ½ inch.
   5. Identify your paper in the upper left corner of page 1 with the following information, single spaced.
      1. Your Student ID. For this round, do NOT put your name on the paper.
      2. The date.
      3. The following text: “CORE 106-10 Fall 2015: Essay #2”
3. Do not give a title to the paper.
4. Citations: Use the MLA style described in the Writers FAQ. Note that you ordinarily cite with this format: (author page). See p. 183 for details.
5. Bibliography: Use the example on p. 215 of the Writers FAQ. The bibliography should appear on a separate page, with a “Works Cited” heading, as shown.
6. The target length for your paper is five pages, and it must not exceed six pages.

**Notes:**

A successful paper will have four ingredients:

1. The paper will have a core thesis that addresses the prompt. Your thesis should take the form of an answer to the question *Why did slavery persist into Douglass’s time?* The thesis should provide the best answer to this question, and your paper will defend this choice.  
     
   A good essay will defend its thesis consistently. The essay exists for this purpose.
2. The paper will present evidence that supports the thesis. Content from the relevant sources shows that you aren’t inventing or supposing observable content that establishes the relevance of your thesis.
3. The paper will establish a logical explanation that connects the evidence to your thesis. The word sometimes used to describe this property is *analysis.*Strictly speaking, analysis isn’t the only way to accomplish this goal, but it’s often the best one. The important idea is to explain the reasons why your evidence supports your thesis, as well as explain any other logical basis for your thesis.
4. The composition of the paper will have transparency, precision, and style. Good composition will deliver your thesis into the mind of the reader with the strength and fidelity it deserves.  
     
   Good composition depends on structure and the construction of your sentences. But remember these things are a means to an end. The purpose of good construction is to enter the minds of your readers, and lift their understanding to a place that is close to your own.

**General, random observations from the first round of papers:**

1. Keep sentences short. Smart people often try to compress too many ideas into a single statement. You are smart, and so you’re susceptible to this problem. Fight this temptation.
2. Use active voice. I know I’m beating this point into the ground. But the use of active voice improves the quality and is a good indication of how much refinement you have given to your writing.
3. Be very stingy with pronouns and referents. They are the most egregious sources of ambiguity in writing, and the easiest to fix.
4. Avoid semicolons unless they are necessary, but do not fear the comma. Many papers tended to overuse semicolons and underuse commas.
5. Many of your colleagues are submitting papers with perfect grammar and no typos. This means your grammar mistakes and typos stick out, more than you might realize.
6. Note the examples of jargon that I included in my written comments. I think you’ll discover it’s easy to change those kinds of examples than you realize.
7. Be judicious about beginning sentences with “It…”. Sometimes we’re told to never do “it”. Once in a while, you can get away with it, but don’t overdo “it” ☺.
8. A good practice for developing writers is to always follow “This” or “That” by a noun, especially at the beginning of a sentence. For example, “This is annoying” isn’t as clear as, “This habit is annoying.”
9. Parentheses and quotation marks sometimes serve as hiding places for ambiguity.

Some instructors suggest five ingredients to a college paragraph. While this list is not something to follow in hard and fast way, test your paragraphs and see how much of these pieces are included:

1. Topic
2. Explanation and Expansion
3. Examples
4. Analysis
5. Transition