

# Blogging

## Assignments

### Assignment Overview

- Students will use the domains created through the Domain of Your Own to publish blog entries
- Students will work throughout the semester developing their ideas about course themes and questions through writing
- Weekly posts are due by Friday at 5pm, and no more than 1 per week may be published
- Students will write as many posts as agreed in their respective grade contracts



*“Blogging” by Daryl Lau*

## Rationale

Throughout the term, we will engage with the ideas of the course through public writing on your blogs, which I will aggregate on this course blog. I ask you to blog for a number of reasons:

- All writing—even academic writing—is being reshaped by online modes of publication. Many academics maintain personal research blogs in which they try out their ideas and get feedback before developing articles or even books. Outside of academia, public, online writing plays an increasing and essential role in many fields. I believe its essential for modern college students to develop skill crafting an online writing persona and I want to foster that development.
- In a related point, blogs give you the opportunity to experiment with your writing, composing arguments that integrate links, quotations, images, video, and other online media as evidence.
- Blogging allows for a broader spectrum of participation in the class. Even shy students can contribute to a course blog.
- Blog posts give you the chance to learn from each other. You'll read your colleague's writing and, hopefully, learn from it or be challenged by it.
- Public blogging allows us to connect to larger communities outside of our classroom. Who knows? Perhaps the author of an article you blog about will respond directly...

You should not treat blog posts like a secondary assignment. In fact, I consider your blog post the central assignment of the semester. Instead, *think of your blog posts as an evolving research paper*. They have the same importance and weight and seriousness.

## The Nitty-Gritty

Each post must begin from our course readings and demonstrate your further engagement with those readings. You should not try to engage with every reading in a given week. Instead, choose 1-2 that intrigued, perplexed, or infuriated you and really dig in. You should follow these guidelines to be successful in your blog assignment:

1. There are approximately 14 weeks in our semester. You may not submit (for credit) more than one blog post per week, though you're free to write more if you wish. I cannot emphasize more strongly that **you should not wait to start writing posts**. Let me repeat that: **do not wait until week 3 or 4 to begin writing your blog assignments**. Your grade contracts are designed to give you some flexibility during the semester. It is up to you to make that flexibility a boon rather than a bane.
2. Blog posts for a given week are due by Friday at 5pm. Anything submitted later than this will count toward the next week, and you may not submit

for credit more than one post per week.

3. Each post should be 300-500 words long. This gives you enough space to make some keen observations or ask some pressing questions, but not enough space to write a full paper. Your blog posts should be concise. The point is not to write everything you might in one week, but instead to develop a set of ideas and questions over the course of many weeks.
4. Each post should *refer specifically to class reading*, often through *direct quotation*. Your posts should continue and further develop conversations that began in class, demonstrating your evolving understanding of our class themes. I strongly encourage you to read, cite, and link to each other's posts.
5. I highly value posts that link our class to the wider world. I encourage you to use your blog posts to bring outside texts into conversation with our class: an article you found interesting or relevant, say, or something you uncovered while doing research.

## Commenting on Posts

I cannot comment on every blog post, though I will occasionally interject when something in a post catches our attention. You should interpret such a comment as engagement, not (necessarily) sanction. Conversely, you should not interpret lack of comment as criticism.

## Evaluating Blog Posts

Each week I will review blog posts with the following rubric in mind, adapted by Creative Commons license (CC BY 3.0) from Mark Sample. An exceptional or satisfactory post meets the requirements of your contract, while anything else may require revision.

<i>Exceptional.</i>	<i>Satisfactory.</i>	<i>Underdeveloped.</i>	<i>Limited.</i>	<i>No Credit.</i>
The blog post is focused and coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis. The entry demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The entry reflects in-depth engagement with the topic.	The blog post is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The entry reflects moderate engagement with the topic.	The blog post is mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. The entry reflects passing engagement with the topic.	The blog post is unfocused, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays no evidence of student engagement with the topic.	The blog post is missing or consists of one or two disconnected sentences.