Upper Division Literature Course Writing Guidelines

Revised Sept. 24, 2021

In keeping with our learning outcomes and general expectations of graduates with English major, faculty teaching upper level literature courses should require essay assignments. These essay assignments should focus on the development of critical thinking skills and effective written communication, including proper MLA citation. Further, writing in upper division courses should stress writing as a process and foster collaboration between students, and between students and instructors. Practicing writing is essential to the development of the aforementioned skills.

These guidelines aim to improve development of students’ writing skills and use of critical methodologies.

1. Paper assignments totaling at least 2500 words based in one of the critical methodologies. The writing can be divided according to the curriculum of the course, but there should be at least one long (1250+ words) paper with a sustained argument, and at least one paper with a research component requiring synthesis of multiple sources.
2. In-class writing workshops. We recommend workshops in which
   1. students work together on their writing (such as peer review or revision workshops);
   2. students construct thesis statements;
   3. students work on focus and structure;
   4. instructors review the use of critical methodologies in writing literary analysis;
   5. instructors review standards of citation, grammar, and punctuation.
3. Meeting with the professor or tutor for each assignment.
4. Common grading rubric for upper division courses.
5. One paper submission to e-portfolio per course.