Overview

Emerson wrote that “I do not wish to treat friendships daintily, but with roughest courage. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frost work, the soldest thing we know.” Most of us are convinced about the importance of friendship, but oddly enough friendship is a neglected area of study, especially in the social sciences. Do we really understand how friendships are formed and how they shape our lives? For example, social science research has traditionally suggested that we tend to seek out friends who are similar to ourselves. But is this always true? What factors inspire people to venture outside of their comfort zones through friendship? And what seems to be happening specifically at Harvard?

This course explores friendships on our campus, with an emphasis on understanding how social differences influence friend-making and community building. Our goal will be to have a better, more complex understanding of how various kinds of social boundaries and identities are reproduced or challenged through the experience of friendship. The theory of social capital will help us to better understand the delicate interplay between “bridging” and “bonding” processes, and how meanings of identity and belonging play out differently across unique contexts of the College. Our discussions will be wide-ranging, but we will be increasingly research-focused as the course unfolds. Students will gather qualitative data on campus and will engage with visual media as well.

In Unit 1, we will explore the sociology and philosophy of friendship, beginning with Emerson’s renowned essay on “Friendship” (1841), an essay at least partly shaped by his experiences at Harvard. In Unit 2, students will begin to develop individual projects and complete a research proposal. The third unit of the course will be devoted to the research process, where students will work in small research “pods” organized by topic. This Expos course emphasizes speaking and presenting as well as writing. Overall, the course is heavily collaborative, modeling that which it studies – namely, a spirit of engagement, dialogue, and community.

A Multimodal Approach to Writing and Communicating

As with all Expos courses, this class is designed to help you work effectively in the many different courses that you will encounter while at Harvard, especially those that require written essays. Expos places a special emphasis on argument and analysis – elements that will allow you to cultivate greater power and persuasiveness in your writing and communicating. In general, the course is intended to help you develop originality in your prose and voice, but always in ways that are explicitly supported through evidence. Our material also will help you to work with different forms of data and evidence so that you will be better able to apply your writing skills across diverse disciplines and assignments. Through our activities and
assignments, Expos 20 hopes to steer you away from common problems in academic writing, such as evasiveness, formula, and unnecessary. Alternatively, we will explore the ways in which our words — whether written or spoken — can become more direct, precise, and embodied.

But what does it mean to be more “embodied?” Last spring, I piloted several course innovations that emphasized two things: expanding the research dimension of the course (having two units devoted to a research project instead of one), and including more speaking assignments, mostly based on an interview format. This semester we will build on the most successful elements of these innovations, and we’ll be adding new activities that not only emphasize speaking but also object-analysis and visual presentation as well (see table below). Thus, this more multimodal approach goes beyond writing in isolation; it includes other important forms of scholarly and professional communication. At the same time, we will likely discover how working with objects, speaking, and presenting all circle back into effective writing.

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<tr>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Textual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>reading aloud; reporting on objects @ Houghton Library</td>
<td>Emerson materials and object analysis (Houghton Library)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4-6-page written essay</td>
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<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>interviewing skills; topic shaping; presentation</td>
<td>proposal with visual element</td>
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<td>6-8-page written proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>research results (elevator pitch); capstone poster installation</td>
<td>“visual sociology” element; capstone poster design</td>
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<td>12+ page research paper</td>
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However, there are many interconnections between writing, speaking, and presenting, and we will be exploring these configurations together. I tend to think that when we bring together different modes of creating and communicating knowledge, we develop more ownership of our ideas; that is, we feel more vitally connected to the writing/communicating process. But you will have to tell me.

“The Friendship Project” – a Campus-based Multimedia Archive

The changes in the course began last year largely because of a new collaboration with the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. That is, our class became one of several course projects supported by the Learning Lab within the Bok Center. The partnership this semester will place our work directly within a larger dialogue about how we can create a more diverse, open, and vibrant campus culture. In short, the Bok partnership is going to allow your writing and speaking to have real audiences and actual effects. And, we’ll be making something together, as a class.

Let me clarify. The Friendship at Harvard Oral History Project (which is now simply call “The Friendship Project”) began in 2016 as part of this course. It’s essentially a video-based archive of mostly student testimonials about friendship and diversity/inclusion on campus. This archive is in its infancy, but it is starting to have more of a campus presence. As part of the Friendship Project, you will be contributing to video projects that will have on-campus visibility. I’ll be telling you more about all of this as we go, so I hope that you will share in my excitement about our course being closely connected to the larger Harvard community!
The salience of the Friendship Project should already tell you that I need you to be an active contributor in the class. This course isn’t for “passengers.” From start to finish, it’s going to be a collaborative enterprise. I will be explaining each dimension of our work with the Learning Lab at the start of the semester, and as we approach each scheduled activity you’ll get a lot more details. I don’t want anything to surprise you, and I would never want you to feel pressured to participate in something that feels too uncomfortable. So, I will have opt-out provisions in place for our video assignments, but I still have an expectation that you will do your best and motivate yourself to take part in what should be a very fun and creative process. We are extremely lucky to have this opportunity with the Bok, so I hope you’ll throw yourself into it, support each other, and enjoy it. I promise that you will learn something not only about friendship, but also about yourself.

You will get to know the relevant staff at the Learning Lab who will be helping with our course. One of these people, Kayla Evans, is a junior who took the course two years ago. She is a Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellows, and her main responsibility at the Bok will be to help with our class. (Remember how I just told you that we are extremely lucky?) She is eager to meet you and to contribute to our collective venture.

What You Will Write

Here is a brief overview of our written assignments:

**Unit 1 Essay: Close Reading: Emerson’s Essay, “Friendship” (1841)**

In Unit 1 we will explore arguably the first “modern” American statement about friendship – Emerson’s piece, “Friendship.” We will specifically address how the essay still speaks to us, even though the language of friendship was quite different in Emerson’s time. Emerson will open an array of issues about the variable and contradictory character of modern friendship, and we will apply some of his ideas to issues of friend-making at Harvard. To assist us, we will explore some of Emerson’s original materials and manuscripts in the Houghton Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. For Unit 1, you will closely analyze Emerson’s ideas and discuss what still resonates in his essay at Harvard 175 years later.

**Unit 2 Essay: A Written Proposal and Oral Presentation for Research on Friendship and Social Differences at Harvard**

The second unit of the course will begin with the connection between friendship and “social capital,” that is, all of the benefits that come with having extensive and high quality social networks as we go through life. First, we will discuss Robert Putnam’s approach to social capital in *Bowling Alone*, and then link that discussion to various sociological studies of friendship and social differences. Here, you will begin to conduct your own library research and embark on research proposal that you will shape in an original way. Your proposal will include a literature review about a topic of your choosing. As opposed to being a bland, detached review of relevant sources, this literature review will begin to shape a conceptual argument about the state of the research surrounding a problem that matters to you. We will also discuss interview strategies and methods appropriate for campus-based research. We will then form topic-based research “pods” for the remainder of the course. A presentation will accompany this proposal (details forthcoming).
Unit 3 Essay: Research Paper: Friendship and Social Differences at Harvard

The third component of the course is a continuation of the second unit; that is, you will continue to locate outside sources and refine your research topic, but you will quickly begin to conduct your own first-hand research on campus. You’ll be working closely in the pods, but you will carry out your own individual projects. Your research will tell us something important about one context of friendship at Harvard. To begin the process of conceptualizing a topic, we will regularly bounce back between three themes: (1) friendship differences at Harvard based on gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, class, or some other sociological category; (2) the friendship experiences of certain groups or populations (e.g., first-generation students, Asian-American students, international students, recruited athletes, etc.); (3) unique locations and contexts of friendship processes and student life (e.g., residential life, student organizations, dining halls, teams, extracurriculars, and so on).

A Few Additional Sources for Unit 3:

Kathleen Kogen, *Crossing the Racial Divide: Close Friendship Between Black and White Americans*
Peter Nardi, *Gay Men’s Friendships: Invincible Communities*
Anna Muraco, *Odd Couples: Friendship at the Intersection of Gender and Sexual Orientation*
Marion Orr, *Black Social Capital*

Capstone Project: A Class Poster Installation (during exam week).

After the completion of the research papers, and an oral reporting of research results at the Bok, we will be sharing our research projects during a public poster installation.* The details of the assignment are in process, but it will be an exciting event where we will invite campus community members to come hear about all the research carried out this semester. You will create a poster that summarizes your project and findings, and you’ll develop a strategy for informally presenting your main ideas to interested observers. The event will be creative and fun.

*Tentative

Required Books

- Elizabeth Aries, *Race and Class Matters at an Elite College* (Temple, 2008)
- Charles Lipson, *Cite Right: A Quick Guide to Citation Styles*, 2nd Ed. (Chicago, 2011)
Reserve Books

- There are quite a few reserve books, and some will change as we go through each unit. In Unit 2, you will be choosing some of your own readings on research methods, many of which will be on reserve. Some of our reserve materials, thankfully, are online.

A Few Initial Web Resources

- Course Website: https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/36849
- Harvard Guide to Using Sources: http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu
- APA Style: http://www.apastyle.org
- Harvard College Writing Center: http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu

How Expos Works

The main goal for the course is for you to produce original, compelling, and analytically-sound essays, and to develop and sharpen your analytic and communications skills more generally. One of the most exciting things to learn in a writing course is that the learning process never stops; one doesn’t “arrive” at being a good writer, but rather continually becomes one.

In each unit, various preliminary exercises (in class, homework, Bok Center work, etc.) will help you get your ideas going and to write the draft. After you complete the draft, we will discuss it in conference, after which you will have several days to revise it. The revision will show how your analysis has evolved and grown more complex.

Good writing is a recursive and heuristic process; that is, it’s a matter of trying out your ideas, getting feedback, rethinking things, working together to rebuild and deepen ideas, and then trying again. In the end, it’s a non-linear process where progress usually happens in a series of unpredictable breakthroughs – some small, others momentous. In our class, we’ll be using speaking and various kinds of informal presentations to help create the conditions for these breakthroughs.

Your writing will improve most when you possess clear ideas about what you want to accomplish in each assignment: what aspects of the writer’s craft matter to you, and how you want to grow and improve. This class asks you to be thoughtful and self-reflective about your writing and thinking process. You are going to be asked to question and critically evaluate your own claims, arguments, and ideas in each assignment. In fact, these reflections will take different forms but they are going to be happening all the time – in your cover letters, in class, in the pods, during Learning Lab activities, and so on.

While inspiration is the moment we all hope for in our writing, it comes most readily when that inspiration is earned – in other words, when you have dedicated, sustained effort to reading, thinking, speaking, questioning, collaborating, drafting, and revising.
So, here are the components of the writing and revising process that take place in all in Expos 20 courses:

- **Pre-draft Exercises/Response Papers:** Before you compose an initial draft of each essay, you will complete one or more pre-draft exercises (sometimes in the form of response papers) and that focus on particular writing or communication skill that is important for that essay. Note that there will also be several shorter exercises assigned as well (citations, summaries, editing, etc.). Check our schedule and website for specific due dates.

- **Drafts:** You will submit a draft of each of the three essays. On each draft you will receive detailed comments from me (in writing and in conferences). Please note that drafts are not graded. One important reason for this is that drafts provide the opportunity to try out ideas and to develop – in an unfettered way – a specific line of inquiry. Sometimes these early ideas “work,” but usually the rough “working through” process creates a lot of necessary problems and questions that will help you write the revision.

- **Draft Cover Letters:** Every time you hand in a draft or revision, you will include a cover letter in which you provide guidance to your reader about the aspects of the essay you are struggling with in addition to whatever other comments or questions you might have. I’ll give you more specific instructions about writing draft cover letters over the course of the semester.

- **Draft Workshops:** Immediately after the Unit 1 and Unit 2 drafts are due we will have an in-class draft workshop in which we work through one or two student papers and offer the writers constructive criticisms and suggestions for improvement. I will post or email you the essays I have chosen before each workshop. You will be expected to provide written comments (probably in the form of a letter) on each draft that we workshop together. I’ll hand out more guidelines on draft workshops later.

- **Conferences:** After I’ve carefully read your draft, we will meet for a 20-minute conference (in Units 1 and 2) in which we will work together on strategies for revising the essay. You should prepare for the conference (I’ll explain how) and plan on taking notes during our discussion. Missed conferences may not be rescheduled. We’ll have group conferences in Unit 3.

- **Essay Revisions:** You should expect to extensively revise each of your drafts before submitting it for a grade. Formatting and proper citations are also important, as is the cover letter. I will provide more limited comments on essay revisions.

In our particular class, we will be following this sequence, but, again, some of the pre-draft and response paper activities will involve speaking and presenting, either in class or in the Learning Lab. For example, in Unit 2, the response paper assignment will involve interviewing each other and talking through your ideas on-camera in two phases. During Unit 3, the response paper assignment will involve interviewing a Harvard College staff member, administrator, dean, or faculty member about your research topic. We may also incorporate Google Docs and other technologies to build and share materials as a class.
Some of Our Important Activities and Due Dates (subject to change)

Unit 1 Response Paper due: Sunday, February 4th by 5pm  
Unit 1 Draft due: Friday, February 17th by 11:59pm  
Unit 1 Draft Workshop: Tuesday, February 20th  
Unit 1 Conferences: February 20th – 23rd  
Unit 1 Revision due six days after your conference by 11:59pm

Unit 2 Response Paper due: Sunday, March 4th by 5pm  
Spring Break: March 11th – 18th  
Unit 2 Proposal Draft due: Friday, March 23rd by 11:59pm  
Unit 2 Draft Workshop: Tuesday, March 27th  
Unit 2 Conferences: March 27th – 29th  
Unit 2 Revision due six days after your conference by 11:59pm

Unit 3 Response Paper due: Friday, April 13th by 11:59pm  
Unit 3 “Half-Draft” due: Sunday, April 15th by 11:59pm  
Unit 3 Draft due: Friday, April 20th by 11:59pm  
Unit 3 Pod Conferences: April 24th – April 26th  
Unit 3 Revision due: May 4th by 11:59pm

Unit 3 Research Reflections (Bok Center): May 8th – 10th  
Unit 3 Capstone Event: May 10th (very tentative)

Assessment and Grading

Final grades are computed as follows:

- Unit 1 Essay Revision = 20%
- Unit 2 Proposal Revision = 25%
- Unit 2 Oral Presentation = 5%
- Unit 3 Essay Revision = 30%
- Class Citizenship, Learning Lab Work, Capstone = 20%

A central expectation of the course is that you will be an accountable, involved citizen of the class. Partly because of our partnership with the Learning Lab at the Bok Center, a full twenty percent of your final grade will be an assessment of your overall commitment to, participation in, and responsibility for the class as a whole.

“Citizenship” may seem like a strange word to use rather than, say, “participation.” This is a discussion-based course – essentially a seminar – so naturally your active participation matters. But the idea of citizenship goes beyond talking; rather, there are many things – some of them seemingly small – that need to happen to help make the course a creative and truly collaborative enterprise. To help clarify, here is a partial list of things of major things that I consider important in assessing your class citizenship:
- Your attendance, your punctuality, your daily class preparation.
- Knowing the class schedule and completing work on-time.
- Being an active contributor and active listener in our class meetings.
- Immersing yourself in the Learning Lab projects and taking some chances.
- Staying connected and honestly communicating with me if problems arise.
- Signing up for conferences and activities on Canvas in a timely way, and staying connected to information posted on Canvas.
- Following turn-in procedures and formatting guidelines for papers and other assignments.
- Initiative: taking charge of your learning and working on your own development while being accountable to others.
- The quality of your cover letters and other modes of reflection.

But that’s not everything. Going beyond just the grading scheme, please consider this: Expos 20 follows a team-based, workshop-based approach where students regularly share their work, speak up, and offer constructive feedback to fellow students. Our particular Expos class is predicated on everyone being self-motivated, but in a way that serves the larger group. That is, your commitment to our class is valued in terms of your own growth but also with respect to supporting a small community of learning. The most enriching courses, in any discipline, emerge when there is camaraderie and trust, careful and active listening, courage in trying out and sharing ideas, and supporting each other’s learning. And with the new multimodal innovations, we have a unique opportunity here to create and model a new kind of class that is built explicitly through close collaboration and active engagement – with each other and with our campus community. So, if you genuinely embrace this spirit of engagement, you’ll do well in your class citizenship assessment, to be sure, but you will also be helping create something that has a larger, collective importance.

_A Word about Your Written Essays and Their Assessment_

The goal for each essay is for you to express an original idea in a compelling, persuasive fashion and to give your readers a clear understanding of why your essay is a worthwhile endeavor. Getting there, however, is not about memorizing information, formulas, or rules for writing. This class is unlike many others in that it does not test your ability to reproduce a particular set of facts. Assessment in writing is not based on a model where there is a “right” answer; the concept of a perfect score (which you would receive if you answered all the questions on a test correctly) does not apply. In an essay, you are creating knowledge, not reproducing it. Think of your writing in this class not in terms of what you did right or wrong, but in terms of what you discovered and how you expressed the unfolding of your ideas.

As you write, give yourself room to explore the topic. Don’t be frustrated if your argument seems to take on a life of its own and move in a direction you hadn’t anticipated. In fact, the seeds of great arguments often appear in the conclusion of a first draft, after you have considerably analyzed and explored the material. Revisions should thus be _major reworkings_. The process of writing well involves more than rearranging words. It is a messy, often exhausting, yet rewarding cycle of reading observation, reexamining, questioning the text, questioning oneself, writing, rewriting, and so on.
(Let me also add that it is a minimum expectation that you will work hard to make your written work free of grammatical, spelling, and formatting errors. Bloopers happen, but I expect that you will take pride in every piece of writing that you complete.)

No matter what grade your writing receives, you can always learn from it and from its accompanying feedback in terms of how to improve yourself as a writer. The following criteria and rubric translates those single-character grades into more useful terms. Translated as such, a grade can help you understand the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing and help you focus on how to improve it in future work.

**Primary evaluation criteria – unit essays**

**Thesis and Argument**: Is there one main argument in the essay? Does it fulfill the assignment? Does it address some problem, issue, or controversy of consequence? Is the problem/question clearly articulated at the beginning of the essay? Is the thesis interesting, complex? Is it argued throughout?

**Structure**: Is the argument clearly and logically organized? Is it easy to understand the main points? Does it develop and is it unified? Is it easy to follow?

**Evidence & Analysis**: Does the argument offer supporting evidence for each of its points? Is the evidence sufficient and appropriate? Is the analysis of the evidence insightful and convincing? Is the evidence properly attributed? Is the bibliographical information correct?

**Sources**: Are all the appropriate or assigned sources being used? Are they introduced in an understandable way? Is their purpose in the argument clear? Do they do more than merely affirm the writer’s viewpoint or merely present a “straw man” for the writer to knock down? Are responsible inferences drawn from them? Are they properly attributed?

**Style**: Is the style appropriate for its audience and subject matter? Is the writing concise, active, cohesive, and to the point? Are the sentences clear and grammatically correct? Are there spelling, proofreading, and formatting errors? Does the writer engage his or her readers respectfully?

**Grading rubric for written work**

Please note that grades are based on the evidence of the work submitted, not on the effort or time spent on the work. Expos 20 faculty use similar grading standards to ensure evenness and fairness in their evaluations of student work across all Expos sections.

**A**: Work that is ambitious and gives an impression of excellence in all the criteria listed. It grapples with interesting, complex ideas; it responds discerningly to counterarguments; it explores well-chosen evidence revealingly. The argument enhances (rather than underscores) the reader’s and writer’s knowledge; it does not simply repeat what has been taught or what someone else has said. It provides a context for its argument. A general reader outside the class would be engaged and enriched, not confused, by reading it. Its beginning opens up, rather than flatly announces, its argument; its end brings closure to its ideas, rather than closing them off. The language is clean, grounded, and precise. A reader feels surprised, delighted, changed upon encountering it. Only its writer could have illuminated the material in this way, and the writer’s stake in the material is obvious, though not trumpeted.

**B**: Work that gives an impression of general superiority in all the criteria listed. Such work reaches high in its aims and achieves many of them. It has a solid thesis, but some supporting points require more analysis
or are sometimes confusing or disconnected. The language is generally clear and precise but occasionally not. The evidence is relevant, but it may be too little; the context for the evidence may not be sufficiently explored, so that a reader has to make the connections that the writer should have made more clearly. 
Or: Work that reaches less high in its ambition than A work but thoroughly achieves its aims. Such work is solid, but the reasoning or argument is nonetheless rather routine.

C: Work that gives an impression of minimal competence in all the criteria listed. Such work has problems in one or more of the following areas: conception (it has at least one main idea, but that idea is usually unclear); structure (it is disorganized and confusing); evidence (it is weak or inappropriate; it is often presented without context or compelling analysis); style (it is often unclear, awkward, imprecise, or contradictory). Such work may repeat a main point rather than develop an argument or it may touch upon many points. Often its punctuation, grammar, spelling, paragraphs, and transitions are problematic. 
Or: Work that is largely a summary, interpretive summary or simple opinion rather than an argument.

D and F: Work that is below average and deficient in one or more of the criteria listed. Such work does not address the expectations of the assignment or comes very short of what it ought to be in grappling with serious ideas.
Or: Work that has serious problems with thesis, structure, evidence, analysis, sources, or style.

Email and the Course Website

You will use our course website on Canvas to access materials in advance of class, to sign up for conference appointments, and usually to submit electronic copies of your work. You can access our website through the “courses” tab on your my.harvard page (requires sign-in). I check email regularly. If you don’t hear back from me right away, please don’t assume that I’m ignoring you (!); I will respond as soon as I can.

Laptops and Phones in Class

Please, leave computers and phones off and tucked away during our brief bi-weekly meetings, unless we are working on the Weebly site or something else that demands technology. Most of our class time will be low-tech and “old school” – pen and paper, discussion, handouts, face-to-face interaction (no screen gazing). Please make sure to print out and bring the relevant materials to each class. And, get ready for lots of handouts. We will use them in every day so you have to read them. I also urge you to organize them in some way because there will be many.

Attendance Policy, Deadlines, and Completion of the Course

The Writing Program imposes reasonable guidelines regarding attendance. If you are absent without medical or religious excuse more than twice, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and failed. On your second unexcused absence, you will receive a warning letter. All excuses for medical or religious reasons should be communicated to me before class if possible, but in any case within 24 hours of class. You always remain responsible for any work missed.

Please note that absences due to special events – including athletic participation, debates, travel, and conferences – are not excusable, and neither is taking a make-up exam for another class, etc. If you wish to attend an event that will put you over the two-absence limit, you must directly petition the Director of Expository Writing, who will grant such a petition only in extraordinary circumstances and only when your
work has been exemplary. Under no circumstances do unexcused absences extend due dates. Class begins 7
minutes past the hour. Three late arrivals to class may be counted as an absence.

Because Expos is a planned sequence of writing, you must write all of the assigned essays to pass the
course, and you must write them within the schedule of the course – not in the last few days of the
semester after you have fallen behind. You will receive a letter reminding you of these requirements if
you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of an essay by the final due date in that essay unit. The letter
will also specify the new date by which you must submit the late work, and be copied to your Freshman
Dean. If you fail to submit at least a substantial draft of the essay by this new date, and you have not
documented a medical problem, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and given a
failing grade.

If, due to religious observance or a medical or family emergency, you cannot meet a deadline, it is your
responsibility to contact me as soon as possible so that we may work out an alternative schedule of due
dates. In the event of a medical emergency, you must produce a note from your health care practitioner
at UHS; in the event of a family emergency, you must ask your dean to contact me by email or
telephone.

In a writing course, late work is especially problematic because, for one, meeting deadlines goes hand-
in-hand with the writing process. However, I realize that occasionally problems arise. You will have
one 24-hour “wildcard” extension available. Use it on any paper – draft or revision – to give yourself an
extra day. There are no other ways to get extensions, so asking is pointless. Please plan ahead for
computer mishaps; always keep a back-up file of your work; and give yourself plenty of time to upload
or print. Problems uploading documents to Canvas are not acceptable excuses for late work (see
below). Late drafts, which cause all kinds of organizational problems within each unit, will affect
your citizenship assessment; late revisions can be graded down one third of a letter grade each day
(e.g., B+ becomes a B, etc.).

Policy on Electronic Submissions

You will submit most of your work electronically this semester. As you send or upload each document, it is
your responsibility to ensure that you have saved the document in Microsoft Word (no pdf files, only docx
or doc). It is also your responsibility to ensure that the file you are sending is not corrupted or damaged. If I
cannot open or read the file you have sent, the essay will be subject to the late penalty. Also, always include
your name and the assignment in the file name (e.g. “Jones.Essay1Draft.doc”).

Academic Honesty

Policy on Collaboration: The following kinds of collaboration are permitted in this course: developing or
refining ideas in conversation with other students, and through peer review of written work, including
feedback from Writing Center tutors. (If you would like to acknowledge the impact someone had on your
essay, it is customary to do this in a footnote at the beginning of the paper.) As stated in the Student
Handbook, “Students need not acknowledge discussion with others of general approaches to the assignment
or assistance with proofreading.” However, all work submitted for this course must be your own.
Therefore, writing response papers, drafts, or revisions with other students is forbidden. Just to make this clear, here
is Harvard’s suggested wording for policies on student papers:
Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

Plagiarism and Citing Sources: Plagiarism — which includes quoting or borrowing ideas from a source without proper attribution, handing in a paper written for another class, or written by someone else, or taken from the internet — is illegal. If you are quoting the work of others, you must indicate that you are doing so by naming your sources, using quotation marks, and giving the proper bibliographic reference to your material. You must also note when you are summarizing or referring to the ideas of another person in your own writing; unattributed paraphrasing is not acceptable. If you have questions about the fine line between being influenced by a text or person and plagiarizing his/her/its ideas, it’s better to be safe than sorry: cite the source. We will discuss the proper use of sources in class, but you should also consult the Writing with Sources website or ask me whenever you have questions.

Resources and Writing Support

Meetings with me: I don’t limit my meetings with you to office hours; rather, I will be available most weekdays to meet with you (at my office at One Bow Street, #211 or at some other location). If you have questions, want to extend our class discussions, or get help specific to your individual progress as a thinker and writer, please make an appointment with me. Scheduling is harder during conference weeks, but that doesn’t mean we can’t talk.

Friends and Informal Support: Writing can be lonely. I would suggest finding fellow students to read your work, especially rough drafts, or just to talk through your ideas. Naturally, a good place to find readers is in our class, but also consider having outside friends give you feedback. Reciprocate: try to return the favor somehow. Tell friends to be balanced but honest in their reactions, and that you need specific ideas for revising rather than general assessments. Use and value the support that friends provide.

Writing Center: At any stage of the writing process — while brainstorming ideas, reviewing drafts, or approaching revisions — you may find yourself wanting help with your essays above and beyond your conferences with me, informal help, and our in-class peer workshops. The Writing Center (located on the garden level of the Barker Center) offers drop-in hours and appointments with trained tutors, and is an invaluable resource. Visit the Writing Center’s website at: writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu to make an appointment. Sign-up early because things can fill up.

Finally, let me list a few catchphrases that will we discuss at various points during the semester. You might find it helpful to keep them in mind as you grapple with the never-ending challenges we all face in finding our own voice in our writing and communicating:

Writing is thinking. Keep it simple. The work will teach you how to do it.
Be a real person in your prose -- be present. Do something small really, really well.