English 3- Critical Reading, Writing, and Thinking FA 2016

**Which Candidate Supports My Positions? Thinking Critically about the Election 2016**

Deborah Lapp F 7:40-10:45 in SOC-35

Check your email throughout the summer; here’s mine:

[deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu](mailto:deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu)

As this is a critical thinking class and it’s an election year, we will attempt to get to the bottom of these crazy politics. Over the summer, please stay abreast of election news from a variety of sources (stretch yourself, even before class begins!) Collect **articles and political cartoons you like** to share on the first Friday.

Because we will have an author who is also an Army veteran coming to speak on Thursday, October 13th at 7PM in the Forum Hall, please also pay attention to **foreign policy as it pertains to the War on Terrorism**. Pay attention to the different candidates’ positions on international issues.

**Immigration and wealth distribution** are topics of pressing and often personal concern to those of us in the Valley. We will read a novel with immigration and wealth distribution as central themes. We miss three classes because of Friday holidays and a conference, but the timing is perfect—you’ll read a third of the novel each of those weeks. Or, if you’d like to get a head start, it’s a fun, often funny, novel and makes for **great summer reading**:

***The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle**

T.C. Boyle will be coming to campus in the Spring. He is a hot shot, blue chip writer, and you get to meet him! If you take my English 41 class (online in the Spring), we’ll be reading this and a few more novels and short stories by Boyle and looking at how he portrays women. This semester with *Tortilla Curtain*, we’ll be looking at the US relationship with Mexico and Mexican immigrants and the disparity of wealth in the US.

**We won’t have any textbooks**, but we will have two more little books, which we will cover weeks 2-8, one poetry and one memoir, by Brian Turner, an Army veteran and splendid writer whom we will meet:

7PM Thursday, October 13th

mark that date on your calendars now!

***Here, Bullet*** *(poetry, includes the poem “Hurt Locker”)*

***My Life as a Foreign Country*** both by Brian Turner

and articles and contributions from popular and social media.

**Course Description:** English 3 reaches beyond what you learned in English 1A to put into practice the academic university level writing I assume you mastered in that class. We concentrate on summary, analysis, and scholarly argument. You will explore multiple positions on several topics. Be prepared to hear and engage with multiple positions and to support your own with logic.

Because we have the opportunity to meet some famous thinkers here at Reedley College, we will read and analyze works by them and perhaps counterpoints to their positions. Because this is an election year, we will follow election politics. Please choose topics that interests you because you will become more passionately engaged in your research, thinking, and writing. But, while passionate engagement is a key to success in this and any class, you will supplement your passion with sound reasoning.

Attendance, preparedness, and timely submission of work are also keys to your success (which, by this time in your academic career should go without saying). We meet only once a week, and a graded assignment is due practically each week at 8AM. Get organized because **I won’t be accepting late papers**, and a zero can have a dramatic effect on your grade (10 percent, which means a “B” becomes a “C”). Of course, if you are in dire and desperate straits, talk to me. On three occasions (Weeks 10, 13, and 15), we have no class so you will read *Tortilla Curtain* independently. I trust you are mature enough to manage your time and get this done—especially since the book is pretty fun! We will meet at least once on a weekday evening to hear a speaker (Thursday, October 13th is already on your calendar from above). When we have evening speakers, I trade you for your time (for example, you’ll come on Friday, October 14th at 9:30 instead of 8AM because you attended the Brian Turner talk the night before). If there’s no way for you to participate, I will arrange an alternate assignment for you.

In class, you will often be called on to participate in class discussion, so come prepared with your ideas in written form so you can enter the scholarly conversation. In your writing, you will also enter the scholarly conversation with me and with each other, so we will aim for correctness, power, complexity, and grace in academic writing. While writing is essential for academia, it is also critical for succeeding in the modern world. **My goal is to prepare you for real world writing and thinking.**

**Assignments and Grading:**

To evaluate your writing, I use the Department Rubric I have posted on the website or occasionally we’ll draw up a rubric of our own for a specific assignment. Assignment grades are delineated in the syllabus below. You’ll see there’s a built-in incentive to have perfect attendance.

Revisions will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If you have clearly produced a good effort and failed, I will ask you (not the other way around) to revise the paper. The grade will say “R,” and that means you must come see me MW 12-2 or right at noon on Friday (I have a class after yours in Soc 30).

Plagiarism is presenting anyone else’s work as your own; it’s wrong; it’s against the law; and it will result in **at least** a zero on the assignment. We have Turnitin.com on this campus, and I am psychic. **If you are desperate, talk to me.**

There should be about 12 grades then, which are added up and divided by the number of essays grades, so you can determine your grade at any time. If you ever have any questions or worries, talk to me.

One good way to “talk” to me is by email (do remember that you are communicating with your English professor, not your homie, and do proofread your emails), or come to my office during office hours or anytime. You can refer to the website for info. One-on-one conversations with me usually net good results for students.

**Attendance and Participation**

I have noticed over the years a direct correlation between low grades and poor attendance. I may drop any student who has missed two classes. As tardies and cellphones have become intolerable in recent semesters, I have adjusted my policies. I *may* lock the door when I start class and graded work will be due at 8:05, so plan ahead to be on time. I allow cellphones for class use, but English class is not the place to check email or Facebook. If you must leave to go to the restroom, you’ll leave your phone on my table. We will take a break as a class around 9:30.

If you must miss a class, be sure to communicate with me. Depending on the circumstance, I may accept your work early (but not late) if you must miss class. You are responsible for what happened in your absence and what’s due the following week. I am strict but fair—tough love (you’ll thank me later).

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

**English 3 Lapp FA 16 Syllabus by Weeks:**

(12 underlined items are graded for 100 points each, about one per week)

**Politics in General and Visual Rhetoric**

Week 1 (8/19) Summary, visual rhetoric, and political cartoons

Post poster for each candidate to develop until November

**Foreign Policy and Military Intervention**

Week 2 (8/26) Analysis of cartoon due; current op-ed pieces;

*Here Bullet* poems (each student gets one); post personae

Week 3 (9/10) Summary and analysis due, present poems

*Hurt Locker* or other film; Begin *My Life as a Foreign Country*

Week 4 (9/9) Film presentation due

Just War theory, pacifism—what various faiths say

Claim, Warrant, Support--Toulmin Argument

Week 5 (9/16) Argument outline due; where candidates stand

Week 6 (9/23) Analyze candidates on international policy

9/28 @ 7PM @ FAM Special on Farmworkers (more later)

Week 7 (9/30) Support and rebuttal for Turner

Week 8 (10/7) Turner paper due, fallacies, midterm grades

Week 9 (10/13 7PM Thurs. for Turner, 10/14 class starts at 9AM)

Discuss reactions to Turner; Begin *Tortilla Curtain*

**Immigration and Legalization**

**Employment and Distribution of Wealth**

Week 10 (no class Friday) read *Tortilla Curtain*

Week 11 (10/28) election analysis—warrants on the wall

Week 12 (11/4) Candidate/issue election presentations

Week 13 (VOTE on 11/8, Veteran’s Day Friday) Read *Curtain*

Week 14 (11/18) Analyze election results; *Crash*

Week 15 (Thanksgiving) Finish *Tortilla* *Curtain*

Week 16 (12/2) *Curtain-Crash* analysispaper draft due;

Week 17 (12/9) Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” (apply to self, Turner, a character in *Curtain*, and a candidate)

FINAL take-home, due Monday 12/12 by noon, CCI-212 or [deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu](mailto:deborah.lapp@reedleycollege.edu)