



25% of course grade; due 12/10

## **Project 3: Finding Common Ground**

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### **Project 3:**

Write a topically organized essay analyzing two or more essays that take different positions on an issue.

Your purpose is to analyze the essays to understand their authors' areas of agreement and to identify the differences in values, perspectives, or priorities that have caused the disagreement. Hone in on the most critical area of disagreement, and determine whether or not it is possible to mediate this disagreement, explaining why/why not, and how.

You must cite all sources in MLA (or another academic style of your choosing), providing both in-text and bibliographic citations.

You may integrate images, tables, etc. if they are rhetorically purposeful. You will cite those as you do any other source.

This project should be 900 to 1,500 words in length.

### **Topic Selection:**

Choose your debate from the options below. You will need to hand in a proposal and some pre-writing on your chosen topic early in the portfolio 3 sequence, so don't put this decision off.

- You may pick an online debate from the [Intelligence Squared archives](#). If you choose one of these debates, and you'd like to see a transcript (a text version of what everyone said), open up the page for that debate and look for the link to the **transcript** on the right side of that screen.
- You may also use the [United Kingdom's Intelligence Squared](#) debate site, though it doesn't always have transcripts.
- You may use the textbook publisher's Web site, which has [a folder of debate "case files"](#) on several popular topics.
  - You will need to log in and under the Browse by Resources section, click on the Resources for Finding Common Ground link. You will have to click on the active link below that to reach the page.
  - Note that some of the links for some of the topics may not work. If they do not, talk to your instructor about another topic or about possible replacements for the missing source. (Sometimes I can find it elsewhere online.)
- You may use any debates from pp. 218-241 of the *St. Martin's Guide*.
- You may use any of the [paired readings](#) posted on our class website. These were used for past DLEs and Capstones.
  - Some of the authors in this list are fictitious -- their essays were written in-house. These tend to be the second (right-hand) readings. In one case, the Mark Millar debate, the essay was commissioned from an outside writer, Jeremiah Wishon.

### **Turning it in:**

This writing project will be the centerpiece of your third portfolio (which must also include a reflective overview. See below for more on that!).

The portfolio will be due by the start of our final exam period (1 p.m. on December 12<sup>th</sup>) and is worth 20% of your final course grade. Approximately half of the portfolio grade will come from the reflective overview, and the other half from the project 3 document.

You will hand the portfolio in electronically by emailing it to me ([dlackey@twu.edu](mailto:dlackey@twu.edu)) before class on the due date. Please use the subject line: ENG 1013.23 Portfolio 3.

Please remember to give your files names that identify both the author and the project! (My suggestions are: yoursurname\_project3.doc, and yoursurname\_Reflection3.doc.)

### **Reflective overview:**

In this class, you will never hand in **just** the project document. Instead, you will hand in a portfolio comprised of the current project document and a sort of cover letter, called a reflective overview. In this critical, thoughtful, and carefully edited reflection of approximately three to five pages, you are to explain your work and learning during this project cycle. As we approach the end of this portfolio period, I will help you develop a list of prompts to guide you in considering various aspects of this project, but just as each of you have your own unique reading/writing/research and learning processes, what you cover in your reflection, and how you do so, will also be quite individual. An understanding of the purposes of this type of writing is therefore more useful than a list of prompts.

One way to think about the purpose of your overview is to persuade readers that your performance for the period of the project should be evaluated in a certain way, earning a certain grade, with ample reasons to support your claims. This piece is meant to help you demonstrate your performance as a learner/researcher/writer, but also to help your reader understand the kinds of work, engagement and learning that you went through.

Report on and evaluate the different processes you used in various parts/stages of each assignment, explore what and how you learned, and evaluate whether/how what you've done/learned will be (or not be) useful to you (for this class and others, and in your day-to-day life). Remember to be more than descriptive about your work—be reflective *and* analytical. Explain the text you've created. How? Why? What works? What doesn't?

Include a section in your reflective overview that serves as self-assessment. Based on the expectations for the project/the course, what grade do you think it should earn, and why? Please list concrete reasons from the assignment, your readings, and/or the learning goals articulated in our syllabus to explain why this grade is appropriate.

Because it is such an important piece of writing, this reflective overview will be the result of multiple drafts and peer review. It will represent careful, college level writing. Obviously, with this much to accomplish, the overview is important. Effective overviews will be carefully developed, well organized, and clear.