ASSIGNMENTS 1

Active Participation

Your active participation is essential for this class! Contribute to our class discussions and in small group work and critically engage with our material. You will need to prepare all readings to be able to actively participate in class - mark up your readings or take notes when watching a video. Bring all of your material to class.

Weekly Questions

Weekly questions that you will post in the collaborative part of our "Class Notebook" also serve to prepare our discussions. Post these questions by Monday morning at 10am of the week when we are discussing a certain text or video, so that I can integrate them into my weekly planning. These questions shouldn't be knowledge-based (such as who wrote the text, who is in the text) but rather should help us to analyze the text and its relation to human rights.

Answers

At three points during the semester (see schedule for the due dates), you will post an answer to any of the questions (your own or another one or one that came up during class) of the previous weeks. These posts are informal, which means they don't have to look like academic writing, they can be your reflection. They can serve to get you started to think about an issue more deeply and prepare your research. The answers should be about 300 words long and posted in your private space in the "Class Notebook."

ASSIGNMENTS 2

Presentations

Theory

You will present twice this semester.

Everyone will read a theoretical text from the field of Human Rights and Literature and present its main points on January 22nd. In our "Class Notebook," on the page titled "Theories," you will list the authors' names, the title of the article with full bibliographical information, and the main thesis of the article. In class, you will present for 5-10 minutes explaining this thesis in more detail and describing the approach of the theory.

Background (UG)

Undergraduate students will present a human rights document related to a topic we will discuss in preparation for our reading (that means, the presentation will happen on Wednesday before we begin discussing the topic in the subsequent week). You will need to read the treaty for this presentation and describe its scope and main points in a 5-10 minute presentation.

Discussion Lead (G)

Graduate students will lead one class session (Monday of a given week). You will choose a text, will read this text carefully and identify and read secondary sources to understand the context and some interpretations of the text. You will then provide the other students with discussion questions in the week before the text is taught. On the day of your lead, you will give a very short (!) presentation about the context (e.g. historical events, author) of the text. Then you will lead the class in their discussion of the text (this can also include small group work and activities). We will discuss your lesson at least two weeks in advance (have the primary text read by then).
And I am there, too, if you get stuck.

ASSIGNMENTS 3

WRITING AND MORE

OPTION 1: THE UNESSAY

The essay originally was supposed to be a flexible open form, but it has become rather formulaic and structured. It is, therefore, often not a good tool to try out new ideas. Enter the stage, the "Unessay" that brings back the creativity that has been lost in essay writing. The description below has been inspired by Ryan Cordell (Northeastern U) and Cate Denial (Knox C).

For the Unessay, you:
- choose your own topic
- present it in any way you please (yes, any way. Search for #unessay on twitter and other internet resources for examples)
- are evaluated on how compelling and effective your Unessay is.

Topic:
You can choose any topic you want as long as you can relate it to our course content and concepts. You can take any sources and as many or as few as you want (wikipedia and such are fine, too). The only requirement is that it engages our course content in a "compelling" and "effective" manner and makes your audience consider the issue deeply.

Presentation mode:
There are no formal requirements. You can write, sing, play, create, make, speak - whatever you choose (from knitting to writing a graphic novel) is fine as long as we have cleared it beforehand (see proposal under Step 1 below).

ASSIGNMENTS 4

OPTION 1: THE UNESSAY CONTINUED

Reflection:
Together with your final product, you will submit a reflection (3 pages) that details what you have learned while creating the Unessay, in what ways it helped you work through a problem mentioned in class or understand an issue raised in class more deeply. You will also submit a bibliography of all the sources you used for your Unessay.

Steps:

- on March 16th, you hand in a proposal for the topic and form of your Unessay. We can chat beforehand and brainstorm together, but this is yours and you can be as creative as you want. All ideas are welcome!
- on April 1st, you submit an update (just tell me where you are in the process, what sources you may have found, whether you have encountered any problems, ask for guidance, or tell me whether you have switched gears) and a brief explanation of the standards of evaluation for your Unessay (that means, you will say what you want to accomplish with your Unessay and what grading criteria should be used to make sure that your Unessay meets the requirements for the grade you are looking to achieve in this class.
- on April 15th, you submit your reflection and bibliography on Canvas and your actual Unessay in class (unless it is a digital product, then you also submit it on Canvas).
- on April 20th, you will present your Unessay in class (10-15 minutes).

ASSIGNMENTS 5

OPTION 2: ESSAY

You can also decide to stick with a traditional research paper instead of the Unessay.

Graduate Students. You:
- propose a topic that builds on our in-class discussions and material by February 26th
- write a first draft by March 16th (the more you have, the more support I can give you, but you should have at least five pages written for this to be helpful)
- submit your final version by April 15th (the final version needs to be 12-15 pages long, double-spaced in a traditional 12pt font, include at least one primary and five secondary sources, and analyze a text or film in relation to human rights)
- present your research on April 20th at our in-class conference.

Undergraduate Students. You:
- choose to write one or two paper of together 8-10 pages (if one, 8 is sufficient, if two, each should be 4-5 pages long)
- pick a topic from a list of questions that I provide or come up with one and clear it with me
- write a first draft (by February 26th and March 30th for two essays, by March 16th for one) that is at least 3 pages long (the more you have, the better I can help)
- submit a final version (by March 18th and April 15th for two essays, by April 15th for one) - that is 4-5pages/8-10pages long (12pt font), includes at least one primary and three secondary sources, and analyzes a text or film in relation to human rights
- present (one of your) paper(s) at our in-class conference on April 20th.