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Office Hours: On Zoom,
By Appointment

EWRT 2
Section 69Z
Winter 2025
Asynchronous, on Canvas

English 2: Critical Reading, Writing, and Thinking – Legacies of Slavery in the U.S.

Description of the Course Theme

As is widely known, U.S. slavery officially ended in the mid-19th century at the close of the Civil War and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, but its legacy has continued to live on in many different ways, from everyday cultural racism to the structural inequalities of our criminal justice system. In our EWRT 2 course this quarter, we will be exploring the different forms the legacy of slavery has taken and continues to take in U.S. society, critically thinking, reading, and writing about both the conscious and unconscious ways that slavery is fundamental to understanding contemporary U.S. society. Key questions that we will be asking throughout the quarter are the following: if slavery has informed our past after its abolition and continues to inform our contemporary moment, then can we say that it is really “over”? What would it mean for slavery to end in an absolute sense? What does slavery’s complex legacy tell us about slavery itself and our national history? What does it tell us about our current society? What should we do and how should we think about these different legacies of slavery? In our exploration of these questions and more, we will study various types of texts—poetry, a play, essays, mixed media, film, and a novel. We will write various types of essays—personal, analytical, and research-based—all of which will be organized around answering our key questions and studying the nature of slavery’s legacy and how it relates to our lives and our contemporary moment.

Description of the Research-Based Course Approach

EWRT 2 is unique in the writing sequence at De Anza in that it is a research-based writing course. To this end, we will be doing external research throughout the course, from basic Google searches to academic research using De Anza’s library databases. I’ll help guide you through this research, but I also want to explain why we’re doing it in the first place. The point of such an approach is that it contextualizes our understanding of the course texts and makes us aware of the way that our texts and their authors are involved in larger and various conversations; we can think of our course texts as just nodes of a broader network of conversations, which in the context of our class will be about slavery in the U.S. and its legacies. The basic premise of research-based reading and writing, then, is that it deepens our engagement with the readings and broadens and raises the level of our writing to be consciously involved in these many conversations. I hope you’ll find it a useful and interesting way to critically read and write about our course texts and to develop your own critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

Student Learning Outcomes

In English 2, we will apply critical thinking skills to writing and complex readings. We will demonstrate academic (analytical, argumentative) writing based on our reading of complex texts, and we will also demonstrate analysis, comparison, synthesis, and documentation in independent research.

Remote Course Organization

This course is going to be taught online in an asynchronous format using Canvas for our course platform and Zoom for office hours. This means that our class will be fully online and that we will not meet together as a class over Zoom or in person. While you will be working individually on assignments during your own time, we will have regular weekly assignment deadlines, weekly public Canvas posts, peer-editing requirements that involve coordinating with other students in the course, and weekly Zoom office hours. If there is interest, I may add group office hours as a way for students to connect with each other and me over Zoom.

Course Texts

Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing* (2016, Vintage, ISBN-10: 1101971061)

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959, Vintage, ISBN-10: 0679755330)

Course Reader (on Canvas via individual PDFs)

Our two course texts are available at the De Anza [Bookstore](#), and the course reader will be provided to you on Canvas. You must purchase the Hansberry and Gyasi books in print form (not digital copies); in Week 2, I will require you to upload a selfie with your books, so be sure to order them on the first day of class. The bookstore has an online ordering system, but you can also purchase books in person if you will be on campus this quarter. You may also order the course texts elsewhere, but please use the ISBN numbers provided above so that you purchase these exact editions. I will also add readings throughout the quarter, particularly on writing and grammar, as I become more familiar with your writing skills, and these will be provided to you on Canvas.

On the print copy requirement: reading in print and reading digitally are different types of intellectual activities, and I want you to have the experience of reading our longer course texts in print form. Research shows that critical thinking, reading, and writing—the subject of our course—are all more likely to happen when reading in print, a form that allows you to be in three dimensions with what you are reading and that comes with fewer distractions. Please make sure to only purchase print copies of the two course texts and please let me know at the start of the quarter if you are having trouble accessing hard copies of these books.

Course Grading Breakdown

Participation (Canvas engagement, weekly discussion posts and responses, familia participation, WRC participation) — 10%; Reading Journals, Quizzes, Homework Videos, and Homework Assignments — 20%; Essays and Prewriting — 70% (Personal Essay — 10%, Analytical Essay #1 — 15%, Analytical Essay #2 — 15%, Final Research Paper — 30%). You must submit and complete all major assignments to be eligible to earn a passing grade.

Course Requirements

Remote Participation, Canvas Protocols, and Office Hours: Active engagement is important to the success of this course as a whole and to your individual success in it. For asynchronous

online courses, active engagement is measured by the timeliness of your assignment submissions, the thoroughness of your work, the frequency of time spent on Canvas, your participation in writing families, and your lively participation on our course discussion board where you will also interact with your classmates. It is also measured by your frequent communication with me, whether this be over email, Canvas, in office hours, or via your assignments. The best way to get in touch with me is by [email](#). I check my email frequently throughout the week, but I generally sign off at the dinner hour. If you email me in the evening, I will likely not respond until the next day. If you haven't received a response from me within 24-hours, please resend your email or try to message me on Canvas; it is likely that I didn't receive your email. If I send you an email, Canvas message, or note on one of your assignments on Canvas, please respond in a timely manner. Failure to respond will adversely affect your participation grade as well as your overall grade in the course, as online communication is the main way we will be interacting this quarter.

I will also be available for office hours on Zoom by appointment during the week. Please email me to set up an appointment, offering several times that are convenient for you. The Zoom link for office hours is in the "College and Course Resources and Guides" module on Canvas (the first module), and we will be using that link all quarter.

Overall, the most important thing this quarter is to be in open communication with me about any challenges that you are facing meeting any of the course expectations. I'm here to help you succeed and will do whatever I can to make that possible. Please do reach out!

Communication Plan and Assignment Feedback: Each Friday, I will post the upcoming week's module, which will include all of our class content for the week and all assignments. The modules will follow the reading and writing schedule that is below, so you will also be able to plan ahead and anticipate what will be in each week's module. Please be sure to review the module each week. Every Monday, I will make a "Week in Review" video in which I walk through the week's module as well as go over any assignments that will be due. Throughout the quarter, I will also send out announcements via Canvas to coordinate writing groups, remind you of upcoming assignments, and alert you to any possible changes.

In terms of course feedback, on minor assignments, I will use the Canvas feedback review function, leaving margin comments on your uploaded document and end comments on the assignment. You can find the margin comments via the "view feedback" button, and you will see the end comment when you open the assignment. Please also be sure to turn on the assignment notification function, which will alert you when I have left a comment on your assignments. You can expect to receive feedback from me on minor assignments within 72-96 hours. On the major essay assignments, I will have a rubric on Canvas (attached to the assignment), which you can view beforehand. Please use these as guides for writing your paper. I will need to have access to your original document to leave feedback for your essays, and I will include instructions about this in each assignment. In addition to receiving comments on your essay document, you will also receive feedback via the rubric itself. You can expect to receive feedback from me on major assignments within 2 weeks.

Student Workload: This is a 5-unit course, and typically one unit equals one hour of classroom work at De Anza. Students should expect to spend two hours of outside

preparation for each course unit in addition to the in-class time, which for us is asynchronous. For our course, this means that you should expect to spend a maximum of 15 hours/week on this course. In other words, this course is a significant time commitment. While I will try to help you work as efficiently as possible, it is important to realize that this course will demand a significant amount of your time every week. Please reach out if you have concerns about the time commitment required for this course.

Planning: If you do not have a planner, I would strongly encourage you to get one now. Using a planner to map out your assignments for this course and your other responsibilities (including eating and sleeping!) is crucial for you to determine how you will manage your time this quarter and when you will complete the work necessary to succeed in this course. I'm happy to talk about time-management strategies and offer suggestions about planning your schedule, so please reach out if you need help with this!

Reading Tips: Reading is a very demanding and difficult task, especially when done well and especially in our digital age when so many distractions are possible. We'll be talking more about reading strategies this quarter, but I have some initial suggestions that I hope you'll take up and experiment with this quarter: 1) turn off your cell phone while you read for class, or put it far away from you, somewhere that is difficult to reach. 2) Only use your computer to look up definitions of words or to write down notes as you read. 3) Clear your workspace. 4) Before you read, take some time to think about the genre of the reading and look up important contexts: Who is the author? When were they alive? When was this piece written and in what publication? What is it generally about? Why did the author write it? 5) Read slowly and take breaks, especially if you're feeling uninterested or tired. Getting up and moving around every half hour or so helps us stay focused when we're reading and keeps our mind fresh.

Lecture Recordings: I will post various recordings over the course of the quarter to introduce writing concepts, explain key ideas of the readings and assignments, introduce paper prompts, and review our weekly reading and assignments. These recordings will be in our modules, and you should plan to watch them by the end of the day on which they are posted. Especially important will be the recordings I post on Monday mornings, which will review the upcoming readings and assignments for each week.

Reading Assignments: You are expected to complete the reading assignments by the due dates listed in the reading schedule below and in the modules, having annotated the reading, taken extensive notes, and completed any homework associated with it. I will occasionally ask you to upload your annotations to show how you are engaging with the readings.

Homework Assignments: Quizzes, Keywords, Reading Questions, Reading Journals, Response Videos, etc.: I will assign various reading homework to help us analytically engage with our texts and prepare for our essays, one of these being keyword exercises that ask you to do outside Internet research to learn about the various contexts for our reading. I will also give you reading analysis questions to help guide your reading and sometimes ask you to post videos in response to the course material. In Week 3, when we start reading our play, we will also begin keeping reading journals, which will help us track our thinking about our two

major texts and help us learn to ask our own reading analysis questions as well as prepare for our papers by having worked through critical ideas and proposed interpretations of our texts. I will offer a model for these journals and guide us through the process in Week 2.

Class Discussion Posts and Responses: Each Friday of the quarter, you will be required to submit a post in the Class Discussion section of Canvas in response to a question (or sometimes a series of questions) that I pose there. In addition to your Friday post, you should set aside time over the weekend to read through your classmates' posts and respond to at least one post or comment; your response will be due each week by Sunday. Please wait until Sunday to comment on a post (i.e. don't comment and post at the same time on Friday). Due to the volume of posts that will be generated on our discussion board, I won't be able to accept late posts or responses on discussion threads, so be sure to submit them on time to receive participation credit for the week.

Writing Assignments and Turnitin.com: You are required to complete four essays—a personal essay, two analytical essays, and an analytical research paper. All papers will involve extensive drafting and planning, much of which will be done in writing groups. All papers are due on Canvas, and they will be cross-checked by turnitin.com on our Canvas site, as will your homework. Late papers will be docked half of a letter grade for each day the paper is late and papers over one week late cannot earn a passing grade, although they must still be submitted for credit to ensure that you will be eligible to pass the course. I have an open revision policy on all papers except the final research paper, so you are welcome and encouraged to revise your work. If you are planning to revise a paper, please check in with me beforehand so I can send you the revision guidelines that I require students to follow while completing revisions.

Late Work Policy: Late assignments will be docked 10% for each day they are late. This means that late papers will be docked a letter grade for each day the paper is late; papers over one week late cannot earn a passing grade, although they must still be submitted for credit to ensure that you will be eligible to pass the course.

Writing Familias: We will be forming familia groups in which you will receive feedback on your writing from your classmates. Please see the Google doc dedicated to familia sign-ups available in both the first module and the Week 1 module and sign up for a familia by the designated due date. I will post more instructions on how familias will work once you begin drafting your first paper.

Writing and Reading Center Resource—Tutoring Requirement: The [Writing and Reading Center](#) at De Anza is an incredible resource for students like us who are honing our reading and reading and writing skills, and we are very lucky to have access to it. Everyone is required to complete two WRC tutoring sessions this quarter. See the WRC link above for how to sign up, and see the Resources module on Canvas for information and videos that introduce you to the Center. The deadline for completing each tutoring session is in the reading, writing, and assignment schedule below, but feel free to complete them before the deadline and to sign up for as many as you would like. I will also include the deadlines in our Canvas modules throughout the quarter, and I will offer extra credit if you attend extra sessions.

Academic Integrity and Citation: Academic integrity is crucial in all aspects of academic life, but especially in a course geared toward developing and improving your own thinking and writing. Academic integrity means being open, honest, and clear about the work you do and giving proper credit to people, websites, or chatbots that you might borrow from or rely on. Thus, whenever you refer, indirectly or directly, to ideas that are not your own, you must indicate the source. This applies to paraphrase and summary as well as to quotation; it also applies to the ideas and passages that you use in your homework and papers. And, of course, it certainly applies to purchasing essays online and passing them off as your own. It also applies to using large language model resources, such as ChatGPT. While we may do a little experimentation with ChatGPT writing in this course, overall you should not be using ChatGPT. If you do, you will be dropped from the course immediately, as such use has become a *huge* issue in writing courses, especially asynchronous ones like ours. As your instructor, I will be paying close attention to your writing and ideas, helping you refine and improve them, but, to do this, you must adhere to a basic level of integrity, that is, meeting me with *your* writing and ideas not something AI generated. All of this is to say, academic dishonesty constitutes *any* information or language from a source that is left unidentified or incorrectly cited as well as more egregious forms of plagiarism. As long as you cite any outside material that you reference and avoid using ChatGPT you will do well in this course. If a student plagiarizes any assignment (including drafts and journals), they will fail the assignment, may risk failing the course, and will be reported to the College's Dean of Students. See the [De Anza Student Handbook](#) for an explanation of academic integrity.

In terms of citation style, you will be graded on the correct use of MLA citation and are required to write all papers using MLA format, which we will review throughout the course. We will be using [Purdue University's Online Writing Lab](#) as our citation reference manual. Please familiarize yourself with the website and the basics of MLA format outlined there.

Weekly Discussion Board Environment: Our course has typically been taught as a discussion-based seminar, and as we have made the transition to offering asynchronous classes, it is important that we still all work to foster the kind of space that is crucial for face-to-face seminars as well, that being an inviting, respectful, non-judgmental, and lively environment. I hope that our remote classroom is a space in which we are trying out ideas, voicing a variety of opinions, and attempting to figure things out together. I expect everyone to come to the course each week ready to actively engage with the course material and each other, share ideas, and expand and challenge our thinking.

Key Add/Drop Dates:

Sunday, January 19: Last day to add a class and to drop a class without a "W"

Friday, February 28: Last day to drop with a "W"

Additional Resources

Disability Support Services: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability or if you need any type of supplementary assistance in this course, please see me in my office hours during the first two weeks of the quarter with the appropriate documentation from Disability

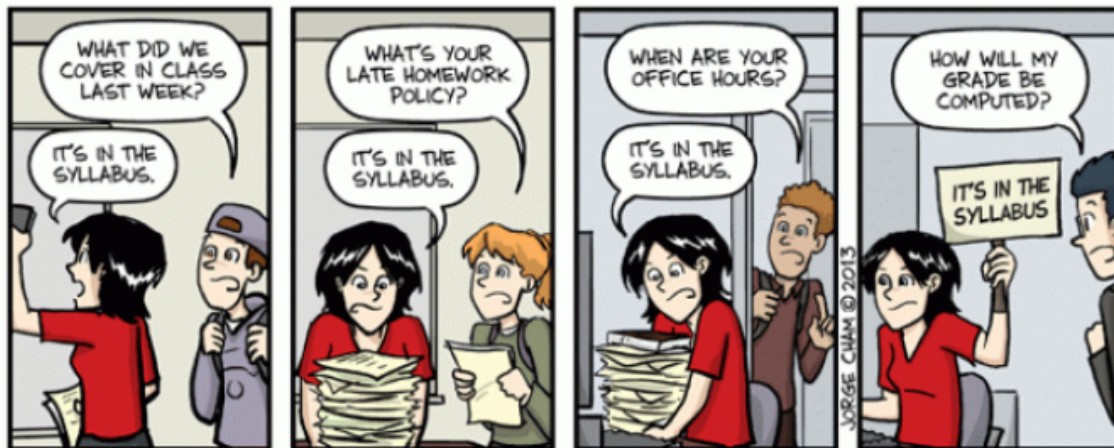
Support Services. You can reach the DSS office for appointments via phone (# 408-864-8753) and [email](#).

[Student Health Resources](#): Student Health Services is open for in-person appointments and limited virtual appointments.

[Food, Technology, Financial, Internet Access Resources, and more](#): You have access to an array of food resources as well as funds for technology and Internet needs. See this [site](#) for details and how to access these resources and more.

Reading and Writing Homework Assignment Schedule—Canvas Modules and Syllabus

All of your reading and writing homework assignments will be listed and linked to in the modules on our Canvas homepage. The assignments are due on the day on which they are listed in the modules; you will also see these assignment due dates in your assignments section on Canvas. I will roll out the modules on a week-by-week basis, so be sure to check them frequently so that you stay up to date. I will aim to publish each week's module by Friday of the previous week, if not before. You will receive a detailed prompt for each major paper assignment and for your journals, which I will post in the modules ahead of time; you will also be able to find these prompts in the "Paper Prompt" folder in the "Files" section of Canvas. Major paper assignments as well as the reading schedule and some homework assignments are listed in the reading and writing schedule below, but you may have additional daily homework in the modules, especially as the quarter picks up and I become more familiar with your writing. Please use the syllabus schedule below to plan ahead and to stay up to date with your major reading and writing assignments. All readings and assignments are due by the end of the day on the assigned date.



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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Reading, Assignment, and Paper Schedule

Unit 1: Legacies of Slavery—American Dreams, American Realities

Week 1: Introduction to the Course and Unit 1

Monday, January 6: Introduction to the Course—Syllabus and Canvas Review, “Getting to Know You” Survey, “Writing Familia Sign-Up

*Due on Canvas: “Getting to Know You” Survey, Writing Familia Sign-Up; Question or Comment Post on Class Discussion Board (Optional)

Tuesday, January 7: Edward Hirsch, “How to Read a Poem” (2007); Langston Hughes, “Harlem” (1951); Gwendolyn Brooks, “kitchenette building” (1945)

*Due on Canvas: Reading Questions on Hirsch, Hughes, and Brooks

Thursday, January 9: Ralph Ellison, “Harlem is Nowhere” (1948); Introduction to Reading Journals

*Due on Canvas: Reading Journal Model Questions on Ellison

Friday, January 10: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas (see Canvas Discussions for Questions)

Sunday, January 12: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas (respond to a Classmate’s post, or respond to someone else’s comment on your original post; please do not post your response until after Friday and until you’ve read through all of your classmates’ posts)

Week 2: Paper #1 Workshop

Tuesday, January 14: Paper #1 Workshop with Familia Partner

***Full Draft of Paper Due on Canvas and to your Partner (details to follow on paper exchanges)**

Thursday, January 16: Paper #1 Peer Editing Worksheet and Edited Paper Due

Friday, January 17: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, January 19: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

***Paper #1 Due: Final Draft**

Unit 2: Jim Crow, Housing Covenants, and Deferred Dreams

Week 3: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*

Tuesday, January 21: Lorraine Hansberry; *A Raisin in the Sun*; Introduction and Act 1, Scene 1 (pp. 5-53); Imani Perry, "Migration Song" (pp. 9-26), from *Looking for Lorraine* (2018)

*Opening Questions Due

*Selfie with Print Copies of the Course Texts Due

Thursday, January 23: Hansberry; *A Raisin in the Sun*; Act 1, Scene 2, and Act 2, Scene 1 (pp. 54-95)

*Reading Journal Due

Friday, January 24: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, January 26: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 4: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*; *Raisin on Screen*

Tuesday, January 28: Hansberry; *A Raisin in the Sun*; Act 2, Scenes 2 and 3 (pp. 96-130)

*Reading Questions Due

Thursday, January 30: Hansberry; *A Raisin in the Sun*; Act 3 (pp. 131-151, finish play); Introduction to Research

*Reading Journal Due

Friday, January 31: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

***Paper #2: Topic, Abstract, and Introduction Due**

Sunday, February 2: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas;

***Remote Film Screening of *A Raisin in the Sun* (watch over the weekend)**

Week 5: *A Raisin in the Sun* on Screen; Paper #2 Workshop

Tuesday, February 4: Paper #2 Workshop

***Paper #2 Full Draft Due**

Thursday, February 6: Paper #2 Workshop

***Peer Editing Worksheets for Paper #2 Due**

Friday, February 7: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

***WRC Tutoring Session #2: Complete by Today**

Sunday, February 9: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Unit 3: Contemporary Legacies of Slavery

Week 6: The New Jim Crow – Mass Incarceration as a Legacy of Slavery; Cultural Legacies of Slavery: Microaggressions, Pop Cultural Racism, Racist Language, Hate Crimes, etc.

Tuesday, February 11: Michelle Alexander, “The Rebirth of Caste” (pp. 20-58), from *The New Jim Crow* (2010)

***Reading Questions Due**

Thursday, February 13: Alexander, “The New Jim Crow” (pp. 178-220), from *The New Jim Crow*; Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*, Part 1 (pp. 5-18)

***Reading Questions Due**

Friday, February 14: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, February 16: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 7: Cultural Legacies of Slavery: Microaggressions, Pop Cultural Racism, Racist Language, Hate Crimes, etc.; Paper #3 Workshop

Tuesday, February 18: Rankine, *Citizen*, Part 6 (pp. 82-109) (CR)

***Reading Journal Due**

Thursday, February 20: Paper #3 Workshop

****Paper #3 Draft Due**

Friday, February 21: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, February 23: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

***Paper #3 Due**

Week 8: Legacies of Slavery in Contemporary Fiction

Tuesday, February 25: Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “Effia” and “Esi” (pp. 3-49)

*Opening Reading Questions on *Homegoing* Due

Thursday, February 27: Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “Quey” and “Ness” (pp. 50-87)

*Reading Journal Due

Friday, February 28: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, March 2: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 9: Slavery and its Legacies in Fiction

Tuesday, March 4: Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “James,” “Kojo,” and “Abena” (pp. 88-153)

*Reading Questions Due

Thursday, March 6: Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “H” and “Akua” (pp. 157-198)

*Reading Journal Due

Friday, March 7: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, March 9: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 10: Slavery and its Legacies in Fiction

Tuesday, March 11: Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “Willie,” “Yaw,” and “Sonny” (pp. 199-263)

*Reading Questions Due

Thursday, March 13: Gyasi, *Homegoing*, “Marjorie” and “Marcus” (pp. 264-300)

*Reading Journal Due

Friday, March 14: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, March 16: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 11: *Homegoing* and Research Paper Workshops

Tuesday, March 18: Research Paper Work and Workshop

Thursday, March 20: Research Paper Work and Workshop

Week 12: Final Exam Week:

Tuesday, March 25: **Final Research Paper Presentations and Research Paper Due**