

### **Collaborative Essay: “Assignment 9¾”**

For the next four+ weeks of our class, we’ll be spending most class days and some out-of-class time working on the writing process together. You will use the experience you gain from working collaboratively as insight into the process you will undertake on your own for the final paper for this course.

Your assignment is to produce a paper that generally conforms the tenets articulated on the assignment prompt for Reading and Writing Assignment 10. Your topics for Assignment 10 will vary; for the in-class collaborative version of the paper, you will write about one of two topics we’ve been discussing already, the use of student data or adjunct labor at universities. In order to address the primary audience identified on your Assignment 10 prompt, you will consider these issues specifically as they relate to your own institution of higher learning. We will split our class into two large groups based on which topic you prefer (though please understand we may need to place some members of the class into their second choice in order to ensure equitable labor is required of all members).

While you may wish to use articles distributed in class and posted to Blackboard as the grounds for generating claims about the topic, you will be responsible as a class for learning all you can about your assigned subject, conducting additional research, meeting with faculty and staff on campus to learn more about our local situation, and developing claims and generating argument(s).

Your group will produce a detailed outline by the second or third week, and by the fourth week, a draft of a paper that fulfills the assignment prompt. I will provide comments on your draft at this point, but will be available for comments prior to it as well. You will use this feedback, along with the feedback you receive on Assignment 9, to produce a strong paper in fulfillment of Assignment 10.

### **How will we be graded?**

The paper is worth 10% of your final course grade; that percentage will be divided into two parts. that will amount to a total of 50 points. First, your group members will all receive the same grade for the paper itself, which will count for up to 30 points. I will assess the paper itself by the same standards articulated on the prompt itself and the rubric attached to it. Generally speaking, you will need to produce a strong discussion that offers claims in a cohesive manner and supports claims with sound reasoning and credible evidence. The essay’s prose should be clear and you should aim for a draft that is free of errors. I will also take into account, of course, that the collaborative and experimental nature of the writing process presents unique challenges. You should all work hard to present a paper that you can be proud of, though in this particular case, the process is as important as the product, and I will aim to give you all as much credit as your efforts seem to warrant.

Second, you will receive a grade for your own contributions to the project, out of an additional 20 points. How you conduct yourself during the assignment is up to you—you can work as hard or as little as you want, but your peers will observe your effort and assistance with the project and will play a significant role in determining a portion of your grade. At the end of the process, each person must briefly present what he or she contributed to the group in front of the class. Class members will then (privately) give each person a grade out of 20 based on a basic rubric that measures each person’s participation, the amount of labor he or she undertook, and the quality of contribution. You will also give yourself a grade out of 20. I will add up all the grades in this portion; your grade out of 20 for this portion will be the average assigned to you by the entire class.

### **How to participate:**

Your mode of contributing will be up to you; possible ways include, but are not limited to:

- contributing with comments and questions to class discussions;
- organizing the group into smaller units to complete specific tasks;

- apportioning research or related needs, including finding sources, sending emails, making phone calls, or other actions the group requires;
- assigning roles and work to different members and/or small sub-groups;
- contributing information collected independently or with other members;
- crafting specific parts of the paper;
- assisting in the revising process, including taking parts to the Writing Center.

### **How to Communicate:**

- Via Blackboard's email system
- Discussion forum via Blackboard in Adjunct Labor In-Class Project Folder (under Links to WWW Reading); you may upload files to posts.
- Shared GoogleDoc (via links shared and sent via university email); you can also find GoogleDocs under GoogleApps in the portal and set up your own shared document!

You need not be loud or vocal to participate—but all members need to listen to one another and take seriously the contributions of others.

All members should be prepared to check Hofstra email, the forum, and shared documents as the group deems necessary so that all members are aware of their classmates' contributions.

### **What if we all disagree?**

No piece of writing every benefits from suppressing dissent or opposing opinions. You'll need to develop strategies as a group for dealing with arguments or claims that don't neatly conform to any one member's ideas. You can't know what your claims and larger arguments will be until you discuss them together and come up with a series of points you want to make together. First consider ways of reaching consensus on a larger or more qualified claim; if you can't find consensus, *build the disagreement into your discussion*. I am happy to help you with this possibility. Doing this kind of rhetorical maneuvering without losing the integrity of your argument and evidence is, in fact, an important skill worth refining—as is the ability to work with others who don't share your immediate experiences or views.

### **What if we can't finish?**

I know this answer is not particularly comforting, but you *must* finish the draft by the deadline. This assignment, though more difficult than some you may have in college, is no different from any other major assignment—not submitting it will have real consequences on your final grade. If you are having trouble getting some group members to work, or if you are having difficulties of some other sort, please speak with me about it. But your group *will* need to complete the draft no matter the challenges you face.

### **What if we finish Early?**

Should you finish the paper with more than a week remaining, you will have the opportunity to learn and add multi-media components to the paper by using audio, video, dynamic and static screen shots. Should you finish the paper with a week remaining, we'll use the rest of class meeting time to work on your final papers for the class.



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