

Laura Martin, PhD
martinlaura@fhda.edu
Office Hours: on Zoom,
by appointment

EWRT 1A
Section 50Z
Winter 2023
Asynchronous, on Canvas

English 1A: Composition and Reading — On Reading, Writing, and Race/Racism

Description of the Course Theme and Objectives

In this course, we will focus on developing college-level critical thinking, reading, and writing skills by studying the history of reading and writing, particularly how we learn to read and write and what kinds of connections we can draw between reading, writing, and thinking. After we explore these topics, we'll turn to contemporary discussions of two key issues: 1) race and racism in the United States and 2) alienation and immigrant life in the United States. We will explore how these issues are intertwined, and we'll consider the value and perhaps the necessity of reevaluating our understandings of them as well as how these issues inform and structure our lives. We will also learn about how various communities have responded to crises of racism in our country by resisting social marginalization and alienation, fighting for social justice, speaking out against racism, and more.

As we explore these topics, we'll be concentrated on discovering and honing our own voices, reading different genres, or types of texts, along the way, such as poems, essays, journalism, epistolary nonfiction, literary criticism, a short story, and a novel. These different types of texts will help us think through the questions of reading, writing, race/racism, and alienation in immigrant life that we will be studying this quarter. Our aim in our reading, writing, thinking as well as in our discussions with each other on Canvas is to examine the function and significance of the issues raised in our readings, determine what they tell us about our contemporary society and communities, figure out a range of possible ways to respond to our texts, and determine how they relate to our present time. As our texts search for ethical ways to give voice to the voiceless, both marginalized people and difficult historical circumstances that leave people feeling voiceless/at a loss for words, so we will search in our writing and thinking to find our own voices, to figure out what we think about the issues that face us and our communities, and to discover how our voices and thinking relate to some of our society's most pressing issues.

At the same time as this course is designed to encourage you to wrestle with big ideas, it is also designed to help you develop and strengthen your reading, writing, and vocabulary skills. We will review and practice fundamentals of grammar, syntax, and writing that will give you a strong foundation for writing different kinds of informal assignments as well as a range of formal essays, from personal and persuasive essays to analytical essays. My goal is for you to leave the class feeling prepared to read and write in college and with a renewed confidence in your reading, writing, and critical thinking abilities. I'm excited to embark on this journey together this quarter, and I look forward to working with you all. Welcome to the course!

Student Learning Outcomes

In English 1A, students will practice writing as a multi-step process, including planning and revising with attention to varying purposes, audiences, and rhetorical strategies. Students will

also read and analyze rhetorically and culturally diverse narrative and expository texts from a variety of perspectives.

Remote Course Organization

This course is going to be taught online in an asynchronous format using Canvas for our course platform and Zoom as our office hours platform. 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 students will be working individually on assignments during their 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

James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (1963, Vintage, ISBN-10: 9780679744726)

Teju Cole, *Open City* (2011, Random House, ISBN-10: 0812980093)

Toni Morrison, *Recitatif: A Story* (1983, Knopf, ISBN-10: 0593315030)

Course Reader

The Baldwin and Morrison books are available at the De Anza [Bookstore](#), the Cole novel must be purchased online, and the course reader will be provided to you on Canvas. You must purchase the Baldwin, Cole, and Morrison books in print form (not digital copies); in Week 3, I will require you to upload a picture of you with your books, so be sure to order them at the beginning of the quarter. The bookstore has an online ordering system, but you can also purchase books in person. You may also order the course texts elsewhere, but please use the ISBN numbers provided above so that you purchase these exact editions; this is especially important with the Baldwin text, as there are many different editions of this book. 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: we will be reading a lot about the issue of print vs. digital reading this quarter, particularly how they are different types of practices, and I want you to have the experience of reading our larger course texts in print form. Please make sure to only purchase print copies of the three 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, office hours visits, WRC participation) —5%; Reading Journals, Quizzes, and Homework Assignments —20%; Essays and Prewriting —75% (Personal Essay —10%, Persuasive Essay —15%, Analytical Essay —20%, Reflective Essay —20%, Timed Analytical

Essay and Final Exam—15%). You must submit and complete all major assignments in order to be eligible to earn a passing grade.

Course Requirements

Remote Participation, Canvas Protocols, and Mandatory Office Hours Attendance: 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, 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 as well as your overall grade in the course, as online communication is the main way we will be interacting this quarter.

In addition to the participation expectations outlined above, you are required to attend a minimum of one office hours session this quarter, but I encourage you make an appointment as often as you'd like, especially if you have questions or something that you'd like to discuss. I will be available for office hours on Zoom by appointment during the week. Please email me to set up an appointment and offer 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.

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!

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 at least 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 run as quickly as possible and 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 a lot 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 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 reading and assignments for each week. Recordings will occasionally be followed by viewing quizzes that will ask you to engage with the recording as well as the reading or writing assignment that I am discussing in the videos.

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, CRIT Exercises, Keywords, Reading Questions, Reading Journals, etc.: I will assign various reading and writing homework to help us analytically engage with our texts, sharpen our reading and writing skills, and prepare for our essays, one of these being a CRIT exercise, which is short for Close Reading Interpretive Tool and is a step-by-step explanation of how to closely analyze a passage of a text; another assignment will be keyword exercises that ask you to do outside Internet research to learn about the various contexts for our reading. I will also often give you reading analysis questions to help guide your reading and reading quizzes to make sure you stay caught up with the reading and to gauge the level of your reading comprehension as well as your ability to write about it. I know this may sound like a lot to juggle right now, but, don't worry, I'll provide instructions for all of the assignments and will have them clearly marked in our Canvas modules. I just want to give you an idea of the types of reading assignments you will encounter in the course. Later in the quarter, we will also begin keeping reading journals, which will help us track our thinking about our 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 interpretations of

our texts. I will offer a model for these journals and guide us through the process when we get there.

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. Some weeks, you may have one thread to post to and in others, you may have two, so be sure to post to each thread for the week. In addition to your Friday post, you should set aside time over the weekend to read through the thread of your classmates' posts and respond to at least one post or comment; your response will be due each week by Sunday. 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 five papers—a personal essay, a persuasive essay, one analytical essay, a reflective essay, and a timed final essay and exam. Aside from the timed final essay, all papers will involve extensive drafting and planning as well as peer editing in our writing familias (see below for info). All papers are due on Canvas, and they will be cross-checked by turnitin.com on our Canvas site. Late papers will be docked half 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 timed final essay, so you are welcome and encouraged to revise your work throughout the quarter. 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 half 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. I will have a Google doc dedicated to familia sign-ups available in the Week 1 modules as well as an assignment to remind you to join a group. I will post more instructions on how familias will work once you begin drafting your first paper.

Writing and Reading Center Resource and Course Requirement: The [Writing and Reading Center](#) at De Anza is an incredible resource for students like us who are honing our reading and writing skills, and we are very lucky to have access to it. Students are required to attend three tutoring sessions in conjunction with this class, with set due dates throughout the quarter. See the WRC link above for how to sign up and see the Resources module in Canvas for videos that introduce you to the WRC. The deadline for completing each 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.

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 (or websites!) that you might borrow from. Thus, whenever you refer, indirectly or directly, to someone else's ideas, 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. Academic dishonesty constitutes *any* information or language from a source that is left unidentified or incorrectly cited as well as this more egregious form of plagiarism. Be sure to cite any outside material that you reference. If a student plagiarizes any assignment (including drafts and journals), he/she/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 is typically taught as a discussion-based seminar, but, as we have had made the transition to remote, asynchronous class offerings, 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 stretch our thinking.

Key Add/Drop Dates:

Saturday, January 21: Last day to add a class

Sunday, January 22: Last day to drop a class with no record of "W"

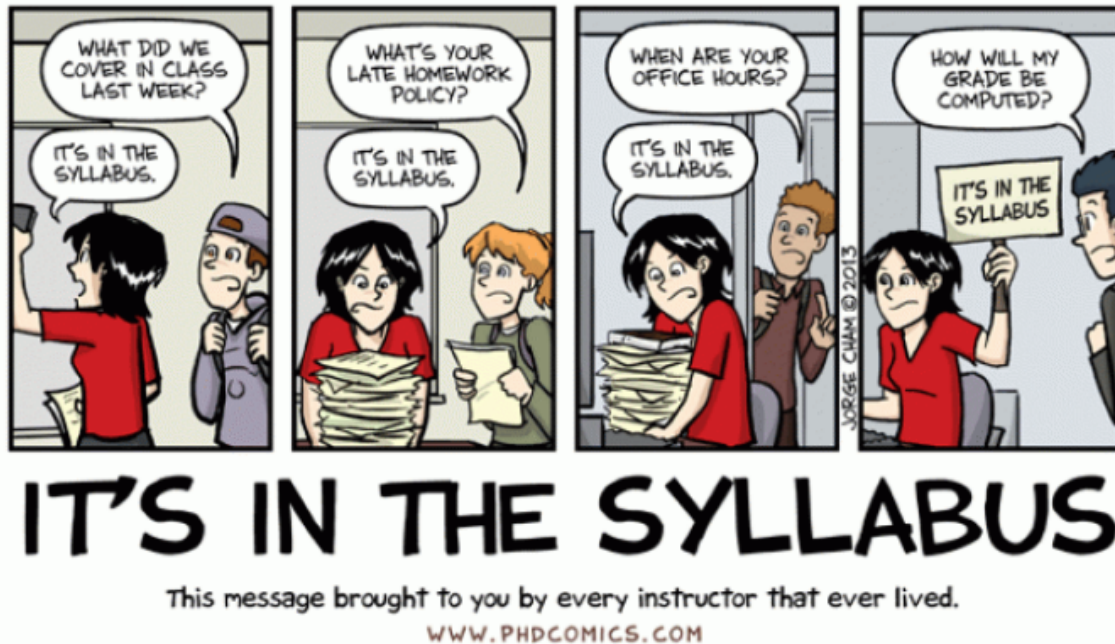
Friday, March 3: Last day to drop with a "W"

Additional Resources

Disability Support Services: If you qualify for classroom 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. The DSS office will be open this quarter, and you can get in touch with them for appointments via phone (# 408-864-8753) and [email](#).

Student Health Resources: Student Health Services is open for in-person appointments this quarter as well as for limited virtual appointments. See the [website](#) for details.

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



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 in which they are listed in the modules; you will also see these assignment due dates in the assignments file 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. Major paper assignments as well as the reading schedule and some of the early homework assignments are listed below, but you will have more daily homework in the modules as well, especially as the quarter picks up. Please use the syllabus schedule below to plan ahead and 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.

Reading, Assignment, and Paper Schedule

Unit 1: Reading and Writing as a Conversation

Week 1: Introduction to Composition and Reading—Discovering Our Voices: How and Why Do We Read and Write? How Do Names Relate to Identities?

Monday, January 9: Introduction to the Course—Syllabus and Canvas Review; “Getting to Know You” Survey; “Where Do You Know From?” Assignment Review; 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 10: Mortimer Adler, “How to Mark a Book”; Natalie Goldberg, “Be Specific”; “What is Genre?”

*Due on Canvas: Adler Reading Questions, Goldberg Reading Questions (at end of the Goldberg essay: “Thinking Critically about this Reading” and “Questions for Study and Discussion”); “Where Do You Know From?” Video Post

Thursday, January 12: Sandra Cisneros, “My Name”; CRIT Handout; Verlyn Klinkenborg, selections from *Several Short Sentences About Writing*

*Due on Canvas: Annotations and CRIT Exercise on “My Name”; Klinkenborg Reading Questions

Friday, January 13: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas (see Canvas Discussions for Questions)

Sunday, January 15: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas (respond to a classmates’ post, or respond to someone else’s comment on your original post)

Week 2: Finding Our Voices: How Do Our Names Relate to Our Voices and Identities? How and Why Do We Read and Write? — Print vs. Digital Reading

Monday, January 16: **Full Draft of Paper #1 Due on Canvas for Workshop** (see the Google Doc in the Modules for Peer-Editing Partners and Instructions for the Workshop Assignment)

Tuesday, January 17: Nicholas Carr, “The Deepening Page,” from *The Shallows*

*Due on Canvas: Carr Questions; **Peer Editing Worksheet on Partner’s Draft**

Thursday, January 19: Nicholas Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?”

*Due on Canvas: Carr Questions, **Paper #1: Personal Essay on “My Name” (Final Version)**

Friday, January 20: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, January 22: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 3: How and Why Do We Read and Write? — Print vs. Digital Reading

Tuesday, January 24: Maryanne Wolf, “Letter Three—Deep Reading: Is it Endangered?” and “Letter Four—What Will Become of the Readers We Have Been,” from *Reader, Come Home*

*Due on Canvas: Wolf Questions

Thursday, January 26: Maryanne Wolf, “Letter Eight—“Building a Biliterate Brain,” from *Reader, Come Home*; “Reading with and Against the Grain”

*Due on Canvas: Wolf Questions; Photo of Print Copies of Course Texts

Friday, January 27: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, January 29: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Unit 2: Difficult Conversations—Racism in the U.S.

Week 4: Persuasive Essay, Mindset and Reading

Monday, January 30: **Paper #2 Full Draft Due on Canvas for Workshop—Persuasive Essay on “Deep Reading”**

Tuesday, January 31: Marina Krakovsky, “Why Mindset Matters”; Malcolm X, “Learning to Read”

*Due on Canvas: Krakovsky and Malcolm X Questions; **Peer Editing Worksheet on Paper #2 Full Draft**

***Complete WRC Tutoring Session #1 by today**

Thursday, February 2: **Paper #2—Persuasive Essay on “Deep Reading” (Final Version) Due on Canvas**

Friday, February 3: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, February 5: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 5: Racism in the U.S.: Racial Justice and the Persistence of Racism

Tuesday, February 7: James Baldwin, “My Dungeon Shook,” from *The Fire Next Time* (pp. 3-10)

*Due on Canvas: Baldwin Questions

Thursday, February 9: Baldwin, “Down at the Cross,” from *The Fire Next Time* (pp. 13-47)

*Due on Canvas: Baldwin Questions

Friday, February 10: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, February 12: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 6: Racism in the U.S.: Racial Justice and the Persistence of Racism

Tuesday, February 28: Baldwin, “Down at the Cross,” from *The Fire Next Time* (pp. 47-82)

*Due on Canvas: Baldwin Questions

Thursday, March 2: Baldwin, “Down at the Cross,” from *The Fire Next Time* (pp. 82-106);
John Trimble, “How to Write a Critical Analysis”

*Due on Canvas: Baldwin Questions

Friday, March 3: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

*Due on Canvas: **Introduction to Analytical Essay on Baldwin**

Sunday, March 5: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Week 7: Analytical Essay on Baldwin

Tuesday, March 7: **Paper #3—Full Draft of Analytical Essay on Baldwin—Due on Canvas for Workshop**

Wednesday, March 8: **Peer Editing Worksheet on Analytical Essay Due on Canvas**

***Complete WRC Tutoring Session #2 by today**

Thursday, March 9: **Paper #3—Analytical Essay on Baldwin (Final Version)—Due on Canvas**

Friday, March 10: Weekly Discussion Board Post Due on Canvas

Sunday, March 12: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas

Unit 3: Fictions of Race and Racism

Week 8: Racism in the U.S.: Racial Codes, Reading, and Fiction

Tuesday, March 14: Toni Morrison, "Recitatif" (pp. 3-40) read the story first, not the introduction)

*Due on Canvas: Morrison Questions and Reflections

Thursday, March 16: Zadie Smith, "Somebody in There After All," Introduction to "Recitatif"

*Due on Canvas: Smith/Morrison Questions and Reflections

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

Sunday, March 19: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas; **Paper #4— Full Draft of Reflective Essay on Morrison— Due on Canvas for Workshop**

Unit 4: Alienation and Immigrant Life in Fiction

Week 9: Reflective Essay; Alienation and Immigrant Life in the U.S.

Monday, March 20: **Peer Editing Worksheet on Reflective Essay Due on Canvas**

Tuesday, March 21: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-41

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

Thursday, March 23: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 4-6, pp. 42-85

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

***Complete WRC Tutoring Session #3 by Today**

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

Sunday, March 26: Weekly Discussion Board Response Due on Canvas; **Paper #4— Full Draft of Reflective Essay on Morrison (Final Version)— Due on Canvas**

Week 10: Alienation and Immigrant Life in the U.S.

Tuesday, March 28: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 7-9, pp. 86-129

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

Thursday, March 30: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 10-13, pp. 130-167

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

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

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

Week 11: Alienation and Immigrant Life in the U.S.

Tuesday, April 4: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 14-17, pp. 168-210

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

Thursday, April 6: Teju Cole, *Open City*, Chapters 18-21, pp. 211-259

*Due on Canvas: Cole Questions

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

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

Week 12: Final Exam Week

Tuesday, April 11: Timed Essay and Final Exam Due