Weekly Reading Responses: Guide
Spring 2019

Every week, you will need to submit a written response to that week's reading. You can earn up to 2 points credit for each response, but I will only count the 10 highest grades. Also, the week you present one of the readings in class, you *do not* need to submit a reading response, but you will automatically get 2 points for that week's response. We have class on Tuesdays at 9am, so the reading responses are due **Monday** morning at 9:00am on canvas. You will get **2 points** if your reading response follows the directions set out below. You will receive **1 point** if your reading response fails to do all that is asked of you, or if you complete all the requested tasks but nonetheless fail to engage the reading carefully. If you don't hand something in, or if what you hand in falls way short of the assignment, this would earn you **0 points**.

You should aim for about the equivalent of 3/4 of a page (typed, double-spaced), or about 250 words. A complete reading response will need to do two things:

1. Summarize the main argument made in the article. To do this properly, you would need to identify at least the following two things:

   - the thesis or the main argument the author makes. (What is it that the author is arguing for?)
   - the main reasons the author gives in support of this thesis. (On what basis should we accept the thesis, according to the author?)

   It should be clear from your response what you are suggesting the thesis is. (I encourage you to make this explicit; for example, say things like *In "The Traffic in Women", Rubin's thesis is...*)

   It won't always be easy for you to identify the thesis. Moreover, you might not always successfully identify the thesis. That's OK. Struggle with it anyway. I won't deduct points if the thesis you identify is off the mark, but only if you don't show evidence of having carefully attempted a reconstruction of the author's argument.

   You don't need to identify *all* of the reasons the author gives. Pick a few of the reasons (more than one, no more than three) that strike you as the most important and try to explain those.

2. You can do one of two things; *either* you **evaluate** the argument you outlined above. Give an assessment of the argument, indicating whether you think the argument is strong or weak, and explaining why you make this assessment. *Or*, you list some questions that the reading raises or brings up to your mind. The questions can pertain to one of the other readings, to a theory or argument we discussed in class, to a question or concern the argument suggests to you, or to something else entirely.

   Though the bulk of your response will be dedicated to (1), this part is especially important. I will collect some of the questions/ evaluations and distribute them at the beginning of each class. They will be used as a basis for a class discussion, and will also help frame the lecture and activities during each class.

A final note: you are expected to read the texts carefully. The response itself shouldn't take that much time to complete. What will likely take most of your effort is going back over the reading to try and gain a thorough enough understanding of it to be able to complete the required tasks. Think of this as part of the reading process required of you for this course.