English 2: Conformity and Rebellion
Spring 2018, Section 16
MW 8:05-9:20 a.m.
Olin 318

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Office Hours: Wed. 9:30-11:00 a.m. in Tower Cafe
Office: East 214

Required Texts
  - ISBN: 978-0-393-60263-0
- All other readings will be posted on our class website
  - https://sites.tufts.edu/alquestaeng2spring2018.
  - Your are expected to bring in hard copies of those readings on the day they are due and upon request.

Optional Texts
  - ISBN: 978-0486264738

Note: *The Little Seagull Handbook* (hereafter known as "the Seagull") is available at the Tufts Bookstore, though you are free to purchase it elsewhere. Having the exact editions listed above will be easier when dealing with pagination, but if you already own a copy, do not feel obligated to purchase the most recent one. However, you will be expected to use the most up-to-date version of MLA formatting and citations, which is thoroughly explained in the Seagull edition listed above.

Course Description
Strong writing will serve you well no matter what field you are studying at Tufts or in the future. Our goal in this course is to communicate effectively through writing using clear, precise prose. In order to achieve this goal, our class will focus on improving your ability to analyze various texts and formulate arguments. We will approach writing as a process that extends from finding a topic of interest to editing final drafts. By focusing on elements of writing such as organization, syntax, grammar, and revision, you will generate polished essays with clear theses, well-structured arguments, persuasive supporting evidence, and a sense of your own voice and style.

We will use readings and other materials to focus our attention on particular elements of writing and to focus our thinking on particular ideas about how we (mis)behave in the world. The theme of “Conformity and Rebellion” will help us think about how our actions and the actions of others challenge or sustain social, cultural, and political norms. I have collected a diverse range of readings and multimedia materials for this course. These texts will not only offer framing for our essay assignments and our writing in general, but they will also model modes and styles of argumentation that we will analyze in both our writing and class discussion. Finally, I hope they will provoke lively conversation during our meetings and help make class all the more engaging.
Course Goals
This course will emphasize the following skills:
1. An ability to articulate a clear thesis;
2. A capacity for critical thinking and rhetorical analysis;
3. A capability to write in clear, straight-forward, jargon-free language;
4. A mastery of grammar and idiomatic usage of English;
5. A facility to construct an argument and write persuasive prose;
6. An ability to develop, sustain and amplify an idea with appropriate supporting evidence;
7. A capacity to produce questions for research;
8. A capacity to conduct research and incorporate findings responsibly into one’s own prose;
9. A capability to proofread, revise and edit one’s prose.

Attendance & Participation
You should come to class on time and be ready to discuss the day’s assignments. Much of our class will depend on you presenting your ideas about the texts we have read and your experiences with the writing process. Therefore, preparation and attendance are essential. That said, sometimes unexpected or unplanned things happen. Therefore, you are allowed two absences over the course of the semester. After those two absences, your final grade will drop by one step for each subsequent absence. For example, if your average at the end of the semester is a B+ and you have missed a total of three classes, your final grade will be a B. English department policy requires you to attend the first two classes of the semester in order to retain your seat in this class. Also, you will be expected to be in class on time. Therefore, I will consider 3 late arrivals as one absence.

Throughout the semester, we will read and discuss a number of essays on a variety of topics. I encourage you to formulate and voice your ideas about these texts, but also recognize that not everyone will agree. In order to maintain a collegial and productive working environment, be sure to respect your classmates’ differences in opinions, backgrounds, and communication styles.

Please refrain from using cell phones, laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices in class, unless directed. Remember, this is a discussion-based class which requires your focused and active participation.

Assignments
Response Posts: For each reading, you are required to write a short response reacting to the assigned text. Your responses should be 250-350 words in length, and you should post them on the course website by 8:00pm the night before we will discuss the text in class. You should also print out a copy of your response and bring it to class, along with a hard copy of the day’s reading. These informal papers should explore areas of the reading that you find compelling, confusing, or thought-provoking. They are a great way to begin developing your ideas, and they should offer focused commentary on some element of the text, such as the author’s tone, style, organization, or argument. On occasion, I will provide questions or topics that you can use as a starting point for your analysis. However, your post should never be a mere summary of the text.
Essays: You will write **5 formal essays**, including one research paper. Essays will vary in length and focus. They should be typed in size twelve Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins on each side of the page, and they should be submitted electronically on Trunk before class on the due date specified on the course calendar. Please submit your essay as a Word document (saved in .doc or .docx format). Note that you can download Microsoft Office **for free** through Tufts by going to this website: [https://it.tufts.edu/sw-office365-pp](https://it.tufts.edu/sw-office365-pp).

You should also bring a hard copy to class. Your paper’s grade will drop by one step each day it is late.

We will do in-class workshops for most of your essays. **Complete drafts of your essays are due on workshop days**. These workshops are crucial to our writing process, so please bring a printed copy of your full draft to facilitate discussion with your peer reader.

Conferences: Over the course of the semester, we will have 2 one-on-one meetings to discuss your essays. I am happy to offer additional feedback during my office hours and by appointment, but please do not send me drafts or sections of papers by email. I am willing to answer brief questions by email, and I will do my best to respond within 24 hours, but I cannot guarantee an immediate response, particularly after working hours or on weekends.

Revision: Our fifth and final essay will involve revising one of your first three papers. We will talk more about what revision looks like, but keep in mind that revision is not merely changing wording or making copy edits. Rather, you must make substantive alterations to the paper’s argument, organization, or scope. You must also include a one-to-two-page explication of the changes you made during the revision process. This revision also gives you the chance to improve the grade of the paper you choose to revise, since I will replace the grade on your original essay with the average of essay five and the original. If, for example, you earned a B-on essay two, and you revised it to a B+ for essay number five, you will receive a B+ for essay number five and a B for essay number two.

Grading
Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

- Essay 1: **15%**
- Essay 2: **15%**
- Essay 3: **15%**
- Essay 4 (research paper): **25%**
- Essay 5 (revision paper): **20%**
- Class Participation (including response posts): **10%**

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious offense, and the consequences are often severe. **Tufts considers plagiarism to be the intentional or unintentional use of someone else’s work without proper attribution**. I will be using an online program called TurnItIn to help make sure that your work is original. We will discuss issues of citation and plagiarism in class, but for more information and for the official Tufts disciplinary protocol, please see the Academic Integrity Policy on the
Tufts Student Life webpage here:  

**Tufts Resources**

**Academic Resource Center (ARC) and Writing Center:** I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center. Though we will be working diligently to produce lucid, polished essays, another highly skilled reader, such as an ARC tutor, can be valuable. To schedule a free appointment with a writing consultant, use the "Tutor Finder" under the "Academics" menu on SIS, or visit the ARC website for more information:  
https://students.tufts.edu/academic-advice-and-support/academic-resource-center

**Tisch Library:** The library offers many opportunities for academic support, from thousands of books and online articles, to printing and coffee in the Tower Cafe. We will spend some time in the library learning how to conduct research in a collegiate setting, but I encourage you to explore their website and get to know their friendly, helpful staff. Here are a few key links:

- Library Homepage & Jumbo Search: http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/
- First Year Writing Research Guide: http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/english1
- A list of librarians specific to each major: http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/get-help/ask-librarian
- Citation Resources: http://tischlibrary.tufts.edu/get-help/help-citations

**Counseling and Mental Health Services:** College life can be very challenging. If you or someone you know is having a difficult time, Counseling and Mental Health Services may be able to help. They offer a range of services, including an on-call counselor for emergencies. For more information, see their website at  
http://students.tufts.edu/health-and-wellness/counseling-and-mental-health

**Tufts Student Accessibility Services:** If you are registered with Tufts Student Accessibility Services and would like to discuss how to best make this class work for you, please come meet with me during office hours or set up an appointment. If you are considering registering, you can find more information at their website, here:  
https://students.tufts.edu/student-accessibility-services

**Other Resources**

Course Website: https://sites.tufts.edu/alquestaeng2spring2018/
Trunk: trunk.tufts.edu

**Please note that the policies outlined in this syllabus, like your essays, are subject to revision. You will be notified of any changes, and new editions of the syllabus will be posted on the website.**
Course Calendar

Week 1
Mon. 1/22 Welcome: Course Introduction and Goals

Unit 1--Education: Lessons in Conformity or Tools for Rebellion?
Wed. 1/24 Read: "Against School" by John Taylor Gatto and "Remarks by the First Lady at Bowie State University Commencement Ceremony" by Michelle Obama, and "Writing Process" in the Seagull (p. 9-16)
Due: Response #1

Week 2
Mon. 1/29 Read: "Learning to Read and Write" by Frederick Douglass, "A Talk to Teachers" by James Baldwin, and "Developing Paragraphs" and "Arguments" in the Seagull (17-29 and 43-48)
Due: Response #2 and Draft Thesis for Essay #1
Due: Response #3 and one body paragraph (including a draft thesis) for Essay #1

Week 3
Mon. 2/5 Peer Writing Workshop
Due: Full Draft of Essay #1
Wed. 2/7 Due: Essay #1

Unit 2--Analyzing Rebellious Narratives

Week 4
Mon. 2/12 Read: "Bartleby, the Scrivener" by Herman Melville and "Narrative Shock in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener''" by Marvin Fisher
Due: Response #4
Wed. 2/14 Watch: Office Space (available on Trunk in Resources Folder)
Read: "Work Sucks" by John Kane
Due: Response #5

Week 5
Mon. 2/19 NO CLASS--Presidents' Day
Wed. 2/21  **Read:** "Just Walk on By" by Brent Staples (both versions) and "Toolbox" by Stephen King  
**Due:** Response #6

Thurs. 2/22  **Read:** "Analyze, Don't Summarize" by Michael Bérubé  
**Due:** Draft Introduction (Including Thesis Statement) for Essay #2

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**Week 6**

Mon. 2/26  **Peer Workshop**  
**Due:** Full Draft of Essay #2  
Wed. 2/28  **Due:** Essay #2

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**Unit 3--Debating Strategies for Change**

**Week 7**

Mon. 3/5  **Read:** "The Problem with #Metoo and Viral Outrage" by Jessi Hempel and "They Say" from *They Say/I Say* by Graff, Berkenstein & Durst  
**Due:** Response #7

Wed. 3/7  **Read:** "Who's Afraid of Free Speech?" by Thomas Healy and “I Say” from *They Say/I Say* by Graff, Berkenstein & Durst  
**Due:** Response #8

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**Week 8**

Mon. 3/12  **Due:** Thesis Statement and Outline for Essay #3
Wed. 3/14  **Peer Workshop**  
**Due:** Full Draft of Essay #3
Fri. 3/16  **Due:** Essay #3

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**Week 9**  **SPRING BREAK--NO CLASS**

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**Unit 4--Researching the Past**

**Week 10**

Mon. 3/26  **Read:** "We Could Have Been Canada" by Adam Gopnik and "Doing Research," "Proposals" and "Evaluating Sources" in the *Seagull* (p.90-101, skip "Field Research," 66-69, 102-105)  
**Due:** Response #9

Wed. 3/28  **Due:** 3-5 Research Questions on your Research Topic
Week 11
Mon. 4/2  Due: Research Proposal
Wed. 4/4  Library Workshop

Week 12
Mon. 4/9  Due: Annotated Bibliography
Wed. 4/11 Workshop

Week 13
Mon. 4/16 NO CLASS--Patriot's Day
Wed. 4/18 Peer Workshop
Due: Full Draft of Essay #4

Week 14
Mon. 4/23 Due: Essay #4
Wed. 4/25 Read: “Revision and Life: Take It from the Top--Again” by Nora Ephron
Due: Revision Plan

Week 15
Mon. 4/30 Workshop & Conferences
Fri. 5/4  Due: Essay #5 with Explication