

# Approaches to Critical Thinking & Writing

*Summer 2009*

Lecturer: Larry Edgerton  
272 Bascom  
7116 Helen C. White Hall  
1:00 to 4:00 pm, daily  
lgedgert@wisc.edu

*Classroom*  
*Office*  
*Office hours*  
*Email*

TA: Mike Shapiro  
6117 Social Sciences  
7134 Helen C. White Hall  
Before and after class  
mashapiro@gmail.com

*Class blog: [ils121.wordpress.com](http://ils121.wordpress.com)*

## Discussion grade (100 points)

10 points: Meeting with Writing Fellows twice (see page 2 of the lecture syllabus for details)

90 points: Contributing two substantive comments or questions per discussion (9 discussions x 2 contributions = 5 points per contribution)

## Essay grades (50 points x 5 essays = 250 points)

I look for three things in an essay:

1. **Argumentative originality.** If an argument seems popular or easy, don't make it. Spend five minutes brainstorming the obvious ways you could approach an essay, and then *don't use any of those ideas*. Find the unobvious.
2. **Insightful, sophisticated analysis.** Ask yourself two questions whenever you are engaging with an artwork: "Why?" and "So what?" Remember: I'm not grading what you know; I'm grading *how you think*.
3. **Professional and polished writing.** Read your essay out loud to yourself: errors that are invisible on the page are frequently audible. You will lose points if you forget the 44 Reminders.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is

- Using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation,
- Copying some portion of your text from another source without proper citation,
- Borrowing another person's specific ideas without documenting the source,
- Having someone else significantly revise your work without acknowledgement, or
- Turning in a paper written – or partially written – by someone else, by an essay service, or retrieved from an internet site.

The most common form of plagiarism involves insufficient citation of sources. To cite a source correctly, make clear to the reader (1) who originated the idea or quotation you have used, and (2) where it can be found. For excellent information about citing sources properly, consult the Writing Center's Writer's Handbook at

<< [http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/QPA\\_plagiarism.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html) >>

Penalties for academic misconduct range from a reduced or failing grade on the assignment to failure in the course; in instances of repeated plagiarism, the University may suspend or expel a student. You can read more about these penalties and the sanctioning process at

<< <http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct01.htm> >>

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to cite properly and avoid problems of plagiarism, please contact somebody who can help you:

- Me ([mashapiro@gmail.com](mailto:mashapiro@gmail.com))
- Larry ([lgedgert@wisc.edu](mailto:lgedgert@wisc.edu))
- A Writing Fellow