

FINAL PROJECT

Length: No less than 8-12 full pages of well-polished text, double spaced, plus an accurate Works Cited page, all following MLA format precisely. An MLA template is still available at <http://success.obenauf.net> so that you can focus on the content of your project.

Due: Monday, December 4, 2023, in hard copy at the start of class AND by email to obenauf@unm.edu as a MS-Word document (.doc. or .docx) unless we have agreed on another format.

Notes: As always, I want you to follow the evidence. That is the key to avoiding BS. This final project should be your masterpiece, showing off your learning this fall. It should be original work. That means you should not use AI technology, even for inspiration. That means you should not repeat major portions of earlier essays. That means you should not merely summarize texts (beyond giving necessary context). That means you should cite textual evidence for every assertion you make—and you should explain the relevance of each quotation to your topic/thesis to generate your analysis. (For creative projects, you should hold off on the textual evidence and parenthetical citations until your analytical section.)

I encourage you to review the syllabus, my Guide to Writing, and my Revision Triage Checklist for help meeting the basic expectations of college writing. I also urge you to review my typed comments and handwritten notes on all of your earlier papers. Repetitions of issues I've pointed out in your previous work will seriously impact your grade on this paper, which is supposed to demonstrate your growth this semester.

There are many steps you can take to meet basic expectations on your own—and I am here to help with any questions you may have. You have the tools and the practice to succeed! Now, show me what you've discovered and how you've grown since August!

Instructions: Please write on ONE of the following topics:

1. This first prompt, like a reaction paper on steroids, invites you to use your personal reflections as a frame for a rigorous analysis of how at least three of our texts deal with the same issues. You should begin by reviewing your reading journal from this semester and identifying one or two related themes that have resonated with you in your responses to the reflection questions, then choosing three to five relevant texts from our syllabus that respond to the themes that have been on your mind, even if those authors respond differently.

If you use texts that you also used for your first analytical paper, they should be in addition to the minimum three works and not in place of them. I want you to interact with more than the same handful of books during our time together.

For example, you could examine your own ideas about the subject of change and growth and then see how change and personal growth are portrayed in such works as Horace's Satires, Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography, and Frederick Douglass's Narrative of the Life, mentioning a couple of other texts in passing. What lessons have you learned from them?

At least two-thirds of your essay should consist of rigorous literary criticism of how several of the texts we have read this semester approach these issues; the other one-third (or so) of your paper is your space to give a personal frame to your analysis, including liberal quotations from your reading journal. As with the short reflection papers, **an anecdote would be a strong way to open your essay**; I encourage you to draw connections between your own experience and our readings throughout your essay and not just in the opening and closing.

A good outline for your paper would look something like this. Your introduction to this longer paper could be one very beefy paragraph or it might span two paragraphs. You should open with a relevant personal **anecdote** drawn from your own experience, then either in the same paragraph or in a second, provide your reader with key context about the paper that follows, ending your introduction with a **thesis statement** about what you found in the other works and what they suggest about the societies for which they were written.

The body of your paper should offer substantial analysis of the literature and the society for which each text was written, but this is still a personal essay and so you will need to artfully interject yourself as the author to form transition paragraphs to take your reader from section to section. I recommend quoting from your reflection journal for your transitions to show your progression of thought over the semester as you read and reacted to each text. Explain how you changed as a result of a reading and discuss whether each author handle the topic in the assigned text in the same way that you did in your journal.

For your conclusion, you will need to wrap up not only the analytical discussion but also your personal frame. Your last paragraph should tie up all the loose threads, ideally by resolving issues you have raised in your personal narrative beginning with the opening anecdote. The paper should come full circle.

In this way, you have will an opportunity not only to explore philosophical concepts as they develop in literature over time, but also to trace your own understanding of these ideas as they have affected you personally, and, perhaps, as your perspective on them has changed over time.

While your paper does not have to be primarily about success, you should draw some connections to the idea of success in your understanding of the philosophical problem you are investigating. As with all your writing in Honors, you must cite evidence for every assertion you make, whether it is a personal anecdote, a quote from your reading journal, or meticulously cited evidence from the assigned reading so as to avoid speculation, broad generalizations, and other unsubstantiated claims. Above all, your final paper should be intellectually honest, academically rigorous, and gracefully constructed.

2. This second prompt is a longstanding tradition in UNM Honors Legacy courses, adapted for Legacy of Success so that you can showcase your commitment to intellectual rigor through a creative story and an analytical narrative. **For this creative option, you will create a fictional character from a time and place of your choosing, but related to the legacy of success as our course has understood it.** (You may NOT create a character who would be living today—it must be someone from the past, living in an era and place we've studied.) You may approach the creative portion of this project however you wish, so long as it is appropriate to the era. A time-tested approach is to write a series of journal entries (which could be from a span of many years), but you may pursue any approach you can pull off with rigor and grace.

You must include, but are not limited to, the following characteristics: your character's name, age, gender, race, principle residence, marital status, profession, interests, family life, family history, religion, friends, and so forth—all with an eye to how these elements help determine whether your person was a success in his or her society. You must include at least one major test of success for your character—even if he or she does not succeed.

You must use all relevant assigned texts for inspiration (e.g., you cannot write about the Roaring Twenties without citing both Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and The Great Gatsby). You will need to include a Works Cited page of the class readings plus at least five other sources that informed your project (and which you will quote in the second part of your paper). Thus in addition to information you gather from our readings this semester, you should use the library and **reputable** scholarly internet resources to paint an accurate portrait of your time period; commercial websites, Wikipedia, Shmoop, Khan Academy, YouTube videos, etc. are **not** generally acceptable sources in an Honors term paper.

This creative component of your paper will probably fill 6-7 pages, but you could write more.

You will then need to write a 4-6-page (minimum) narrative explaining how you made every decision about your character and his or her story and test of success. You must have a thesis at the end of the introduction to this analytical portion of your project describing success and failure in the era in which your story takes place. This analytical section must include rigorous documentation of every source that inspired any aspect of your story, quoting from the texts to explain not only how they led you to make certain decisions but also what those decisions suggest about success and failure at the time. In this section you may wish to discuss what worked well, and what didn't seem to work well, and why. What did you learn about success in your period from this project?

You must demonstrate a scale of success and failure in your creative section, which you must then explain in your analytical section. So although this is a creative project, it should be every bit as rigorous as any other Honors paper you have written this semester. The historical fiction you produce should be plausible (and not mere costume drama). Do not take liberties of artistic license: you must adjust your character's traits and the events so that they accurately reflect success and failure in the era you are examining through your project.