ENG 110

**Essay 4: Research Essay Blog Post (20% of your final grade)**

**The Digital Essay:** This digital essay will examine the complicated relationship between urban space and experience, and will be shared via a twenty-first century form of communication: a WordPress blog post on our Commons course website. The CUNY Academic Commons, where our course website lives, is a WordPress platform; Wordpress is a website-building platform that powers 30% of the internet, so learning how to navigate, post, and responds to posts on WordPress is likely to transfer over into skills that will be helpful in your workplace after college.

Writing a “digital” or “multimodal essay” means composing an essay that uses traditional research materials like texts, articles, and books together with multimedia, such as data graphics, photographs, audio texts, and/ or video to support your claims. We will work on organizing your writing for the assignment, but also how you organize the presentation of your writing online.

**Assignment goal:** Your goal for this assignment is to write a thesis-driven “digital essay” (multimodal essay) that presents an alternative map of a city or a part of a city. Think about the maps we have been looking at in *Nonstop Metropolis* as models. Each of those maps required a lot of research into their topic. For instance, for “Trash in the City,” the author had to learn about the different trash routes, the history of Freshkills Landfill, and all about the artist she discusses. I would like you to create your own alternative map that reveals something surprising or often overlooked about a city or neighborhood you have a connection to. This can be New York, but doesn’t have to be.

**Assignment questions:** What, to you, is important and often overlooked about the city or neighborhood you are mapping in your essay? Why is this important? What kinds of visual and textual evidence could you use to support your ideas? Use specific examples to explain your claims supported by direct quotation using proper MLA citation.

**The Research Essay Blog Post will include:**

* **An alternative map of a city or a part of a city:** This map can be hand drawn and designed. You would then take a picture of the map and include it as part of your research essay blog post. Alternatively, you can use a digital mapping tool like Google Maps to create a digital map if you prefer. You can then embed the map or include a link or screen shot image in your research essay blog post.
* **Two textual sources:** We will have a session with a librarian from Hostos to discuss the types of textual sources you can use, but textual sources can include governmental websites and resources, news articles, and reference articles (from an academic encyclopedia). If you are unsure if a source is appropriate, you can email it to me to help you evaluate.
* **Two multimedia sources:** These can be photographs, videos, data graphics, or podcasts. They will be embedded into your post or linked to in your research essay blog post.

**Essay Organization:**

Your paper will have an introduction that introduces your map and argument, supporting paragraphs that introduce your sources and make claims, and evidence in the form of direct quotations and multimedia elements (photographs, video, audio files, etc.) that support your claims and which you analyze. You should plan and organize your draft before writing, as well as assemble your notes.

* Paragraph 1: Introduce your map—what is your map about? Use a template to start with what others say, and explain why your map presents an important way to look at the city or neighborhood (This is your argument).
* Paragraph 2: Introduce your first textual source and summarize it. Explain what it illustrates or explains about your map. Use relevant templates.
* Paragraph 3: Introduce your second textual source and summarize it. Explain what it illustrates or explains about your map. Use relevant templates.
* Paragraph 4: Introduce, embed, and explain two multimedia elements that help to illustrate your map. These should be in addition to your map itself, which can be either hand drawn or created using a mapping tool like Google Maps.
* Conclusion: Reflect on the broader significance of your map/ the issues it brings up. Make connections to your own life.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Stages (Check Course Schedule on Course Site for Due Dates):**

* **Research Proposal (5%):** Your research proposal should be at least 250 words and should indicate what you will be mapping. Your research proposal should answer the following questions about what you are mapping: Where? When? What kind? Which part? Why? How? This will be posted to the course blog. **Be sure to use the category for your section when posting, otherwise I will not be able to locate your work.**
* **Research Proposal Peer Review (5%):** You are required to provide feedback on at least one of your classmate’s proposals. You will provide feedback through the blog prior to class. Strive to offer 1-3 suggestions for refinement, improvement, or places to look for information.
* **Annotated Bibliography (10%):** Your annotated bibliography should list the two textual sources and the two multimedia sources you will be using. List the source using MLA format, and include a 100-200 word summary of each source and explain why you are using it.
* **Written Copy Draft Due (5%):** This draft will be graded on the basis of effort and will be reviewed by me in class and peer-reviewed.
* **Written Copy Draft Peer Review (5%):** This will be completed in class and cannot be made up.
* **Final Copy Blog Post (65%):** Your final draft will be posted to the course blog. Your blog post should start with an embedded image of or link to your map. Next you will post the written copy of your research essay. The fourth paragraph should include your two pieces of multimedia. **Be sure to use the category for your section when posting, otherwise I will not be able to locate your work.**