

ENGL 202.815: Composition II FALL 2019

“Talking with Ghosts”

Professor M. Perle Tahat

**As part of your Liberal Studies education at IUP, you’re required to spend a semester practicing and experiencing the methods, goals, and spirit of scholarly research. The primary purpose behind this requirement is to help you learn how to better read, analyze, and evaluate nonfiction sources and to effectively present the results of that analysis in clear, carefully documented research papers. But we also hope to foster your interest in, maybe even love for, rigorous intellectual inquiry.**

Our theme this semester is “hauntology.”

Hauntology, as we will explore it, is a way to describe a phenomenon related to resonances of traumatic events, a coming to terms with “what’s been done” in the present based on the arc of the past in order to reclaim the future, an examination of futures lost but remembered in fragments like *deja vu*. Afrofuturists position the concept of hauntology as discovering “countermemories” through history. What if alternate futures and histories exist within our realm but we can’t perceive them? We perceive them whenever we imagine utopias of social equity. This is called “world building” and we participate in it all the time. When M. Asli Dukan was piloting her documentary *Invisible Universe* she’d say, “In the past, we dreamed of this future...In the future, we dreamed of this past...”

Futures are always being created by what we can imagine for ourselves right now and were created by what we imagined in the past. Hauntology is a discussion and a conversation with ghosts. Mark Fisher explains in his essay “What is Hauntology,”:

Provisionally, then, we can distinguish two directions in hauntology. The first refers to that which is (in actuality is) no longer, but which is still effective as a virtuality (the traumatic “compulsion to repeat,” a structure that repeats, a fatal pattern). The second refers to that which (in actuality) has not yet happened, but which is already effective in the virtual (an attractor, an anticipation shaping current behavior).

As a culture we remain haunted by our psychic imprints since we’ve been alive and our ancestors’ imprints. Social epistemic psychologists would call this “intergenerational trauma.”

**SEMESTER GOALS:**

## English 202 Student Learning Objectives

1. Improve your ability to read, analyze, and evaluate texts for the quality of their information, argument, and credibility.
2. Improve your ability to present the results of such reading, analysis, and evaluation in a variety of written forms, culminating in a research-based essay.
3. Learn and apply the conventions of academic research writing.
4. Learn and practice how to develop excellent academic research papers through a process of critical reading, note taking, drafting, and revision.
5. Work with the theme of hauntology in order to facilitate meaningful connection with the research process.

**NOTE ON COURSE RESTRICTIONS:**

I will, to the best of my ability, provide you with exceptional resources within our D2L shell parameters. This includes putting in a request for your text book order, uploading pertinent files and information, and empathizing with the lack of software capabilities of your DOC site. My hope is to teach you to become a scholarly researcher within the confines of our small space. Some of the readings I've selected for us will demand a high level of dedication and comprehension. I trust you will try your best with them and challenge yourself. With that considered, my main goal is your learning, which, I believe, is processual. If you can: try to also keep a dictionary or thesaurus handy for your allotted study time. If you have trouble with this please let me know in the Q & A forum.

**TEXTBOOK/READINGS:**

Bruce Ballenger, *The Curious Researcher*, 8th ed.

Various readings as assigned in our course outline and available on D2L.

**INSTRUCTOR CONTACT:**

I've provided a Q&A discussion board on our course D2L where you can ask questions and notify me of emergencies.

**Grade Distribution:**

Please note IUP only assigns whole grades--no plus or minus addendums.

100-90=A; 89-80=B; 79-70=C; 69-60=D; below 60 =F

## MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE:

### Reading Response “Journal” (30% of final grade)

Here we will practice our scholarly reflection in a weekly post to D2L. Every week I will ask you to respond to our readings in a guided discussion board. I want to see here that you are critically reading our texts and using your “annotation” skills to the best of your ability with the tools you have.

### Summary & Analysis Paper: Strong Response (20% of final grade)

In this essay you will show significant skill in analysis and summary with emphasis on recognizing the difference between these skills.

### Research Quest/ Exploratory Essay with Annotated Bibliography (20% of final grade)

College should expose you to the vast world of academic research. In order to practice sound argumentation you will need research to back up your claims. The Research Planning Paper is designed to get you thinking about *the journey of research* (rather than just writing the academic research paper). We will discuss topic selection in class in order for you to pick a topic that lends itself well to this project. This paper is a way for you to show what sources you would select for a larger research project.

### Class Participation (30% of final grade)

Just logging in every week, doing the assigned tasks, especially the readings, will earn you a majority of your final score. Show me you are getting everything out of these assignments every week.

**NOTE ON READINGS:** THESE READINGS SHOULD CHALLENGE YOU. SINCE WE NEED TO BE A BIT CREATIVE IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH OUR COURSE GOALS WITHOUT RELIABLE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET OR LIBRARY RESEARCH TOOLS, KEEP IN MIND I’VE CHOSEN YOUR COURSE READINGS WITH THE GOAL OF INCREASING YOUR ACADEMIC VOCABULARY, PROVIDING A SOCIALLY RELEVANT THEME, AND MAKING SURE YOU MEET OUR COURSE REQUIREMENTS. HOPEFULLY YOU FIND THESE READINGS INTRIGUING. IF EVER YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH THESE TEXTS, KEEP IN MIND THEY SHOULDN’T BE EASY. JUST DO YOUR BEST AND YOUR GRADE WILL BE A REFLECTION OF THAT. ALSO NOTE: ALL THE READINGS WE DO HERE ARE A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE LIBRARY RESEARCH YOU WOULD TYPICALLY BE DOING. WE WILL CRAFT A RESEARCH PAPER, YOUR CULMINATING EXPERIENCE, FROM YOUR COURSE READINGS. THE MATERIALS IN OUR COURSE WILL ALSO BE CENTERED AROUND THE MORE GENERAL THEME OF COMBATING RACISM AND ITS LEGACY. KEEP IN MIND YOU ARE TO SHOW THE UTMOST PROFESSIONALISM WHEN DEALING WITH THIS SUBJECT MATTER.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

### Week One

*Getting Started*

From Textbook: pg. 30-31 “The Myth of the Boring Topic,” pg. 45-47 “Reading for Research”

	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<b>Week Two</b>	
<i>Getting into the Research Mindset</i> Reading: <i>Ways of Seeing</i> by John Berger From Textbook: pg. 1-17	
<b>Week Three</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Defining our Theme: Hauntology</i> Reading: "The Metaphysics of Crackle: Afrofuturism and Hauntology" by Mark Fisher	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<b>Week Four</b>	
<i>Taking Notes &amp; Drafting</i> From Textbook: pg. 114-155	
<b>Week Five</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Reading Closely</i> Reading: "Recitatif" by Toni Morrison	
<b>Week Six</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Writing for Reader Interest</i> From Textbook: pg. 164-185 Reading: "Necropolitics" by J.-A. Mbembé, Libby Meintjes	
<b>Week Seven</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Summary vs. Analysis</i> Reading: Professor Tahat's Summary vs. Analysis Lesson	<b>SUMMARY VS. ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
<b>Week Eight</b>	
<i>Revision Strategies</i> From Textbook: pg. 187-199 Reading: "Talking to Ghosts" by R.F. Kuang	
<b>Week Nine</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Revision Continued</i> From Textbook: pg. 203-221 Reading: Professor Tahat's Lesson on Annotated Bibliography	<b>Draft of an Annotation DUE</b>
<b>Week Ten</b>	
<i>Drafting a Thesis-based Paper</i> Reading: "Bloodchild" by Octavia Butler Exercise: Thesis statement worksheet	
<b>Week Eleven</b>	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>
<i>Seeing Research pt. 1</i> Reading: "The Dilemma of Classification: The Past in the Present" by Lundy Braun and Evelyn Hammond	<b>Reading Reflection DUE</b>

**Week Twelve**

*Seeing Research pt. 2*

Reading: "Traces of Derrida in Toni Morrison's Jazz" by Phillip Page

Exercise: Create a thesis statement and introductory paragraph.

**Reading Reflection DUE**

**Week Thirteen**

*Drafting a Research Assignment*

No readings, work on annotated bibliography

**Annotations DUE**

**Week Fourteen**

No readings, work on drafting paper

**Research Quest DUE**

**\*This syllabus may change based on our needs in the course.**