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Intersections of Me

“There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

Audre Lorde

This semester-long project asks you to look at yourself through the lens of intersectionality. This project has several parts, including research, a six-to-eight page paper, and a conference presentation at the end of the semester. We will use Kimberle Crenshaw’s “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color” as a primary text. All assignments for this project will center around Crenshaw’s arguments and ideas as presented in this essay.

Goals (from the English 100 performance objectives and learning outcomes):

- Apply reading comprehension strategies to academic, professional, and other texts.
- Identify, analyze, and evaluate explicit and implied claims, support, and reasoning in a wide array of texts.
- Identify, evaluate, and draw sound inferences from scholarly texts gathered from library resources.
- Compose academic essay characterized by a controlling idea, containing logically sequenced and focused body paragraphs that use and explain relevant and specific evidence.
- Put to use a strategy for generating, drafting, and revising an academic essay.
- Correctly integrate quotes and summaries of outside sources without plagiarism, according to MLA standards.
- Construct concise, grammatically correct, and varied sentences following the principles of standard edited American English and conventions of genre.
- Recognize and use effective style characterized by complexity of syntax and vocabulary, appropriateness of diction, and awareness of audience.

Your task is to take part in a multi-tiered, semester-long project drawing from Crenshaw’s text. You will first summarize the text, then you will propose and conduct scholarly research on the topic of intersectionality as it relates to you, and finally, you will apply what you learn to yourself. The end result will be a six-to-eight-page research paper in which you analyze yourself through the lens of intersectionality. You will write a research proposal at the beginning of your project process, and you will present a summary of the findings of your research in an end-of-the-semester conference.

Step One: Summary Your task is to write a five or more paragraph summary of Crenshaw’s text. Your summary must include an overall summary of the text and its main ideas, as well as
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an explanation of some of the evidence used as support. As is always the case in my class, this summary will not include any quotes from the text. Your task is to put all of the ideas into your own words. However, since you are referring to and summarizing someone else’s ideas, your summary will have correctly formatted MLA style in-text citations.

**Step Two: research proposal.** Drawing from the Crenshaw "Mapping the Margins" text and your own life experiences, propose a plan for your research. Your proposal must show an understanding of Crenshaw’s overall argument, main points, and evidence used. You proposal must also show a beginning argument about what it is that you want to argue in your paper.

You will likely need to ask a librarian for help putting together keywords for database searches. Use the chat feature on our class library page.

Include the following sections in your research proposal. Be sure to title the sections.

1. Two paragraph summary of Crenshaw’s text. Your summary must show an understanding of Crenshaw’s main points, argument, and evidence. Use your summary purposefully. It should not just be plopped into your proposal. Instead, use your understanding and knowledge of the text to justify and show purpose for your research.

2. An exploration of one key passage in Crenshaw’s text.
   a. Paste in a section of Crenshaw’s text. The key passage should be three to five sentences in length. Use correct MLA style rules for quotes. There is no need to introduce this passage, but you must use quotation marks and a correctly formatted citation.
   b. Then write an in-depth exploration of the passage. Your exploration section should be one to two paragraphs.
      i. What is the meaning of this passage?
      ii. What are the implications?

3. Preliminary scholarly research—must include at least one other text, which must be from a peer-reviewed journal article. Summarize the second text’s argument, main points, and evidence used, then explain how you are using the text to formulate your argument. You may use one of the scholarly texts I have posted, or you can do your own scholarly research, but the source must be a peer-reviewed journal article. This section should be two separate paragraphs.

4. A plan for forward research. What ideas or topics will you continue to research? Why? This section should be one to two paragraphs long. Be specific.

5. Finally, one paragraph on your preliminary ideas about the intersections on which you sit. How have these intersections given you privilege? How have they given you hardships? What do you think you will learn with your research? About yourself or about something else?
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Keep in mind that correctly cited quotes and a works cited page are required for your research proposal.

**Step Three: Annotated Bibliography.** Using the format in the example I have posted, cite and annotate at least five articles from peer-reviewed journals. You may use the Crenshaw text and any or all of the sources I have posted, or you may conduct your own research. Each source in your bibliography must include 1) a correctly-formatted MLA style citation, 2) a summary paragraph that demonstrates an understanding of the text’s overall argument, main points, and evidence used as support, and 3) an analysis paragraph that discusses the ways in which you make connections and/or draw conclusions about yourself as an intersection of experiences and identity.

**Step Four: Research Paper.** Your task is to write a paper that makes an argument about you as seen through the lens of intersectionality. This will be a six to eight page* personal narrative-research paper hybrid.

Tell the story of you and the intersections on which you sit. Tell the story of your intersections. How have those intersections informed you of the world and of yourself? How have you formed your own identity and your own values and beliefs based on the the things Crenshaw says inform us about ourselves? How have those intersections contributed to who you are and the views you have on the world? How have those experiences, values, beliefs etc informed you about others? How have you looked at the people in your community as opposed to the people outside of your community?

What I want is for you to use the knowledge you have gained from Crenshaw’s paper and from your own research and apply that knowledge in some way to you. To who you are. To what you believe. To what you value. To how you look at your surroundings. You have five sources--at least. Use all of those sources, take what they have to say, and apply that knowledge and info to you.

**Your thesis** will be your argument about the intersections you sit upon, and the ways in which those intersections have informed you of yourself, the world, and your views of people who inhabit your community and communities that look nothing like yours.

**Your paper must include five sources**, including the Crenshaw text, and must use at least five significant and substantial quotes that contribute to and/or support your thesis. At least three of your sources must be from peer-reviewed journal articles. All of your sources must be credible. If you choose to include summaries of any texts, use the summary purposefully and effectively.
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**Minimum Requirements:**

- Your paper must demonstrate all that we have learned about good writing over the course of this semester, including but not limited to the following:
  - A strong thesis that shows an argument and effectively controls the essay as a whole.
  - An element of critical thinking that shows you are making connections between the texts you have read and yourself. This is a lens reading, which means your paper will show that you are looking at yourself through the lens of intersectionality.
  - Paragraphs that show cohesiveness, completion, and clear and obvious contribution to the essay’s main argument.
  - Sentences that are concise, correct, and varied.
  - MLA style essay format, quote integration, in-text citations, and works cited page.
- Your paper must be at least six pages long, which means that it will reach the bottom of page six.
- Your paper must go through the writing process. In order to submit a final draft for grading, a rough draft must be submitted on time. All papers that do not go through the revision process, in other words a rough draft AND a final draft, will not be eligible for a grade.
- Your paper must include at least five substantial and significant quotes from five different sources.
  - Three of the quotes must be from scholarly sources.
  - Two of the quotes must be from credible quotes.
- Your paper must include a correctly formatted [2016 MLA style works cited](#) page.

**Step Five: Conference.** Share a three to four minute summary of the findings of your research project. Summarize your paper and present that summary to the class. Include in your presentation at least two of the sources you used, making sure to show how those sources informed your argument about you. In other words, what did you learn about you from reading these sources? You'll not need any visual aids for this conference presentation. Just you and your awesomeness.