Assessment: Essays and Tutorials

Teaching Block 1 and 2: Critical Thinking Essays

At the end of each quarter/teaching block, two essay questions are given, and you must write on one of the texts from that Teaching block.

Before you start writing the essay, it is crucial that you familiarise yourself with the Technical Guidelines on Essay Writing in this course pack.

Teaching Block 1: You must choose to write on one the following topics:

Critical Thinking Essay Number 1

Date of Submission: 18 March 2019 at 12:00 ADU.

Topic 1 (Karl Van Wyk)
“Space” (Ntshanga)

Length: 2000 words inclusive of text, references, figures, tables & captions

He says how this man, behind Ma Thano’s spaza shop, he isn’t the same as any other man he’s ever seen, before. CK leans forward and tells us that this guy, whatever he is, he’s just something we have to set our own eyes on. (Ntshanga 174)

Provide a critical analysis of the way in which the four boys in Masande Ntshanga’s short story, “Space”, understand (or misunderstand) the male figures in their lives. You must provide a close reading of the extract in your answer, and link this close reading to concerns of the rest of the text.

Some notes to help you along:
Apart from the many men in the text, there are also women and girls that feature in the margins of the story. Why do you think they are not at the centre of the story? What does this say about the kinds of people the boys take as role models in their lives? Remember that the story is narrated by one of the boys (who remains nameless in the text), so everything we see is filtered through his perspective and preoccupations.
Consider when the story is set. What was about to happen in South Africa, and what kind of problems (related to politics, race, and health) was the country facing during this time?
The story depicts different kinds of spaces. Think of the spaza shop mentioned in the extract, the “local” the boys attend, the shopping mall where they boys steal toys and pop culture memorabilia, and think of the sick man, the ‘alien’, who doesn’t seem to come from this planet. How do some of these inform our understanding of the story?
You need not address all of these matters in your essay, and you are also encouraged to think beyond the confines of these prompts.

OR
**Topic 2** (Daisy Matlou)

**Length:** 2000 words inclusive of text, references, figures, tables & captions

Critical analysis of the underrepresentation of women in the Engineering Profession, challenges they face within the engineering sector and possible interventions strategies.

This topic has a rich socio-economic historical context within which it must be located. You are expected to do extensive independent research and back up claims and arguments with evidence from reputable sources. You will need to trace the status of women within society and its culture, schooling and perceptions about their academic performance, late entry and prospects of growth within the engineering sector, the impact of these issues on women’s career development in engineering, and argue for diversity and equality.

**Teaching Block 2, you must choose to write on one the following topics:**

**Critical Thinking Essay Number 2**

**Date of Submission: 13 May 2019 at 12:00 ADU**

**Topic 1** (Josiah Nyanda)

**Photographic Essay**

**Length:** Five Pictures/photographs with 1500 words inclusive of pictures, text, references & captions

Life in the city is full of surprises, drama, comedy and tragedy. One way of capturing these happy, sad and melodramatic moments is through pictures and photographs because of their picturesque nature. Using FIVE pictures of your choice (Not the ones discussed in the lecture and/or tutorials), develop and write an essay that creatively and critically engages with the theme of **PROTEST IN THE CITY**. Your essay, which should combine five images of your choice and written text, MUST also make reference to the city discourse that you have read and watched (poems, short stories, films and theoretically grounded readings), and is contained in the course reading pack. The written text of your photographic essay should NOT be more than **1200 words**.

**Instructions**

• You may use captions and/or sub-headings in your essay but ensure that your work has continuous flow.

• Your essay should provide a close reading of the pictures and texts chosen for analysis and must provide relevant evidence and quotations from the texts to support your discussion.

**OR**
**Topic 2** (Eva Kowalska)

**Length:** 2000 words inclusive of text, references, figures, tables & captions

What is the most significant invention or discovery made by humans?

This topic requires extensive independent research. You will need to provide historical background, explain how the invention works or how the discovery was made, and argue for its importance within the relevant context.

**Technical Guidelines on Essay Writing and Submission**

Essay must be written in clear grammatically correct English; concise sentences with critical coherent argument. The Essay format and structure must adhere to the “Style Guide for Essays / Theses and Dissertations” writing standards specified in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment booklet (copy of this will be posted on Sakai).

Do extensive literature search and make use of any reputable source of information.

**Writing Guidelines**

- All essays must be **2000 words** except for the Photographic Essay in term 2
- All Essays must be typed
- Use New **Times Roman Font / Calibri / Arial / Garamond**
- Use font **size 12** with a line **spacing of 1.5**
- Use standard page margins
- Paginate your essay and number all pages
- Edit own work; correct mistakes, spelling errors, sentence construction etc. before submission

**Referencing requirements**

- Use **Harvard Referencing Style** to reference your work / acknowledge the work of others
- Use **IN-TEXT REFERENCES** when citing the texts in the body of the essay
- In-text reference all ideas, images, figures and tables of the sources used in the essay
- A list of all **REFERENCES** used in the essay must be attached at the end of the essay
- Relevant secondary research will be rewarded when used judiciously and cited appropriately.

**Similarity Index Report**

- Load essay on the Turn-It-In Software through the Sakai Website to generate the Similarity Index Report
- Enter the total percentage (%) of the Similarity Index Report on the cover page
- Detected instances of Plagiarism will result in the student’s work being reviewed with a possibility of appearance before the **Plagiarism Disciplinary Committee of the ADU**
Submission Guidelines

- Use the standard provided **Cover Page** when submitting an essay
- Cover page can be downloaded from Sakai – (see sample provided in the course pack)
- Cover page must be completed in full with your surname, name, student number, full course information, group number, Tutor’s name, surname and diagonal, essay topic, word count and the percentage (%) of the Similarity Index Report
- Attach the provided Mark-Sheet after the cover page (mark-sheet must be inserted between Cover Page and the Introduction page)
- **HARD COPY** of the essay must be printed only on one side of the page.

Honour Pledge/ Declaration

- **Sign** the honour pledge to declare amongst other that:
  - Essay is your own unaided work.
  - Essay has no plagiarised information
- Enter the date on which you sign the Honour Pledge.

Submission Date and Time

- NOTE that Sakai’s Turn-it-in SOFTCOPY essay-upload will be synchronised with the submission date and time of the essay at the ADU. It is important that you upload the essay on or before the submission date and time to allow Turn-it-in to generate the Similarity Index Report (SIR) which may take time resulting in you not getting the SIR and or your essay being late for submission.
- **HARD COPY** of the Essay must be submitted on the **date and time** specified in the Course-Outline / Lecture Programme / Course Pack
- All essays must be submitted at the Academic Development Unit on the 3rd Floor of the Chamber of Mine Building, West Campus on or before 12:00 of the date specified on the Course-Outline

Sakai and Turn-It-In Software

- All technical problems related to uploading the essay on the Sakai’s Turn-it-in software must be communicated timeously to the eLearning Team at **elearn@wits.ac.za** or Phone: 011 717 7161/ 7169 or visit, Office location: Solomon Mahlangu, 1st floor, ICT helpdesk
- and also copy the Critical Thinking course (FEBE1000A) Administrator: **mihloti.ntimbane@wits.ac.za** and Coordinator: **daisy.matlou@wits.ac.za**

Maintaining academic integrity of own learning tasks and avoiding Plagiarism

- Familiarise yourself with the University of the Witwatersrand **Plagiarism Policy Number: S2003/351B** which amongst others provides the following guidelines (see attached copy):
  - values and practises of the discipline with respect to the conventions associated with acknowledging the work of others
  - **importance of signing** declaration that the work submitted is your own unaided work
  - acknowledging that plagiarism is unacceptable in the academe
Penalties for mistakes and failure to follow instructions

- Failure to follow any of the above instructions will attract penalties of 5% or more.
- **Late submissions will be subjected to penalties** with marks deductions according to School/ Academic Development Unit’s Policy; 5% after 12:00 thereafter 5% per each late day
- Essay with **No Honour Pledge Signature and Date** will be subjected to penalties
- All detected cases of plagiarism will result in student being summoned to appear at the **Plagiarism Disciplinary Committee** (PDC) to answer allegations of plagiarism.
  - Confirmed cases of plagiarism will result in penalties according to the University / School / Academic Development Unit’s Policy depending on the nature of plagiarism.
Declaration

I declare that this essay / report is my own, unaided work. I have read the University Policy on Plagiarism and hereby confirm that no Plagiarism, copying; nor is there any copyright infringement in this report. I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others. I willingly submit to any investigation in this regard by the Faculty of Engineering and The Built Environment and understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that I plagiarised. I undertake to abide by the decision of any such investigation.

_______________________  ______________________
Signature               Date
# Essay Marks and Feedback

Student Surname & Name:  
Student Number:  
Tutor’s Name:  
Group Number:  

## Diagonal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>/50</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>/50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/100</td>
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</tbody>
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## Applicable Penalties

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<th>Final Total Mark</th>
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## Comments:
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Critical Thinking (50%)</th>
<th>Language (50%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80% +</td>
<td>Superlative engagement with the text; answers the question and goes well beyond its confines and requirements; argument is clearly original and excellently structured; offers original and unusual use of quotations; excellent engagement with secondary readings (if not required, but may be awarded)</td>
<td>Demonstrates panache in the use of original phrases and expression; meaning is conveyed without ambiguity; almost no typos; clear evidence of editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% - 79%</td>
<td>Answers the question fully; demonstrates awareness of the text’s complexities and ambiguities; argument is clear and well-reasoned; provides interesting insight into the text; finds interesting patterns</td>
<td>Language and phrasing is clear; work is edited well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% - 74%</td>
<td>Mostly or fully answers the question; offers a reading that doesn’t expose the full complexity of the text; argument is unsurprising, though good; good use of the text and quotations, though somewhat expected</td>
<td>Language is functional; meaning is clear; a few typos that do not at all obscure meaning</td>
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<td>60% - 69%</td>
<td>An adequate response to the question; offers some dynamic reading of the text; argument is mostly coherent; different extracts speak to each other in somewhat interesting ways; finds some interesting patterns but uses what is most immediately available</td>
<td>Writing is mostly clear; some errors but not enough to detract from intended meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% - 59%</td>
<td>Offers a few complex readings of the text, but largely misses the point of some or most aspects of the question; argument just about hangs together and lacks logical structure; some use of the text; offers few instances of paraphrasing or direct quotation; glosses over some important aspects of the extract</td>
<td>Mostly understandable and somewhat clear, though some errors obscure much of what is meant; some evidence of proofreading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35% - 49%</td>
<td>Provides a cursory response to the question, but often misses the point; almost no critical engagement with the text; argument is disorderly but present; makes very little use of the text; hardly or does not at all refer to the extract</td>
<td>There is enough clarity of expression to discern some but very little meaning; clear evidence of little editing and proofreading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% - 34%</td>
<td>Does not address the question at all; there is no discernible argument; response is far too short; does not refer to the text at all</td>
<td>Incomprehensible</td>
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