

# ENGLISH W170: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BODY AND THE BEAUTY MYTH

## COURSE PHILOSOPHY

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*This semester we are going to look differently in the mirror!*

W 170 is a course that attempts to integrate critical reading, thinking, and writing through sustained inquiry into a cultural issue that concerns us all, even if we admit it or not - the beauty myth. In this course, we will try to investigate how this myth structures what we do, how we dress, move, or behave. We will also take a close look at the various ways in which our bodies become the cultural messengers of the beauty myth. Through careful analyses of advertisements for beauty products, literary pieces, movies, and TV shows, we will develop cultural analyses in different mediums and genres, but we will also use them as a springboard for building reading, writing, research strategies, and rhetorical moves that will help us engage with a variety of texts (fictional and non-fictional, written and visual, popular and academic).



## MATERIALS

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1. *Writing Analytically*. 5th ed. Stephen & Rosenwasser, Thompson/Wadsworth, 2009. (WA)
2. *Rules for Writers*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Diana Hacker, IUB, 2009. (RW)
3. *The Bluest Eye*. Toni Morrison
4. Additional readings posted on Oncourse, under the Resources tab.
5. A three-ring binder for storing all class materials, readings, and notes.

Note: Please do not throw away any of the materials you prepare for this class.

## TYPES OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

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- (1) **Two Reading Prompts:** short handouts that will help you and your peers guide the in-class discussions about the critical texts we read
- (2) **Six Microthemes:** short papers that will help you practice the skills and rhetorical moves necessary for the major papers
- (3) **Three Major Papers with Drafts:** major papers that will go through revision and incorporate the skills and strategies practiced in the Microthemes and all other in-class exercises
- (4) **Three Rhetorical Reflections:** reflective papers that will help you keep a critical eye on your progress and challenges throughout the semester

## GRADING

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In order to pass this course, you must submit ALL assigned work. There are 1,000 possible points for the semester, and your final grade will be a sum of the points you receive, converted to a letter grade. The point breakdown is as follows:

ASSIGNMENTS	No. of Points
<b>UNIT 1</b>	
Microtheme 1 – Reading critically visual elements	25
Microtheme 2 – Identifying and integrating portable claims	25
<b>Paper 1 – Visual Analysis of an Ad for a Beauty Product</b>	100
Rhetorical Reflection 1	50

<b>UNIT II</b>	
Microtheme 3 – Reading critically a character	50
Microtheme 4 – Source as a lens	50
<b>Paper 2 – Comparative Analysis of Two Characters</b>	200
Rhetorical Reflection 2	50
<b>UNIT III</b>	
Microtheme 5 – Topic Proposal	25
Microtheme 6 – Annotated Bibliography	50
<b>Paper 3 – Research Paper</b>	300
Rhetorical Reflection 3	25
Reading Prompts (2)	50
	<b>1,000 total points</b>

Each assignment will have specific evaluation criteria with different number of points, depending on the level of difficulty and importance. We will discuss these criteria for each assignment; however, overall your projects will be evaluated depending on content, argument, depth of analysis, development, organization and coherence, language and vocabulary, and grammatical and stylistic conventions.

The final grade distribution is as follows:

A	930-1,000	94-100%	C+	770-799	77-79%
A-	900-929	90-93%	C	730-769	73-76%
B+	870-899	87-89%	C-	700-729	70-72%
B	830-869	83-86%	D	600-699	60-69%
B-	800-829	80-82%	F	599 and below	<59%

At Indiana University,

A = exemplary work that shows mastery of the concepts targeted by the assignment and significant improvement as a result of careful revision

B = very good work that shows mastery of the concepts targeted by the assignment at a level above expectations

C = adequate completion of the assignment that could benefit from more in-depth work and/or revision

D = failure to execute some portion of the assignment properly

F = failure to understand or follow through with the assignment

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Drafts and Peer Response:** Revising is an important part of inquiry and writing in this course.

Throughout the semester, you will receive feedback from peers and from me. On the day when drafts are due, please bring one copy of your draft. Keep the drafts with you since you will have to turn them in with each final assignment.

NOTE: Every major paper will be preceded by a rough draft due on the date indicated in the syllabus.

Failure to bring a draft to class will result in a third of a letter grade deduction (e.g., from B to B-) from the final grade for that paper.

**Paper Format:** All written materials prepared for this class should follow the guidelines below:

- 1 They must be stapled or paper-clipped. I will NOT accept assignments that do not meet this requirement; the assignment will also be considered late.
- 2 They must meet the MLA format requirements (see the sample paper and guidelines in RW, pages 467-475).

**Late Papers:** All papers must be submitted in class on their due date as indicated in the syllabus unless I announce any alternate dates. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on which they are listed as due on the syllabus. Assignments will be considered late if they are turned in after papers have been collected during class. Your grade for that assignment will suffer a third of a letter grade deduction (e.g., from B to B-) for every day a paper is late (calendar day, not class meeting). If you become ill or the victim of emergency circumstances, please let me know as soon as possible. Computer error (e.g. failure to print out your work) is not a valid excuse for missing an assignment deadline. To avoid such situations, save your work often and do not count on printing right before class!

**Participation:** As a successful student, you should attend class regularly and on time. Come to class on time with your reading and/or writing assignments completed, prepared to participate in discussions and group work. Your daily participation in writing exercises, group work, and class discussions is absolutely necessary and I highly encourage you to engage in class debates, even though you may not always be sure about the correctness of your answer. In order to foster a respectful and comfortable environment for class discussions, when expressing your opinion, please refrain from using offensive language.

**Attendance:** There are no excused absences. Your final grade will be dropped by a third of a letter grade (e.g., B to B-) for each absence after three. In case of tardiness, coming late 10 minutes after the beginning of the class for three different class sessions equals a full class absence. Therefore, it would be wise to save your absences for emergencies and illness. Please inform me in advance of special circumstances such as religious holidays, military duty, and extended hospitalization, for which there will be no penalties. It is your responsibility to catch up on course activities that take place while you are absent; therefore, after you miss a class, contact a classmate asking what we did that day.

**Electronics:** I will not accept first or final drafts electronically unless I announce some exceptions in class. If an emergency makes electronic submission necessary, you must let me know about your situation in advance. You will still be held responsible in the event of any transmission problems. Please turn off and put away cell phones before class. Anyone text-messaging or using iPods during class will be counted absent. Should you have special needs, please let me know.

**Oncourse:** Students are required to check Oncourse regularly for updates and materials. If you do not have personal access to a computer, there are several computer labs available across campus (see <http://uits.iu.edu/page/amea> for a full list of labs, hours, and locations). Furthermore, keep back-up copies of all your work; computer glitches or long lines in the computer labs will not be accepted as excuses for late or missing work.

**Academic Integrity:** Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author—that the wording and ideas are yours, with exceptions indicated by quotation marks and citations. As the IU Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct states:

“Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else’s work, including the work of other students, as one’s own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully

acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. [...]

- 1 "A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgement.
- 2 "A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:
  - "Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
  - "Using another person's ideas, opinions, theories;
  - "Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
  - "Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement."

We will discuss how to avoid plagiarism in class. See also pages IUB-4 -6 in RW.

Evidence of plagiarism will result in an F grade for the course and a report filed with the Dean.

**Writing Conferences and E-Mail:** I encourage you to consider my office hours as an extension of the classroom. I will hold office hours each week during which I will offer one-on-one instruction to anyone interested. Please email me in advance to set up an appointment and to inform me about the issues you are interested in discussing. For questions and concerns outside of class or after office hours, feel free to send me a brief email, but do not expect an immediate response from me, especially after 8:00 p.m. For important matters, such as extended conversations about your drafts and/or grades, please see me in person.

**Writing Tutorial Services (WTS):** I encourage you to visit a W131 tutor at Writing Tutorial Services to work on papers at any stage of the writing process. WTS is a free service for all IU students. It is located in Ballantine 206 and is a great resource for improving your writing skills. WTS is not a proofreading service; rather, tutors assist you in developing your ideas and improving your ability to communicate by writing. WTS is also a great resource for helping clean up your prose and assisting with proper citation. Call WTS at 855-6738 for appointments at the Ballantine location, at which sessions are one hour. Half-hour walk-in sessions are available at the Academic Support Centers in Briscoe, Forest, and Teter or on the third floor of Wells Library.

**Support Services:** Disability Services and the Adaptive Technologies divisions of the Office of Student Affairs can provide you with assistance, auxiliary aids, or related services if you think a temporary or permanent disability might prevent you from fully participating in the class. Please contact them at <http://www2.dsa.indiana.edu/dss/> or 855-7578 with any individual concerns. Students with special needs must be registered with Disability Services before classroom accommodations can be provided.

## DAILY SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS<sup>1</sup>

WA = *Writing Analytically*<sup>2</sup>

RW = *Rules for Writers*

<b>UNIT I: The Beauty Myth</b> <b>SKILLS: Reading critically and practicing analysis</b>
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### Week One

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- Mon 01/10** W 170 Course Introduction  
Class Introductions  
Introduction to Oncourse  
Introductory exercise  
Writing Profile (assigned)
- Wed 01/12** “Counterproductive Habits of Mind” (WA 17-30)  
“What’s Wrong with the Five-Paragraph Form?” (WA 124-127)  
“Understanding an Assignment” (RW 7-11)  
“Read Actively: Annotate a Text” (RW 346-351)
- Fri 01/14** **Writing Profile (Due)**  
Roland Barthes – “What is a Myth?” (Oncourse)  
“Interpretation: What It Is, What It Isn’t, and How to Do It” (WA 49-63)  
“Notice and Focus” (WA 35-36)

### Week Two

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- Mon 01/17** **Martin Luther King Day (No Class)**
- Wed 01/19** “The Method” (WA 37-43)  
“What Evidence Is and How It Works” (WA 109-120)
- Fri 01/21** **Microtheme 1 – Reading critically visual elements (Due)**  
“Seems to Be about X but Could Also Be Y” (WA 63-65)  
“Developing a Thesis” (WA 123-124)  
“How Thesis Shapes the Paper” (WA 165), “Thesis Slots” (WA 169)

### Week Three

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- Mon 01/24** “Linking Evidence and Claims” (WA 110-114)  
“Climactic Order” (WA 171-172)  
“The Shaping Force of Transitions” (WA 166-167)  
“Build Effective Paragraphs” (RW 40-43, 50-57)
- Wed 01/26** **Rough Draft (Due)**  
In-Class Peer Review

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<sup>1</sup>The schedule may be subject to revision throughout the course of the semester. Any changes will be announced in class and over e-mail. Please keep this syllabus with you at all times.

<sup>2</sup> All readings from WA, RW, and Oncourse must be prepared **before** you come to the session under which they are listed on the syllabus (i.e. readings listed under a Wednesday class must be prepared before you come to class on Wednesday).

- Fri 01/28** "Reading Analytically" (WA 205-206)  
"Becoming Conversant instead of Reading for the Gist" (WA 207)  
Naomi Wolf – "The Beauty Myth" (Oncourse)

Week Four

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- Mon 01/31** Susan Bordo - "Beauty (Re)discovers the Male Body" (Oncourse)
- Wed 02/02** "Summary" (WA 96-97)  
"Summarizing" (RW 351-352, 408-410)
- Fri 02/04** Summary Practice  
"Forwarding" (selection from Joseph Harris' *Re-writing: How to Do Things with Texts*) (Oncourse)

Week Five

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- Mon 02/07** **Microtheme 2 – Identifying and integrating portable claims (Due)**  
"Seems to Be about X but Could Also Be (Is Really) about Y" (WA 63-65)
- Wed 02/09** **Bring all Paper 1 materials to class**  
"Guidelines for Recognizing & Fixing Weak Theses" (WA 193-201)
- Fri 02/11** Group Conferences (**Second Draft is due on the day of your conference**)

Week Six

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- Mon 02/14** Group Conferences
- Wed 02/16** **Final Draft Paper 1 (Due)**  
Revisiting a skill: Developing main claims in body paragraphs
- Fri 02/18** **Rhetorical Reflection 1 (Due)**  
Introduction to Unit II

<b>UNIT II: Confronting beauty</b> <b>SKILLS: Advancing and contextualizing analysis</b>
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Week Seven

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- Mon 02/21** "Pitch, complaint, moment" (WA 208-209)  
Framing Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*
- Wed 02/23** **Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (2-58)**  
"Reading with or against the Grain" (WA 210-212)  
"Uncovering Assumptions" (WA 76-84)
- Fri 02/25** **Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (61-131)**  
Movie Night: *Precious* (2009) (Location: TBA)

Week Eight

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- Mon 02/28** **Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (132-206)**  
***Imitation of Life* (Due)**
- Wed 03/02** "Comparison/Contrast" (WA 100-102)  
Review "The Method" (WA 37-43)
- Fri 03/04** **Microtheme 3 – Reading critically a character (Due)**  
W. E. B. duBois – "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" (Oncourse)

Week Nine

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- Mon 03/07** bell hooks – "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance" (Oncourse)
- Wed 03/09** Avoiding the Matching Exercise (WA 215-218)  
"Applying Reading as a Lens" (WA 213-214)
- Fri 03/11** **Microtheme 4 – Source as a lens (Due)**  
"Using Sources Analytically" (WA 219-226)  
"Plagiarism and the Logic of Citation" (WA 254-260)

Week Ten

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- Mon 03/14** **Spring Break**
- Wed 03/16** **Spring Break**
- Fri 03/18** **Spring Break**

Week Eleven

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- Mon 03/21** "Introductions and Conclusions" (WA 179-190)  
"Coordination, Subordination, and Emphasis" (WA 290-295)
- Wed 03/23** **Rough Draft Paper 2 Due (bring 2 copies)**  
Review "Guidelines for Recognizing & Fixing Weak Theses" (WA 193-201)  
"Cutting the Fat" (WA 298-303)  
"Integrating Sources" (RW 418-426)
- Fri 03/25** Group Conferences (**Second Draft is due on the day of your conference**)

<b>UNIT III: Beauty – the measure of our bodies</b> <b>SKILLS: Finding focus and researching for analysis</b>
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Week Twelve

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- Mon 03/28** In-class Peer Review (**Third Draft of Paper 2 DUE**) (**bring 2 copies**)
- Wed 03/30** **Final Draft Paper 2 (Due)**  
Introduction to Unit II  
Introduction to a research project

**Fri 04/01** Finding productive research questions  
**Rhetorical Reflection 2 (Due)**  
Writing a Topic Proposal

Week Thirteen

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**Mon 04/04** **Microtheme 5: Topic Proposal (Due)**  
"10 on 1" (WA 36-37)

**Wed 04/06** Searching for MLA sources (Location: TBA)

**Fri 04/08** Research Workshop

Week Fourteen

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**Mon 04/11** Jeffrey Jerome Cohen – "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)" (Oncourse)  
Annotated Bibliography (assigned)

**Wed 04/13** Patrick McGann – "Eating Muscle. Material-Semiotics and a Manly Appetite"  
(Oncourse)

**Fri 04/15** **Microtheme 6: Annotated Bibliography (Due)**  
**Bring all Paper 3 materials to class**  
Thesis Workshop

Week Fifteen

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**Mon 04/18** **Revised Thesis Statement, Introduction, and 1 Body Paragraph (Due)**  
In-class writing workshop

**Wed 04/20** "Making a Thesis Evolve" (WA 139-157)  
"When to Use a Formal Outline" (RW 18-20)  
Organization workshop

**Fri 04/22** **Rough Draft of Paper 3 Comparative Analysis (Due) (Bring 3 copies to class)**  
In-Class Peer Review

Week Sixteen

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**Mon 04/25** "Conflicting Evidence – Step 5" (WA 151)  
"Giving Evidence a Point: Making Details Speak" (WA 112-114)

**Wed 04/27** Group Conferences (**Second Draft of Paper 3 Comparative Analysis Due**)

**Fri 04/29** **Paper 3 + Rhetorical Reflection 3 (Due in class)**  
Course Wrap-up  
Course Evaluations

**Note:** There is no final exam for this course. Paper 3 and Rhetorical Reflection 3 count as your Final Exam.