

Assignment 1: What is a life of significance?

Write an essay (4-5 pages) in which you draw from the materials we have examined as a class to answer the question, what does it mean to live a life of significance? By what criteria or measure might we judge a life as significant? What qualities, characteristics, actions, and attitudes might be associated with such a life?

	4 – Exemplary	3 – Accomplished	2 – Developing	1 – Beginning
Articulates Points, Perspectives, or Analytic Conclusions <i>States criteria, features, qualities, principles, characteristics, tension points, or paradoxes</i> 30%	Identifies, with a thesis statement, three or more pillars of what constitutes a life of significance; author has taken ownership of overall approach and answered the question, “so what?” Work may offer surprising, creative insight or show thoughtfulness that exceeds expectations	Identifies three or more pillars of what constitutes a life of significance that provide insight into core issues; additional clarification of individual points or overall stance would improve main points/ideas; author has taken ownership of project	Identifies pillars of what constitutes a life of significance; additional pillars may be implied but not stated; relevance or insight (e.g., “so what?”) into core issues may be implied; conclusions may appear superficial; ownership/authority emerges at various points in the essay	Pillars may be missing, not yet clearly stated, more implied than stated, or appear to parrot other ideas; author may not yet have taken ownership for overall perspective or stance
Provides Evidence and Justification <i>Includes details from specific artifacts and provides justification in relation to main ideas/points</i> 30%	References and uses details from specific course materials and/or other sources to develop and support ideas; relationship between evidence and main points is explicit, fully elaborated, and follows logically; interpretations and logic may be particularly thoughtful or artful	References and uses details from specific course materials and/or other sources to develop and support ideas; additional elaboration or details might improve explication between points/ideas and evidence; logical relationship is generally clear, but additional explanation might improve	References course materials and/or other sources, yet provides limited, irrelevant, or insufficient details and explanation in support of main ideas; explanation and justification may be thin, overly presumptive, or more implied than stated; relationship may be logical, but not yet made explicit due to missing details or justification; may raise more questions than it answers	Cursory reference to course materials and/or other sources; relevance between materials referenced and main ideas is not yet made explicit, leaving the reader to determine how evidence supports or justifies main points and ideas; referenced materials, even specific details, may be plunked, shoe-horned, or air dropped into the essay without sufficient explanation
Addresses Alternative Perspectives and Points of View <i>Consideration of alternative understandings</i> 25%	Names and responds to specific alternate understandings of what constitutes a “life of significance”; views are accurately represented and/or summarized; response is highly appropriate in relation to the essay’s main argument or thesis; may anticipate objections	Names and responds to alternative understandings of what constitutes a “life of significance”; summary or response to views is mostly accurate and/or summarized; some aspects of response may require additional elaboration; effort has been made to wrestle with view	Alternative views may be named and referenced, but summary may be thin or incomplete and/or response is not yet fully developed in relation to the main thesis; effort has been made to wrestle with views, yet write up is incomplete	Alternative views are not explicitly named, even if implied; if named, summary and response are thin, misrepresent the view, or are not linked to main thesis; shows little or no effort yet to address or wrestle with alternate views
Meets Format and Style Demands <i>Meets audience expectations for formatting, punctuation, grammar, and other stylistic elements</i> 15%	Overall organization is clear, with well-placed paragraphs and sections; sentence-level language is essentially error free, requiring little additional proofreading; citations and quotations are consistent and appropriately integrated for the genre; language and style may be particularly effective	Overall organization may be clear, even if some paragraphs or sections appear out of place; sentence-level language is generally error free; citations and quotations are consistent and appropriately integrated for the genre	Overall organization may be appropriate, but not clearly signaled or may rely on an organization inappropriate for the main argument; sentence-level language includes some errors that distract; citations and quotations may not be always complete or consistent and may not always be appropriately integrated for the genre	Organization may hinder reader comprehension or appear confusing; sentence-level errors and integration of citations distract from meaning; essay has not yet been proofread or prepared for readers