

English 1, Section 80703: College Composition

Fall 2008: 2:00-3:15 Tu&Th in Room 701

Office Hours: Tu&Th, 11:30-12:20, Rm 173A, the Writing Lab or the Library; also in Room 701 from 3:15 to 3:30 unless someone shows, in which case I'll stay longer

Online Reference: QCounty.com (follow link to Solano College classes)

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No Longer at Ease Final Exam

Your final exam paper is due during the final exam period next Tuesday, 12/16, from 1:30 to 3:30 in this room. You can either drop your finished paper off to me during this time, or you can write the exam in class during the two-hour period.

Ethical problems are frequently difficult because they arise when rights and duties conflict. As Scruton notes, “. . . the distinguishing mark of a dilemma is that, while only one of two things can be done, you have a duty to do both” (125). Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* is rife with such dilemmas perhaps because, as he points out in the Bill Moyers' interview I showed in class and [available online](#), the Igbo, whose philosophy embraces dualities, believe that there is never a single answer: wherever something stands, something else will stand beside it, meaning that there is no one way to do anything, that there is no absolute. If you are brave, fine, but remember that the coward survives the brave man; if there is one god, fine, but there will be others as well; if there is one point of view, fine, but there will be a second point of view.

With an eye towards examining ethical dilemmas, write a three- to four-page RSVP ethical response in which you address one of the following dilemmas concerning *No Longer at Ease*. In each case use Scruton, either [the article](#) or [chart](#), as your ethical reference. Also, feel free to reference any readings from this semester that are relevant to your analysis. In all cases, of course, make sure that you get your MLA formatting right, including citations and works cited, and that you've included all and only those references that you refer to in your paper. See the back of this sheet for the grading rubric I'll use.

1. What ethical issues are raised by Obi's education in England? While Obi's English education expands his world by exposing him to ideas beyond his Igbo and Nigerian cultures, it also complicates his life as he becomes increasingly burdened by status, family and community commitments.
2. What ethical issues are raised by Obi's interaction with the Umuofia Progressive Union? While the UPU honored Obi by giving him a loan of 800 pounds, a huge sum given that Obi's parents are trying to live on Isaac's pension of 35 pounds per year, they also expect Obi to pay the loan back while also living the proper life of a highly educated Igbo.
3. What ethical issues are raised by Obi's love for Clara? When Clara eventually tells Obi that she's an *osu*, he says that he still plans on marrying her.
4. Is Obi's approach to bribery ethical? While many might consider Obi's adamant opposition to bribery laudable, his approach to bribery creates problems in his job and among his people.
5. Was the colonial power that England held over Nigeria ethical? While Nigerians want their independence from England, which had governed them since 1885, might it not be better for English patriarchal control to continue given the kinds of problems Obi observes.
6. Is Isaac Okonkwo's approach to religion ethical? While Obi's father is a catechist Christian opposed to traditional beliefs and practices, he is also against Obi's involvement with Clara.
7. Is Clara's abortion ethical? While Obi claims that he loves Clara, he can't decide what he should do when Clara becomes pregnant, so she gets an abortion.

Grading Standards

NOTE ON USE: These are holistic characterizations – Not all elements must be present to justify a grade; conversely, one or two elements in another grade category may not be sufficient to justify that grade.

A work is defined as Excellent ("of the highest or finest quality; exceptionally good of its kind" -- *American Heritage College Dictionary*)

- ideas are mature, perceptive, original; they contribute something substantial and unique to a discussion of the topic and reflect a thorough understanding of the subject under discussion
- there is a clearly expressed, readily identifiable central focus or thesis
- this idea is logically developed
- support for the thesis is provided by ample, appropriate and effective evidence, including detailed facts, examples, and/or other specific data--all of which is clearly linked to the thesis with a thorough explanation of the significance of the evidence
- supporting evidence is organized into well-developed, coherent paragraphs
- paragraphs will normally contain an introductory topic sentence, followed by more detailed sentences providing the specific evidence
- paragraphs and sentences will have logical and sophisticated transitions
- sentences are complete, fluent, and reflect a variety of structures
- word choice is precise, distinctive, and free of clichés
- errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage are minor or absent.
- format and topic meet or exceed assignment guidelines.

B work is defined as Good ("competent;" "of high quality" -- *American Heritage College Dictionary*)

A B paper is very similar to an A paper. It generally does not have the depth and sophistication of an A paper; however, the grammar and mechanics are expected to be very good.

- ideas are somewhat mature and perceptive
- there is a clear central focus or thesis idea
- logic is evident in the development
- support for the thesis varies from excellent to good.
- paragraphs contain some specific evidence, though supporting analysis may not be as thorough as that of an A essay
- transitions are adequate, but not as elegant as those in an A essay
- sentences are complete and clear, varied in structure and mostly free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- word choice is competent, free of clichés
- format and topic meet assignment instructions.

C work is defined as Average-"competent, but undistinguished" -- *American Heritage College Dictionary*)

A C essay meets minimum requirements for the assignment--length, topics addressed--but does so in a minimal way. Such an essay may not have all of the problems below, but one or more will be apparent, and while one such problem may not necessarily result in a C grade, it might if the problem is the overwhelming in its effect on the paper.

- ideas are routine, predictable, and obvious
- thesis is adequate
- logic is still evident, but weak
- support is minimal, with a few details and/or some obvious generalizations
- paragraphs are meager, minimally developed
- transitions are mechanical---e.g. "first," "second..." --or missing altogether
- sentences are complete, but occasionally awkward
- vocabulary is dull, with occasional clichés, slang, or unclear expressions
- errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation are evident, and some are basic.
- format and topic minimally meet assignment guidelines.

D work is defined as Poor ("not adequate;" "inferior;" "lacking in value;" "lacking in content" -- *American Heritage College Dictionary*)

- ideas reveal limited insight
- central focus or thesis is vague, superficial
- logic is weak or vague
- supporting details are few; generalizations are many
- paragraphs are undeveloped, often incoherent
- sentences are unclear and often require rereading
- vocabulary is imprecise
- errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation are frequent and major
- format and topic may not meet assignment guidelines.

F work is defined as Unacceptable

- ideas are shallow and vague
- thesis is inadequate or simplistic
- development is random and illogical
- support is minimal, unclear, general
- paragraphs lack clear main point; they ramble
- sentences are unclear, poorly constructed, and sometimes nonsensical
- format and topic does not meet assignment guidelines.