REACTION PAPERS

As stated in the syllabus, the “reaction papers” portion of your grade consists of responses to questions related to course reading and/or videos. The purpose of these assignments is to stimulate learning and class discussion by encouraging you to analyze or respond to course material. It enables me to evaluate learning in a manner different from in-class examinations and it enables me to hear from students who are reluctant to speak in class.

I do not assign letter grades to the reaction papers. I do evaluate your work in terms of coverage (did you discuss all of the assigned readings and/or questions) and depth (thoughtfulness and quality of your commentary). I am more interested in what you have to say than the style of presentation. While length is not necessarily an indicator of quality, a typical reaction paper is usually at least two to two and one-half typed pages.

Your papers are evaluated using the following system:

- **V+ Outstanding.** (92-100) A very thoughtful paper that answers the questions and/or discusses the assigned material. An outstanding paper goes beyond summarizing the material and answering the questions to present personal insights, application of course material, and connections to other issues.
- **V+/V Very Good.** (84-91) A generally thoughtful paper that covers all of the assigned topics. Some additional material and insights are presented, but not with the same depth as a V+ paper.
- **V/V+ Good.** (77-83) A paper that covers all of the assigned topics and has a modest amount of additional material.
- **V Okay.** (70-75) Paper minimally covers all of the assigned topics but does not go into any additional depth.
- **V/V- Below Average.** (63-67) Some assigned material is missing.
- **V- Minimal Credit.** (55-60) A paper that lacks both coverage and depth.
- **0 No credit.** Work was not submitted or contains plagiarized material.

Please note that this system rewards students who consistently complete course readings and take time to provide a thoughtful reaction. *Failure to submit a significant number of these reaction papers will probably result in your receiving a failing grade for this portion of the course* (every semester I have a few students who receive an F for a part of the course in which a B- is relatively easy to obtain). You should also keep in mind that I do not normally accept reaction papers more than one class after the due date (After all, the purpose of reaction papers is to prepare for class discussion, not do attempt to complete several weeks later). Extra credit opportunities (when available) may be used to make up for missing papers or supplement your reaction paper grade.