Writing for Critical Consciousness fulfills the Junior Year Writing requirement for the Social Thought and Political Economy program. In this course, students will compose short, “low-stakes” compositions that will lead toward longer, more formal “high stakes” essays. Students can expect to produce approximately 20-25 pages of polished, finished writing this semester. Some essays will respond and react to readings and some will include research from primary and secondary sources. We will emphasize the writing process as an analytical tool, and will explore modes and genres of composition in addition to the academic, research-based essay.

While the aim of first-year composition courses is to introduce students to the conventions of college writing in general, the aim of Junior Year Writing courses, in general, is to develop fluency in discipline-specific writing. We’re in a unique position as STPEC is an unusual major without defined disciplinary conventions. However, as STPEC emphasizes the relationship between theory and action, our Junior Year Writing course will use writing to negotiate the theory and action of composition.

One of the central ways that we’ll explore the rhetorics of theory and action will be in the composition of personal, justice-oriented pieces, such as a personal statement and a research-based essay that explores possible post-baccalaureate opportunities. We will also strive to use the analytical essay as an opportunity to create new meaning, rather than as an application alone of a particular theory to a particular example.

Because college tends to be a busy time, many students learn to quickly produce essays that demonstrate the student’s grasp on the material. But writing is more than reporting knowledge. Part of the discourse of Writing Across the Curriculum (which is what Junior Year Writing is) is that we learn to write and write to learn. So we’ll linger on the writing process, reflecting, re-considering, and re-vising (indeed, at least one of our readings this semester views revision as a political process). To dwell in the process of creation is to orient oneself to the political action and power of rhetoric.

*I very much want to meet with all of you during the semester to discuss your work. Please feel welcomed and encouraged to contact me to schedule meetings. I do not hold ‘open’
office hours as I have found that very few students attend them. But I reserve Wednesday afternoons for appointments with STPEC students, and am amenable to scheduling meetings during other weekdays if necessary. I’m also open to scheduling phone conversations, and will provide my phone number on a case-by-case basis. I prefer to avoid lengthy email conversations, but also prefer to communicate with you than not: email’s better than nothing.

**TEXTS**
You’ll be creating most of the texts this semester by writing them or locating them for yourself. Other supporting texts will be made available to you via the Internet, the W.E.B. DuBois Library, Google Drive, or Moodle.

We will use The Online Writing Lab at Purdue (owl.english.purdue.edu) as our writing handbook this semester. It’s a free source that contains excellent information on grammar and style.

Recommended:
Also available online here: [http://www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/)

**WORK**
The course is designed so that readings, discussions and assignments build on each other. Missing one or more assignments throws the course, and your education, off kilter. Besides which, I assume that you will be prepared for class discussions, and that you will hand your assignments in on time.

I know that life happens, and sometimes deadlines pass regardless of whether you’ve finished your work. So, you may hand your work in up to one week late and still get the benefit of my feedback, but with a grade deduction of a letter grade. Unless otherwise noted, I will grade hard copies only—no emailed or digital assignments will be accepted. I will generally collect essays in class. If you don’t have your essay with you, it’s your responsibility to get me a hard copy as soon as possible (I won’t come to campus just to pick up your paper).

Extensions are rare, but if you would like one and feel that you have a compelling reason, speak with me at least 24 hours before the due date. Be prepared to show me your work and have a sound case for an extension. Extensions will not be granted if it is clear that you have done no work, or only minimal work, toward the finished project.

Assignments in this class are spaced intentionally to correspond with readings and discussions, and to allow time to work on them. One late assignment causes a train wreck of overdue papers further down the line. It’s best to stay on top of your work. The assigned reading load is very light for a 300-level course so that you can focus on your own research and writing; you will have a writing assignment due every week. Incompletes are possible in extreme cases only, for example in the case of serious illness, and are the responsibility of the student to request. If you simply stop showing up to class, or neglect to hand in assignments, you will earn an “F.”
WRITING
You will compose a variety of compositions this semester, long and short, formal and informal. The informal pieces, in general, are intended to help provide fodder for the longer pieces. All of your work this semester will occur as part of a writing process. In this class, I really want to get away from the rough draft final version essay. So in some cases, you’ll produce drafts to be revised; in other cases, we’ll follow a writing process that includes composition of lists, summaries, proposals, and so on.

Final versions of all assignments should be thoughtfully designed and polished. Grammar and citations in keeping with the genre of the composition are a given. Essays should be titled, solidly bound in some way (like with staples, but preferably not with paperclips), with pages numbered, and, if it’s a conventional academic essay, adhering to MLA style and layout. I may deduct points from essays that fail to meet these most basic criteria.

To receive a grade and the benefit of my feedback your paper must be handed in hard copy within a week of the due date. Papers submitted later than this may not receive feedback.

Plagiarism is passing off another author’s work as your own, paraphrased or copied verbatim. Plagiarism is considered a strict offense by me and by the University and carries penalties. If I found that you’ve plagiarized an essay or a significant part of an essay, you’ll receive an F. Be sure to attribute all ideas, work, and language to their source. Please use MLA style for assignments for this course (unless you get the okay from me to use a different style).

NOTEBOOK
Buy yourself a notebook and take notes in it—jot reactions or responses to readings and activities, write observations relevant to class and class discussions. Periodically I may devote class time to writing in our notebooks.

TECHNOLOGY
We have a Moodle page. You can find our course schedule, readings, and assignments on Moodle. Some assignments may be handed in on Moodle (like drafts of major essays). If you all are interested in transferring more of our work to Moodle, I’m okay with that. Let me know and we’ll work it out.

A note on technology in the classroom: Please do not ever use your cell phone during class. If you are in the midst of an emergency and must use your phone, quietly excuse yourself and use your phone outside. If you must use a computer during class, use it for class-related purposes only. Please do not record, in any way other than written notes, our class without obtaining permission from the instructor and your classmates.

I check work email at least once a day, Monday through Friday, and will respond within 24 hours. I do not reply to work-related emails on Saturdays and Sundays.
ATTENDANCE
Please come to class, arrive on time, contribute to class discussions and to workshops, come to scheduled meetings with me, turn in your work. Excessive tardiness and/or more than two absences will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade per absence.

GRADES
Each assignment carries its own grading criteria, which will be detailed on the prompt. In general, higher grades will go to those essays that exhibit thought-provoking analyses and effective, grammatically accurate prose; lower grades will go to those essays that primarily summarize relevant texts and exhibit numerous errors of grammar or syntax.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSIGNMENTS
Review of Past Work 10%
Personal Statement
- Pre-writing 10%
- Final 15%
Research-based Essay
- Pre-writing 10%
- Final 15%
Popular Essay
- Pre-writing 10%
- Final 15%
Archives Visit: Report/Reflection
- Pre-writing required, not graded
- Final 10%
Attendance, Participation, etc. 5%

SCHEDULE
Jan 20
Course Introduction / Syllabus
Reviewing Past Work
For Jan 20, please locate and discuss in approximately 2 pages a recent composition that you are proud of.

Jan 27
**Due: Reflection on Previous Work**
Discussions of Past Work: mini presentations
Begin Personal Statement Project: discuss possible approaches, defining the genre; evaluate personal statements. Begin to brainstorm possible approaches, topics; begin to organize expectations for the genre.

Feb 3
Share advice, summaries of advice for writing personal statements
Workshop draft of Personal Statement

Feb 10  **Due:** Personal Statement (plus all pre-writing)
Begin Research-based essay (TBD: library visit)
Freewrite and explore possible topics, opportunities; begin to look for sources
Discuss expectations for proposals

Feb 17  **Due:** Proposal for research-based essay
Discuss readings (on Moodle) on possible careers, volunteer opportunities, and so on.

Feb 24  **Due:** Draft
Class Canceled for Individual Conferences

Mar 2  **Due:** Final version, research-based essay
Presentations

Mar 9  TBD: Archives Visit

**Unit 3: The Archives: Radical Histories**
Mar 16  **Spring Break**

Mar 23  **Due:** Archives Reflection/Report (and show and tell)
Begin discussing the Popular Essay
Discuss “colors” essays from *Cabinet*, and others (on Moodle)
Brainstorm and discuss possible

Mar 30  **Due:** Bibliography and examples to use in Popular Essay
Continue discussing “accessibility”—concise, effective language

Apr 6  **Due:** Draft for workshop

Apr 13  **Due:** Final version, Popular Essay; Reading and Sharing
Discuss the portfolio, review guidelines

Apr 20  Monday Schedule

Apr 27  Last day of our class **DUE:** All outstanding work and revisions due by 5 pm.
Portfolios due in class.

Apr 28  Last day of UMass classes

May 5  Last day of finals