

ANTH 3333 Writing Assignment:

“Debunking Immigration Myths”

Assignment Summary:

For this assignment, you will be tasked with writing a persuasive essay in which you **debunk three common myths or misconceptions** about Latino immigration.

For the purposes of this assignment, a myth is “a widely held (or commonly-cited) belief or idea that is false.” A myth could be 100% false – with no factual basis. Alternatively, a myth can be generated when facts are misinterpreted or misrepresented. Myths can also be based in opinions or experiences that do not reflect factual reality. A myth may also have multiple parts; some parts may be true, while others are false.

To complete this assignment, you will **choose three myths about Latina/o immigration**. Which myths you choose to write about are up to you – but each myth you choose must address a different UNIT of course material (there are 4 units in the course). Your myth may overlap multiple units.

The myths you choose should be somewhat commonly-known. Whatever myths you choose, be sure to pick things that have enough substance to them so that you can write three to four pages about each. Please note: This assignment does not include any outside research. You must choose myths that can be debunked using **only the materials we have used in class**.

Then, using only our course materials (which may include readings and/or in-class materials), you will “debunk,” or “expose the falseness of,” each myth. You may do this by providing statistical, historical, ethnographic, or other empirical evidence drawn from your course materials that refutes the notion expressed by the myth. Is it 100% false? Partly true? Another helpful way to debunk immigration myths is to illuminate the origin of the myth. Where did it come from? How did it get created, and for what purpose? How does the myth get perpetuated, and why? Does the myth have a grain of truth to it, or is it utterly baseless? Was it generated by a willful or accidental misrepresentation of the facts? You must use **at least six academic sources** (articles, books, book chapters, etc.) from the course materials (**two per myth**).

Submissions:

The paper will be submitted in phased “submissions,” including three outlines (graded), three drafts (ungraded), and a final paper (graded). You will get some feedback at each stage of the process – some will be individualized, and some will be generalized. **If at any time you would like more feedback on your submissions, please come see me during office hours.** Submissions must be saved as Microsoft Word documents and uploaded through the Turnitin system on Canvas. Do not use Google Docs or any other file sharing service for writing assignment submissions.

Guidelines for outlines are below. **Each draft submission should include progressive/cumulative revisions to previously submitted text, as well as a cover letter (template below).**

Submission schedule:

- Fri, 9/13, 11:59 pm: Outline 1 (graded)
 - This includes the outline for your first myth. If you would like, you may also submit outlines for myths 2 and/or 3, but this is not required and will not be evaluated.
- Fri, 9/27, 11:59 pm: Submission 1 (ungraded)
 - This includes the draft text of your first myth and a cover letter. 3-4 pages.
- Fri, 10/11, 11:59 pm: Outline 2 (graded)
 - This includes the outline for your second myth. If you would like, you may also submit a revised myth 1 outline and a new outline for myth 3, but this is not required and will not be evaluated.
- Fri, 10/25, 11:59 pm: Submission 2 (ungraded)
 - This includes the REVISED text of your first myth, the draft of your second myth, and a cover letter. 6-8 pages.
- Fri, 11/8, 11:59 pm: Outline 3 (graded)
 - This includes the outline for your third myth. If you would like, you may also submit revised versions of outlines for myths 1 and 2, but this is not required and will not be evaluated.
- Fri, 11/22, 11:59 pm: Submission 3 – **FULL DRAFT** (ungraded)
 - This includes the REVISED text of your first and second myths, the draft of your third (and final) myth, ****an introduction and conclusion**** and a cover letter. 9-12 pages.
- Mon, 12/9, 11:59 pm: Final Submission (graded)
 - All submissions must include tracked changes in Microsoft Word and cover letters (see assignment handout for more information).
 - 12 page minimum, 15 page max. This submission must also include a cover letter describing your final revision process.

All submissions must include tracked changes in Microsoft Word. Cover Letters do not count toward the page count, but they should be included in the same document (as the first page of your submission).

I recommend that you mark these deadlines down in your calendar as soon as possible.

Details:

- Final paper will constitute 50% of your final grade in this course.
 - Writing Assignment Grade Break-down:
 - Outlines 1-3: 20%
 - Final Paper: 80%
- **Final** submission should be 12-15 pages long, in 12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with standard 1-inch margins. I will check this – please do not mess around with the font size, margins, etc. to manipulate the length of your document.
- **Drafts** must be **COMPLETE DRAFTS**. Each drafted myth should include at least 3 pages of fully-written, proof-read text (no bullet points).

- With each submission, students must include a cover letter following the attached template. **The Cover Letter should be submitted as the first page of your submission document – please do not submit two separate files.**
- All submissions should be free of grammatical errors.
- Please ensure that **Track Changes** are visible in all of your submission documents.

Learning Objectives:

- Think critically about current public debates about Latina/o immigration
- Learn to deploy empirical evidence to refute commonly-held beliefs and assumptions
- Learn how to construct and articulate a robust (well-evidenced) but concise (direct and “to-the-point”) persuasive essay

Suggestions for how to get started:

1. After reading through this handout, review the syllabus and assigned readings. Think about the topics we will be addressing in each unit of the course. Jot down some ideas about which myths you are most interested in investigating for each unit.
2. Brainstorm a list of potential sources (from course materials) that might contain information relevant to the task of debunking each myth.
3. As you read, write down notes and page numbers where you find evidence you can use to refute each myth.
4. Depending on how much evidence you find, consider if the myths you chose will provide sufficient material for a 12-15-page paper, or whether or not you have enough evidence to debunk them.
5. Start by making a draft outline of your first myth.
6. Jot down a few sentences concerning the ideas about which you feel most confident. (Start anywhere in the main body of your essay, explicitly avoiding the introduction and conclusion.)
7. Think, write, repeat! Use the class materials from writing workshops to guide you along the way. We will be doing several activities in class that will help facilitate your thought process for this paper.

Evaluation:

In the best papers, the authors will:

- Clearly and concisely describe each myth.
- Provide ample relevant evidence to refute each myth.
- Draw extensively from course materials to construct the argument. (Do not draw from outside sources unless you think it is absolutely necessary and have gotten permission from me to do so.)
 - Use a minimum of six academic sources from the course materials (two per myth).
- Finish with a strong conclusion that does more than reiterate the main points addressed in the rest of the essay (ie. provides a strong take-home message that reinforces the overall message).

- Develop their own voice – demonstrate originality and higher-level thinking through their writing
- Use varied sentence structure and construct interesting prose that engages the reader
- Present ideas in an organized way. The argument should progress logically and smoothly.
- Demonstrate mastery of the rules of Standard English – papers should be free from grammatical, spelling, and other copy-edit errors.

Good writing in this assignment will be direct, active, clear, and concise. A good way to check for these characteristics is by reading your paper out loud to yourself or to others to check for flow.

See sample rubrics for more details about how this assignment will be evaluated.

Cover Letter Template

Please answer the following questions in a cover letter for each submission. Feel free to copy and paste the phrases below as a model for your cover letter. Please submit this as the FIRST PAGE (in the same document, in other words) of your submissions.

Dear Jenny,

In this submission I am trying to...

(For draft submissions 2, 3, and final submission: In my last draft I..... Given the feedback I received on that draft, I decided to... because....)

For this submission I concentrated most of my efforts on... because...

What I struggled with most was.... (AND/OR) If I was given more time, I would work on....

I think the strongest parts of this submission are...

A question I have for you is...

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Myth Outlining Worksheet

What is your myth? What is your argument about your myth? (Should be two to three concise sentences.)

What pieces of evidence are you using to prove your argument?

Evidence	Explanation – how does this evidence support your thesis?	Sources
1.		
2.		
3.		

Sample Outline Rubric

Name:

Myth:

Criteria	Points Avail.	Score	Comments
Myth statement is present, and is written clearly and concisely. (ie. "A common myth about immigration is..." or equivalent)	2		
Myth is not too broad, nor too narrow – topic will provide sufficient opportunity for length requirements	1		
Author's argument about the myth is present and clearly stated. (ie. "This is wrong/mostly false because...")	1		
A) Outline includes at least three piece of evidence that will support the argument. B) Each piece of evidence is accompanied by a statement by the author indicating HOW this evidence supports the argument.	6		
Outline lists at least two sources that will provide evidence to support the argument.	2		
Professionalism – Appropriate formatting, full sentences used where necessary. Outline is neat and easily legible to professor.	2		
TOTAL			

Sample Writing Assignment Rubric

Name: _____

Criteria	Points Avail.	Score	Comments
Introduction clearly and concisely introduces the four myths that will be discussed in the paper and adequately informs the reader of the direction the paper will take.	4		
Myth 1: Described clearly and concisely, backed up by sufficient evidence from at least 2 academic sources from course. Debunked effectively.	4		
Myth 2: (See above)	4		
Myth 3: (See above)	4		
Sources are cited correctly throughout the paper through the use of parenthetical citations. Bibliography is present and formatted correctly, includes all sources cited in the paper.	3		
The paper has a strong conclusion, which does more than reiterate the main points addressed in the rest of the essay. It provides a strong, convincing take-home message that reinforces the overall argument.	3		
Overall, the paper is organized in such a way that the ideas progress logically and smoothly.	2		
The paper contains no (or minimal) grammatical or mechanical errors.	2		
The writing in the paper is direct, active, clear, and concise. Tone is appropriate for the prompt, paper satisfies length requirement.	2		
Progressive revision (Student submitted each draft on-time with cover letter, and demonstrated an effort to revise and improve the paper with each submission. 1 point per draft submission)	4		
Final revision (revisions are recorded in track changes and the author made a significant effort to improve the final submission)	2		
TOTAL	34		