

RHCS 105: Media, Culture, and Identity Spring 2016

Media Fast Assignment

Due: Thursday, March 3

100 points or 10% of your final grade

Our “media fast” is intended to provide you with insight into the role of electronic media in your daily life. To this end, this assignment requires you to “unplug” from electronic media for 24 hours. You may select the day and time of day to begin this “media fast.” When “fasting,” you are expected to refrain from using all electronic media including, but not limited to, cell phones/smart phones, computers, iPods, televisions, radios, and tablets.

Before you begin the fast, you are required to make a short video of approximately 30 seconds detailing how you feel about the project (i.e. Do you think it will be easy? Difficult? Are you anxious about any part of it? What preparations have you made (if any)? When are you starting the assignment?).

Immediately following the completion of your 24-hour fast, you are required to create another 30-second video detailing how it went and how you feel upon having the opportunity to use electronic media again.

Both videos should be recorded “confession cam” style (i.e. with a web camera focused on you). If you are a mac user, I recommend using iMovie to do this. Both videos will be shared with me via Google Drive the day the assignment is due (Thursday, March 3) or sooner (of course!). If you can, please send the videos as an mp4 file. I will then edit the videos together over spring break for the class to review and reflect upon.

In addition to making the two, 30-second videos, you will write a paper of 3-4 pages (typed, double spaced) in which you reflect upon your time “[electronic] media free.” The final product should answer the following questions (in no particular order):

1. What did you do with your 24 hours?
2. What impacted your decisions regarding how you spent this time?
3. How did you feel during the fast?
4. Was it difficult? Easy? Explain.
5. How did you manage the fast? (i.e. Did you do any advance planning?) Why or why not?
6. Was there a noticeable change to your daily routine because of the fast? Explain.
7. Has this experience led you to reconsider how you use electronic media? Discuss.
8. How significant are electronic media in your life?
9. What course concepts helped you make sense of the assignment? In answering this question, you must make reference to specific concepts/theories/readings. This question can be answered in response to the above questions and need not be a separate response. Please note: although this is only one listed question, it is **the most important question for you to answer**. Concepts may be drawn from class lecture, required readings, films, as well as other course-related materials.

Tips and Reminders:

- Because this is a *reflection* paper, it need not be organized like a traditional argumentative essay. This is a creative piece but must address each of the questions listed above.
- A copy of this paper must be submitted to Blackboard before class on Thursday, March 3. Please make sure you reference the submission formatting guidelines listed on the course syllabus. In terms of submitting the videos, share them with me via Google Drive (nicole.maurantonio@gmail.com). The videos must also be shared with me prior to class.

- This will likely not be easy. Not all will make the full 24 hours. If you fall into this category, say so and explain. Be honest but also remember that your explanation should demonstrate a *true* effort. Anyone who “fasts” for 10 minutes and quits because the assignment is “too difficult” will receive an F for this assignment. By the same token, if you *need* to break the fast for one reason or another, do so. Use your discretion and common sense.
- I readily acknowledge the difficulty of this assignment, particularly on a college campus. That said, **I am not responsible for any missed work in other classes, unpaid bills, angry friends, etc. Of course, if any of the above happens you may write about it, but remember – this assignment is *your* responsibility.**

This assignment will be graded out of 100 points, according to the following rubric:

Grading Rubric:

** Modeled after *UC Davis English Department Composition Program* **

Grade	Guidelines
“A” range or 90-100 points	Excels in responding to assignment. Ideas communicated clearly and in an engaging manner. Uses course concepts/readings in a sophisticated way, demonstrating mastery of concepts/theory. Almost entirely free of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and grammatical errors. Submits both videos and completes assignment according to guidelines. Includes properly formatted bibliography/works cited list.
“B” range or 80-89 points	A solid paper, responding appropriately to assignment. May sometimes be too general in its discussion of course concepts and/or description of the day. Uses course concepts/readings in a way that demonstrates understanding. May contain a few errors grammatical/spelling errors. Submits both videos and completes assignment according to guidelines. Includes a properly formatted bibliography/works cited list.
“C” range or 70-79 points	Adequate but weaker and less effective, responding less well to assignment. Often depends on clichés or platitudes. Paper may be overly general. Uses course concepts/readings in a fairly superficial way. Contains several grammatical/spelling errors. Submits one or both videos but does not entirely complete the assignment. Includes a works cited list/bibliography but may not be properly formatted.
“D” range or 60-69 points	Does not respond appropriately to the assignment. Depends on overgeneralizations for support, or offers little evidence of any kind. Too vague. Uses course concepts/readings inappropriately. Contains many grammatical/spelling errors. Does not submit videos. Does not include a works cited list.
“F” range or 59 and below	Does not respond to the assignment. No appreciable organization. Uses irrelevant details. Unduly brief or long. Does not attempt to incorporate course concepts/readings. Contains many mechanical errors. Does not submit videos. Does not include a works cited list.