

Short Essay

Purpose: During this assignment, your goal will be to closely analyze a specific space in Durham or at Duke. This assignment will serve as jumping off point for thinking about how physical spaces both shape and are shaped by the social interactions that occur within them. In your writing, you'll practice taking an arguable position and constructing a *conceptually* organized essay that advances your main claim over the course of several paragraphs.

Prompt: Make a focused, arguable claim about the relationship between the structure of the space you choose and the unspoken gender and sexual norms at work in that space. How does the organization of the space you choose help to challenge or enforce gender and/or sexual norms? What set of assumptions are at work that allow some people and not others to access that space or to experience safety and belonging in that space? Feel free to consider other forms of difference that might be shaping the character of the space you choose as long as you can explain how those differences intersect with and relate to gender and sexual difference.

A successful essay will:

- take a focused, arguable position.
- be conceptually organized, which means that rather than listing points as you move from paragraph to paragraph, each paragraph should logically build off the previous paragraph and help to walk the reader through your interpretation of the space you choose.
- offer supporting evidence for all the claims you make, drawn from your observations of particular space and an analysis that explains *how* your observations are working to support your argument.

Your essay should be 2-3 full pages, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with one-inch margins, and properly paginated. Your essay will be due via the "Assignments" section of Sakai on **Monday, January 19th by 11:55pm.**