AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES 3101 (W/Y)
THEORIES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
FALL 2018

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will systematically and objectively examine the sources of American oppression and explore how it shapes the life chances of African Americans from just prior to the Reconstruction Era to the twenty-first century. More specifically, we will explore the timing and manner of their entry into U.S. society, conflicts with other groups, encounters with prejudice and discrimination, as well as the extent to which they have secured access to cultural, economic, political, and social assimilation into U.S. society.

COURSE DESIGNATIONS

State Mandated Writing (W)-

This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies “W” (State-Mandated Writing) requirements and is designed to help you become a clear, creative, and convincing communicator. In this course, you will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing. The writing cultivated by this process conforms to FSU’s definition of “college-level writing”, which is writing that: 1. presents a clearly defined central idea or thesis; 2. provides adequate support for that idea; 3. is organized clearly and logically; 4. is presented in a format appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience; and 5. utilizes standard conventions appropriate for study in English. As such, this course requires the completion of two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent.

Instructors will provide criteria for evaluating your performance on writing, feedback on your writing (including instructor response), and opportunities for revision. To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C-” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C-” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C-” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C-” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.
Diversity in Western Experience (Y)-

This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Diversity in Western Experience (Y) requirements and is designed to help you become a culturally literate member of society. In order to fulfill FSU’s Diversity in Western Experience requirement, the student must earn a “C-” or better in the course.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To articulate the histories and interactions of the major racial and ethnic groups in the United States
2. To develop analytical and critical perspectives of the role of racial and ethnic differentiation in the organization of contemporary societies
3. To articulate the historical processes by which racial/ethnic categories, meanings, identities, and inequalities are created and transformed (and destroyed?)
4. To identify social problems influenced by racism and discrimination, evaluate problem-solving strategies, and develop practical solutions
5. To analyze some aspect of human experience within a culture, focusing on at least one source of diversity (e.g., age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other)
6. To explore one’s own cultural norms or values in relation those of a different cultural group
7. To compose for a specific purpose, occasion, and audience
8. To convey ideas in clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of a standard language

COURSE MATERIALS

Readings:
No required text books.

All course materials (readings and course films) will be posted and available on Canvas in the Modules section according to their scheduled time in the semester.

Intellectual Property Rights
Teaching and curricular materials (including but not limited to classroom lectures, class notes, quizzes, exams, handouts, and presentations) are the property of the instructor. Therefore, transmission of class material or class notes is prohibited without the express written permission of the instructor. Such permission is to be considered unique to the needs of an individual student (e.g. ADA compliance), and not a license for permanent retention or electronic dissemination to others.

GRADE CALCULATION

Students will receive multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate their learning in this course. Progress with the course will be determined with the following assignments:
Attendance-Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussion. Students receive one point for each day of attending the course. Points earned for attendance will be averaged to determine your score for this component of the final grade.

Reading journals-Weekly, students are required to submit regarding journals. Each reading journal submission is worth 30 points. Grading rubrics are posted on Canvas. Points earned on reading journal submissions will be averaged to determine your score for these assignments.

Midterm-Mid semester assessment of knowledge of course material. Your grade (max points 100) will determine your score for this assignment.

Writing Assignments: Students will have several writing assignments designed to encourage progress on the critical essay. Concept paper will be due by Week 3 and the draft of the critical essay is due Week 10. The goal of each assignment is to help you develop critical thinking skills and to improve your ability to write clearly and concisely. Assignment expectations are posted on Canvas. Points earned on the concept paper (max points-30) and the draft of critical essay (60) will be averaged to determine your score for these assignments.

Critical essay: Students are required to write a critical essay on a topic related to course material that draws on peer reviewed research. The final paper is due Week 14. Grading rubrics are posted on Canvas. Your grade (max points-100) will determine your score for this assignment.

The final grade is weighted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance.............................................</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Journals......................................</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments ...</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm................................................</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Essay (6-8 page limit, not including refs)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF STUDENTS NEGLECT TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS OF THIS COURSE, THEY WILL FAIL THIS COURSE.

Grading Scale

All exams and final course grades are calculated according to the following scale:


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**Deadlines:** I expect students to complete assignments and examinations on time. Normally, I will not offer make-up examinations or extend deadlines. I make exceptions to this policy only in instances of excusable personal illness or hospitalization or death of immediate family members. I expect students who have emergencies to contact me within 48 hours of the scheduled assignment or exam or as soon as possible. Provide documentation for the event that motivates your request. Those who fail to do both (provide notification and documentation), may not be permitted to make up the work and may be awarded a grade of zero for the missed assignment or examination. Students whose university business creates scheduling conflicts must discuss alternative arrangements with me well in advance of travel dates.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

Reading Journals:

These are 500 word essays you will be responsible for completing each week. I will either present a question to you about the readings, or ask you to reflect on the readings, films, and your life experiences. Doing well on these writing assignments is dependent on you having done the reading prior to submitting reading journal responses. See which elements to include from course material in Syllabus Appendix 1.

Your journal entries do not need to be in the style of an academic paper. In other words, you do not need an introduction, thesis, conclusion, etc. However, I do expect college level writing. This means the use of proper grammar, complete sentences, good spelling, etc. In grading the entries, I will be looking for thoughtful reflection, application of course materials, completion of exercise (if applicable) and coherence. The journals themselves are private communications between yourself and the instructor. As such, I hope that you will challenge yourself to submit personally introspective and honest entries.

**Grading Rubric for Reading Journals**

See Canvas

Quizzes:

Each week, students should be prepared to be tested on the assigned readings. All quizzes will be based on reading or assigned films and will be in multiple choice format.
Critical Essay:

To view Critical Essay assignment and grading rubric, see Canvas.

Essay Length and Due Date:

This is a 6-8 page essay (not including references). Electronic versions of papers (sent via email) will not be accepted. Nor will late papers, unless an extension (requested at least 48 hours prior to due date) was approved by the instructor.

Critical Essay requirements:

All essays must be typed, have standard margins and font size.

You may use MLA or APA style. Your written report should be approximately 6-8 pages in length, not including the cover and bibliography pages.

Your paper should rely on a minimum of six outside sources to support the claims in your paper.

Writing assignments:

Concept paper- The concept paper (1-2 pages max, double spaced) is an opportunity for students to present their critical paper idea and its relationship to the literature surveyed in this class. Due September 13.

Paper draft- The paper draft (6-8 pages max, double spaced, not including references) is an opportunity for students to present their critical paper for feedback. Students are expected to use the feedback provided to improve their critical paper. Due November 1.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Accommodations for Students with Documented Special Needs

Efforts will be made to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students needing accommodations should discuss their needs with the instructor. Documentation of your disability at the beginning of the semester is strongly suggested.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: **UPDATED 3/4/2016**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.
Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.
For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu  
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

Cheating

Cheating will not be overlooked by the instructor. Cheating of any kind will be dealt with using appropriate university policies. Note: See Academic Honor Policy below.

A Note On Plagiarism

Whenever you use someone else's ideas or words, it is necessary to give credit to the source from which you took them. Otherwise, this constitutes plagiarism – defined as appropriating and presenting as one's own the writing, ideas, or thoughts of someone else. You may not use another person's words, ideas, opinions, interpretations, theories, or thoughts (either paraphrased or in direct quotes) without indicating the source from which you obtained the words, facts, or ideas. If the words you are using are direct quotes, you are required to indicate this by enclosing the directly quoted material in quotation marks and by providing information on the source from which you obtained the material. If you use someone else's ideas but don't quote them directly, you are still responsible for indicating the source from which you obtained the ideas. Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing grade for the entire course. There will be no exceptions to this rule. If there is any ambiguity about this definition or you have any questions about what comprises plagiarism, please contact me before you submit a written essay. I will not accept the excuse that you did not know that what you were doing constituted plagiarism.

Class Conduct

Disruptive and rude behavior interrupts the learning environment, and will not be tolerated by the instructor. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following: making/receiving cell phone calls during class, sending text messages, leaving early or coming to class late, talking out of turn in an excessive and rude manner, reading the newspaper during class, doing assignments for other classes, sleeping, and engaging in other activities that distract from the classroom learning experience. Lastly, I do not allow the use of laptops during class. Students are expected to use pen/pencil and paper to note take. Please turn off your cell phone in the classroom (put it on vibrate or turn down ringer). If you need to make/take a call, please leave
the classroom to complete your call. NOTE: I reserve the right to lower your final grade for disruptive behavior. Also, when students are asked to leave due to disruptive behavior, a meeting may be required before the student will be allowed to rejoin the class.

University Attendance Policy:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy:

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy.)

Free Tutoring From FSU:

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Syllabus Change Policy:

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

TOPICS AND WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS


Week 1: Foundations of Modern Racism
August 26- September 1


**Week 2: Ethnic Myth: The Cultural Paradigm**
**September 2-8**

Steinberg, Stephen. The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity and Class in America. (Chapters 3 and 4).


**Week 3: Race Based Assumptions About Intelligence and Mobility**
**September 9-15**


Fischer et al., Inequality By Design. Chapter 8.

Concept paper due, September 13

**Week 4: Social Reproduction Theory**
**September 16-22**

Macleod, Jay. Ain’t No Making it. Chapter TBA

**Week 5: Residential Segregation**
**September 23-29**


FILM: “Banished: American Ethnic Cleanings”

**Part 2: Experiences within American Institutions**

**Week 6: Schools**
**September 30-October 6**
Woodson, Carter G. The Mis-Education of the Negro. Chapters 2 and 4.


Film—”A National Disgrace”

Week 7: Workplaces
October 7-October 13


Midterm, October 11

Week 8: The Welfare State
October 14-October 20


Week 9: Health Care Facilities/Services
October 21-October 27


Film: The Endgame: AIDS in the Black Community

Week 10: Neighborhood Quality in “Black America” and the Health Effects of Raced Space
October 28-November 3


Film: Tales of the Grim Sleeper

Paper draft due, Nov 1

**Week 11: Criminal Justice System: Why It’s Not So Just...**

**November 4-November 10**


**Week 12: Confronting Jim Crow and the Reality of Backlash Politics**

**November 11-November 17**


Film: “Brick by Brick: A Civil Rights Story”

**Week 13: Thanksgiving Break**

**November 18-November 24**

**Week 14: Reading Week**

**November 25-December 1**

Paper due November 29, 2018
Week 15: Pathways to Liberation 1: Theoretical Beginnings
December 2-December 8


Week 16: Pathways to Liberation 2: Black Lives Matter and Beyond
December 9-14

Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. Chapter 1.


Black Lives Matter Policy Platform and Demands. https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/
Writing Assignments Overview:

Students will have an opportunity to work on their writing skills throughout the entire semester. Two assignments make up the core writing curriculum: 1) reading journals and the 2) critical essay. While students will be prompted to engage thought-provoking questions pertaining to course topics each week, they are also challenged to identify and describe major elements of the arguments engaged in assigned reading each week. Throughout a 15 week semester, students work substantially on writing skills (500 words per week). To receive full credit, students must demonstrate capacity to identify and summarize the thesis, methods and results from the readings assigned each week. See “Grading Rubric for Reading Journals” for details.

With the critical essay assignment, students are expected to write about a social problem pertinent to the course topic. Students will be required to submit a concept paper by Week 3 in which they provide an overview of their paper topic and references that they intend to use to support claims in the critical essay. This assignment will be 5 percent of the writing assignment grade and will provide the instructor an opportunity to help develop the writing topic ideas and locate peer reviewed scholarship to support claims in their analysis.

Students will also be expected to submit an outline and literature review by Week 8. The literature review is the core of the paper. This is another opportunity that the instructor will use to offer guidance and encouragement on the critical essay assignment. The literature review and outline assignment will be 5 percent of the critical essay grade. Finally, feedback for this assignment be prompt and meaningful. Students will be asked to submit the final paper by Week 14. See Critical essay Mission, work details, and grading rubric for further details regarding this assignment.

*When this course is offered face to face, students will also be required to do presentations which will also have a written component.

Evidence of Competency:

Evidence of competency of writing skills and knowledge of the diversity in Western culture curriculum will be assessed with weekly quizzes and short response assignments as well as the writing assignments.
Grading Rubric for Reading Journals

Word count minimum: 500 words

Before starting this assignment, be sure to read the course material assigned for the week. In weeks with multiple authors/articles, students will not need to write 500 per article. That said, responses should account for the reading(s) assigned for the week. To earn full credit (see rubric below), make sure that your reading journal response accounts for at least 2 of the articles/authors assigned for the week. See the below table drafted to guide your approach to discussing the content in readings summarized each week.

Elements to include in reading journals about assigned readings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions to address</th>
<th>Sample Response-based on Robert Putnam’s Bowling Alone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central research question(s):</td>
<td>Whatever happened to civic engagement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central thesis:</td>
<td>The vibrancy of American civil society (measured by civic engagement and social connectedness) has declined over the past several decades. Television, living in and commuting from suburbs and women’s entry into the workplace may be reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s the empirical significance, if any?</td>
<td>No empirical innovation. Putnam largely relies on data from other studies to make his point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s the theoretical significance, if any?</td>
<td>Putnam links declining membership in voluntary organizations and other forms of civic organization, such as church, union membership, the PTA, and fraternal organizations to declining social connectedness, and declining civic engagement over all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions to address</td>
<td>Sample Response-based on Robert Putnam’s Bowling Alone</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Substantively, what’s significant about the study</td>
<td>Americans seem to come into significantly less contact with others in contexts where they can share views, build social trust, and get together to coordinate and cooperate for the common good, including actively and directly engaging in politics and government. This can hurt all kinds of things, including trust in others, health and democratic participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an empirical study, what’s the data source (type, data collection method)? How large is the dataset? When was it collected? Who/what constitutes the sample?</td>
<td>Putnam builds his argument by relying on the findings of other studies, notably surveys of people’s reported activity and organizational membership data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most important finding(s):</td>
<td>Using a number of measures, Putnam shows that Americans’ participation in traditional civil organizations has declined, in some cases remarkably so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths of study (from your perspective):</td>
<td>Putnam has highlighted what many may have overlooked—the decline in socializing with neighbors and general participation in social life beyond the nuclear family. Also, he suggests television, longer commutes from suburbs and women’s participation in the labor market may have contributed to declining sociability and civic engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakness of study (from your perspective):</td>
<td>Has civic engagement really declined, or has it just changed shape? Not sure about his “culprits” either...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your impressions of this work</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Reading Journal Grading Rubric:**

Grading Rubric for Reading Journals

10 points: You present a clear and direct response to the question, offer clear and accurate summaries of the readings, and draw from examples in the readings to make your points.
8 points: You present a response to the question, offer solid summaries of the readings, and draw from examples in the readings to make your points.

5 points: You answer the question and allude to the readings.

3 points: You answer the question but neglect to use any course materials (weekly readings) to support your claims.

1 points: You fail to answer the question.

**Critical Essay Mission:**

Throughout this course, we will explore the experiences of African Americans within various social institutions in the US. For this assignment, each student will 1) select a problem/reality within any social institution that shapes the life chances of African Americans; 2) describe the history of the problem/reality and current challenges that were caused by race prejudice/animus and/or racial discrimination; 3) identify existing social policies or organizational efforts designed to address hurdles, and 4) identify steps that may be taken to examine persistent inequality/concerns related to your topic.

**Paper structure:**

Students are assigned a 6-8 page paper (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt font, 1 inch margins) not including the bibliography.

**Documentation:**

Students are required to draw on secondary literature (at least 6 peer reviewed articles; 6 from course material) to support your claims in this paper.

**Work Expectations:**

This paper will be completed in a series of steps; you will receive feedback at each stage:

1) Concept paper (5%): The concept paper (1-2 pages max, double spaced) is an opportunity for students to present their critical paper idea and its relationship to the literature surveyed in this class. **Due Week 3.**

2) Literature Review and outline of paper (5%): In general, literature reviews explain why the subject you are writing about is important. In some literature reviews writers are required to compare the historical and current trends of research on the topic. Others identify conflicts within research methodologies. Your literature review should include a discussion of the relevant scholarly literature on your topic. Note that the literature review should not be a simple summary of the research on a topic. Rather, you
need to use existing research, theory, and evidence to build your argument and motivate your research question pertaining to this social problem/reality. Due Week 8

3) Final Draft (90%) - Due Week 14.

Final Critical Review Paper: Major Sections

**Introduction, Thesis:** This 1-1.5 page section should introduce your topic and why it is important to study. A good way to begin is to write a brief narrative that will grab your reader, and then move into a more formal discussion of the key points of your research interest. Your Introduction should also include some preliminary hypotheses or a thesis statement that you intend to argue throughout the paper.

**Review of the Literature:** The 3-3.5 page literature review (including at least 12 scholarly sources) should encapsulate what researchers have said on your subject of investigation. This section “reviews” the range of debates on your subject matter. This is library research involving the use of academic journal and books. Look for themes and emphasize major findings rather than trying to report every study done on the topic. The literature review should be used as the basis for your argument (thesis) and should set up the discussion and analysis section.

**Discussion and Analysis:** This 1-1.5 page section summarizes and discusses the major research findings from your library research and should elaborate on your thesis argument.

**Conclusion:** This 1-1.5 page section ends the paper with a brief summary (i.e. basically reviewing the highlights of the report). The conclusion should briefly highlight how the major themes or findings in the literature review support your thesis. The conclusion should also include a discussion of how you would gather data for an empirical study of the topic if you were to conduct one in the future and discussion of why you would use the methods you propose (i.e., would you use interviews, participant observation, secondary data analysis from a statistical database, content analysis etc.?) to research your topic.

*Please number your pages. The document should use 12 point, Times New Roman font, be double spaced and should have 1 inch margins all around.

Supplements that must be included in the final version: (These pages are not numbered and not included in the overall page requirement):

**References/Bibliography:** Note different styles: MLA, Chicago style, ASA and APA. Social scientists generally use the ASA and APA format. You may choose any style to utilize. What is important for the paper is that you are consistent with the rules and protocols of the style you choose.

**Title Page** – In your final version, you will also include a title of your project. On the page you should also include, name, date, course name, professor’s name.
## Critical Essay Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Amount</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Conventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The single controlling point made with an awareness of task about a specific topic.</td>
<td>The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, and/or explanations.</td>
<td>The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices and including introduction and conclusion.</td>
<td>The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice.</td>
<td>Grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage, and sentence transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sharp, distinct controlling point (thesis statement) about a single topic.</td>
<td>Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas.</td>
<td>Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions.</td>
<td>Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer’s voice and tone appropriate to audience.</td>
<td>Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task.</td>
<td>Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation.</td>
<td>Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions.</td>
<td>Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer’s voice and tone appropriate to audience.</td>
<td>Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic</td>
<td>Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation.</td>
<td>Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transitions.</td>
<td>Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone.</td>
<td>Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minimal evidence of a topic</td>
<td>Superficial and/or minimal content.</td>
<td>Minimal control of content arrangement.</td>
<td>Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures.</td>
<td>Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>