

**Domestic Violence
Professor Waits
Reaction Papers**

As mentioned in the Course Information handout, all students must send me 3 "reaction papers" via email during the course of the semester.

The purpose of the reaction papers is to get you thinking about the material before (or after) class. It also helps me gauge class reactions to the reading and class discussions, anticipate issues and questions, etc.

My email address *for reaction papers only* is:

waitsreact@yahoo.com. For all other email correspondence with me, please use my regular address: kwait@utulsa.edu.

I assume all students have an email account and know how to use it.

SPREADING OUT REACTION PAPERS, DEADLINES AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

I want your reaction papers to be somewhat spread out through the semester. This will keep me from being deluged with papers at the beginning and end of the term. But, more importantly, students often change in their reactions through semester, and I want to hear about those changes.

Therefore, each student must send one reaction paper in each of the remaining three months of the semester: February, March and April. If you send a reaction paper in the last few days of January, it will count as your February reaction paper and you cannot send another reaction paper until March. **The date of a reaction paper is determined by when you sent it (the time stamp on your email).**

You are allowed to send only one reaction paper per class period. For your information, I will typically download reaction papers at approximately 9:30 a.m. on the date the class meets. If a reaction paper is not received until after I've downloaded my mail, I will count it for the *next* class. If it's important for you to get a reaction paper in for a particular class, it is your responsibility to get it to me before I download my mail for that day. I don't want to hear excuses like, "My clock said 9:35 when I sent it, so I assumed I was okay" or "It was 9:25 a.m. when I sent it; I guess either my system or yours didn't deliver the mail instantaneously." [This happens more than you think.]

The subject header for your reaction paper should read: Reaction paper # __ [1 through 3] from [your name]; for class on [date of class that reaction paper is for]. If your email system won't allow this long a header, put this information as the first of line of the text of your message.

Using the proper header is very important, as it helps me keep track of reaction papers.

Please send reaction papers as text in your email - ***do not send what you've written as an attachment***. [If you want to write your message in another program - e.g., word processing, you can just cut and paste the text into an email when you're done.]

Acknowledgment of reaction papers. I will send a standardized acknowledgment of all reaction papers received. If you haven't received an acknowledgment within 24 hours after the relevant class period, please contact me to see if there's a problem.

Protection against lost mail. Be sure to keep copies of your reaction papers ***and my acknowledgments***, in case your paper is somehow lost in cyberspace or in case there is some discrepancy between my count of your reaction papers and yours. [Keeping track of all the reaction papers can get a little hairy.]

Reaction papers should be submitted no more than 1 week before the time a class reading is assigned.

See my secretary, Sharon Miller, in the Secretariat (Room 2413; 631-3055) to check on how many reaction papers you've written.

CONTENT AND FORMATTING OF "REACTION PAPERS"

A "reaction paper" is just that. You describe your reaction to a particular class assignment, or a particular class discussion, or really to anything that's happening in the class. Most often, reaction papers discuss the assigned reading, and address issues such as: What did you like or dislike in the reading? What did you agree or disagree with? What didn't you understand? What questions might you have for follow-up? How does this reading relate to other readings in the class, or to experiences that have happened to you or to people you know, or to other material you've covered in law school? ***Reaction papers can also discuss issues from earlier class discussions as well as experiences you've had personally or have observed in others.***

Reaction papers should not be long (generally, not more than about 2-3 computer screens). Reaction papers don't have to be terribly polished, but should be written in standard English with full sentences, proper punctuation and spelling, etc. *Please try to avoid writing in a stream-of-consciousness manner.* Avoid long paragraphs; shorter paragraphs increase dramatically my ability to understand what you're trying to say. You may even want to put in some extra hard returns between paragraphs, since email programs don't always translate hard returns properly.

Reaction papers should indicate whether you're willing to discuss/follow-up with your reaction in class (assuming you sign on as "present and prepared" for that class). I will respect a student's desire to communicate his/her reactions with me privately, although I may still at times indicate that I received a particular reaction without identifying the student in question.

Students may seek to have email exchanges with me, but I may at times have to answer very briefly due to constraints on my time.

PENALTY FOR NOT MEETING REACTION PAPER REQUIREMENTS

In the absence of truly extraordinary circumstances, I will lower the final grade one notch (e.g., a B become a B-) from what it would otherwise be for any student who does not submit the required number of reaction papers. (Failing to plan ahead and then having disaster strike is not an extraordinary circumstance.)

CAN I USE REACTION PAPERS TO BOOST MY GRADE? CAN I SEND EXTRA REACTION PAPERS?

The answer to both these questions is no.