Introduction to Humanities Review Paper Guidelines
(100 points total)

Purpose

The purpose of this assignment is for you to have a face to face experience with an artistic work and then write about your response to it. This means that you must witness something live, i.e., in bodily form rather than in virtual form (a movie, book, internet site would not work). You must attend this experience this semester. Possible experiences you could pursue:

- Live reading by a well-known poet or writer
- Art museum or art gallery exhibit
- Dance concert
- Theater performance

Requirements:

Use good judgment in choosing an art experience. Your little niece’s ballet recital is not going to give you an experience that relates to the content of this course. A natural history museum, science museum, or historical exhibit is not appropriate.

Format:

Your paper must be typed! You must turn in a paper copy to me and submit a copy to turnitin.com. I will not grade a paper unless I have a paper copy and a turnitin.com copy. Include the place, time, and date (if relevant) of the experience. The paper must be 750 words minimum. Grammar and spelling count and are worth 25 points of the paper.

Content:

Act as if you are writing for an audience that did not see the art works and did not read anything about it. Your reader (me) is only able to experience the event through your words. It is your responsibility to do three things, which are each worth 25 points:
1. **Describe** in detail some aspect or aspects of the art works. Make the reading, dance piece, art work, or performance come alive for your reader! Be sure to give the name of the person who made the work, the title of the work, and the medium (for visual arts). **If you are writing about a performance, plot summary should be kept to a minimum.** The plot of a play or dance, for example, is less important than how the plot is conveyed by the choices the director/choreographer, designers, and performers make. If you are writing about visual arts, you should **focus on one, two or three** art works. If you write about a live performance, you should choose **one aspect** of a performance piece (lighting, costuming, or acting). If you are writing about a poetry reading, **focus on one, two, or three poems.** Use descriptive words and significant details to create a mental picture for your reader. The more specific and clear you are, the better. Avoid clichés ("beauty is in the eye of the beholder") and sweeping generalizations.

2. **Analyze** and **interpret** the aspects of the work(s) you choose to describe. Interpreting means that you attempt to understand what the work is communicating using the elements from the work to back up your points. Basically, you are acting like detective who uses the clues to figure out what it means.

3. **Evaluate** the work(s). Tell your reader how you felt about the work(s). If you like or dislike some aspect of it, do not simply state this, give reasons for why the performance, reading, or works of art affected you the way it did. In other words, think about how the artistic choices influenced your experience of the event. It is your job to convince the reader of your aesthetic judgment using evidence; mere statements of the experience being "bad" or "good" do not tell your reader why it is worth seeing or not.

**Citations**

There is **NO REASON** to use research for this paper. It is supposed to be your **personal response** to the works you witness. However, if there are program notes, exhibition texts, or other written material that you refer to in writing your review, you **must** cite them, for example: According to the wall text accompanying the exhibit, Jeff Wright’s photography was “inspired by his interest in post-war Americana.” Be sure to cite any source you use, whether it is the playbill or Wikipedia. Even definitions must be cited! **Do not pass off someone else’s ideas as your own (refer to syllabus and**
the plagiarism policy). You **may not** use an assignment that you have turned into another class. If you do use outside sources, you must both cite them in the paper right after they are used and in a separate, Works Cited page. You must also put words that are not your in own in quotations, and if you paraphrase, you must still cite the source. If you neglect to do any of this, your paper is considered to have been plagiarized. If your paper is suspected of plagiarism, it will be sent to the Dean of Student’s office. Ignorance is **not** an excuse.