

Writing Assignment 1: What is Ebola?

FYOS 1001: Ebola

Rationale. One of our goals as learners is to modify our beliefs and opinions in response to new information. This requires *introspection* (to recognize one's existing or prior beliefs and opinions), the *acquisition of new information* or *adoption of a new perspective* (on which basis one's prior beliefs or opinions might change), and *critical evaluation* of the new information or perspective. This assignment seeks to make these steps in the learning process explicit.

Learning objectives. The student will be able to identify and summarize a prior belief or opinion. The student will be able to select relevant new information (or point of view for interpreting information) that is inconsistent with that prior belief. The student will engage in some analysis of the new information to determine if and how the prior belief or opinion should be modified.

Assignment. Write a two page essay on if and how your understanding of the 2013-2015 West Africa Ebola epidemic has changed. First, reflect on what you knew about this epidemic prior to our course. Identify one or more claims presented in *Ebola's Message* that are somehow inconsistent with your prior opinions. Evaluate the information contained in *Ebola's Message* and describe any relevant changes in your perspective on the epidemic.

Assessment. Essays will be evaluated according to the following writing rubric.

Due: January 26, 2017

	Excellent	Good	Competent	Ineffective
Clear and specific description of prior belief or opinion; analysis how a claim in <i>Ebola's Message</i> is contrary to this belief or opinion				
Reflective critical assessment to evaluate the identified claim in <i>Ebola's Message</i>				
Mechanics of writing (use of paragraphs, clear thesis, logical argument, spelling/grammar); following directions of the assignment				