

## Essay Assignment

### Instructions

Below you will find three essay prompts. For this essay, select **one** of the prompts below. Then, write a 3- to 5-page essay in response to your chosen prompt.

Please use at least one outside source to provide support for your essay. An online article, for example, such as the article we read regarding declining student resiliency at the beginning of the quarter is a good choice.

While writing your draft, review course materials and your notes regarding issues such as:

- Audience, purpose, tone (the academic audience, the skeptical reader)
- Introduction paragraph development: introductory discussion, elements of an effective thesis statement
- Body paragraph development: elements of an effective topic sentence, providing support for your topic sentence, analyzing and explaining your support
- Conclusion paragraph information is provided in this module.

### Essay Prompt Choices

1) In September of this year, the California legislature passed a bill that requires publicly-traded California companies to add a seat on their corporate boards of director for a female board member (if that company does not already have a female board member) or face monetary penalties. Supporters of the bill see the legislation as a much-needed “fast-track to diversity,” while opponents claim that a gender-based quota accounts for only one aspect of diversity and would render a potential male board member ineligible based solely on his gender, which violates both the U.S. and California Constitutions. What do you think? Should the government have the right to force private, publicly-traded companies to create a seat on its boards of director for the sole purpose of hiring a woman?

2) In 2014, seventeen-year-old Michelle Carter sent her distraught 18-year-old boyfriend, Carter Roy III, dozens of text messages encouraging him to commit suicide. The text messages Carter sent to Roy included statements such as:

- “Don't be scared. You already made this decision and if you don't do it tonight you're gonna be thinking about it all the time and stuff all the rest of your life and be miserable.”
- “You're finally going to be happy in heaven. No more pain. No more bad thoughts and worries. You'll be free.”
- “I just want to make sure you're being serious. Like I know you are, but I don't know. You always say you're gonna do it, but you never do. I just want to make sure tonight is the real thing.”

- “When are you gonna do it? Stop ignoring the question.”
- “You can't keep living this way. You just need to do it like you did the last time and not think about it and just do it, babe. You can't keep doing this every day.”

At one point, while Roy and Carter spoke on the phone, Roy told her that he had stepped out of the carbon monoxide-filled truck (where he was later found dead) because he had second thoughts about committing suicide. In response, Carter told him, “Get back in!” The judge pointed to this action when he convicted Carter of involuntary manslaughter. This week, Carter, who was facing twenty years in prison, was sentenced to fifteen months in jail and an additional twenty-one months of probation. During the trial, Carter’s attorneys argued that Carter’s statements to Roy are protected free speech under the First Amendment. However, prosecutors, the judge, and the Massachusetts Supreme Court disagreed, saying that Carter engaged in a “systematic campaign of coercion” that targeted her boyfriend’s depression and insecurities. What do you think? *Should someone who systematically encourages another person to commit suicide be held at least partially responsible for the death that results from his/her influence, or should the deceased party be held solely responsible for his/her own suicide?*

3) In the United States Armed Forces, soldiers are held to staunch physical standards. “PT” is part of an active-duty soldier’s daily life, and PT failures can negatively impact a soldier’s career. Most understand and agree that a physically fit soldier is a more effective soldier, but what about police officers? *Should American police officers be held to physical fitness standards that are equivalent to their military counterparts?*

#### Format

- Double space
- MLA header
- MLA four-line heading (on the first page only)
- MLA formatted essay title
- Place quotation marks around direct quotes you bring in from a source.
- After a direct quotation, place the author’s last name in parentheses at the end of the quote. If the author’s name isn’t available, place the title of the article instead.