Monday, February 27

Students brought in short pieces they wrote over the weekend. They were instructed to write their own demagogic speeches (they were supposed to be creative and not name real people/situations) using two of the demagogic strategies Roberts-Miller details in her article. They exchanged their speeches with partners who read them and tried to identify the demagogic strategies being used and explain how they were being used to persuade a target audience. We reconvened as a class and students discussed their findings. The previous class session I also split the class into 3 groups. Each group was assigned the task of close-reading and analyzing different sections of George Wallace’s speech over the weekend. They were asked to answer series of questions about word choice, self-presentation, cultural references, as well as identify 3 instances of demagogic rhetoric and/or fallacious reasoning in their assigned section. After wrapping up our discussion of their creative demagogic speeches, I went through Wallace’s speech with them using the overhead document camera, focusing on each of the groups’ assigned sections one-by-one.

Wednesday, March 1

This class is a peer-review day for rough drafts. Students are going to review 2 of their peers’ papers, answering a series of questions provided to them to help them critically read and analyze one another’s work. Afterwards, I will take about 20 minutes to hand out a sheet of paper giving good, moderate, and poor examples of body paragraphs that analyze aspects of demagoguery. In the examples I’ve included common issues with discussion in body paragraphs that I noticed in their first essays. I’ll go over the examples with them and discuss common problems I noticed, and showing them how to remedy them based on the better examples of discussion provided. At the close of class I will pass around a sign-up sheet for conferences, which I’ve made mandatory for this paper.

Monday, March 6

Class is cancelled today for conferences. I’m holding conferences on Thursday 3/2, Friday 3/3, Monday 3/6, and Tuesday 3/7.

Wednesday, March 8

The final draft of their second essay is due today. I’ll introduce Unit 3.