

FYSP Common Reading Project

Each summer, FYSP reading and writing faculty committee members chose a common reading text to offer students a sense of the expectations of college-level English courses at New York City College of Technology, as well as to encourage students to reach beyond reading only what is “assigned” and experience how reading habits developed in an academic setting can enable them to recognize, understand, and more powerfully articulate ideas in and outside of college.

The goals of this project are:

- to engage students in longer reading assignments representative of college-level curriculum;
- to familiarize students with analytical and discussion skills necessary for college-level work;
- to coordinate common reading assignments so that students may independently engage with students from other classes reading the same texts; and
- to have one large group activity encouraging students to share responses to similar texts.

Past Common Reading Projects have included:

2009: *Lead, Follow, or Move Out of the Way*, a textbook edited by NYCCT professors Monique Ferrell and Julian Williams. Culminating event: a mock trial based on issues of stereotyping and gender bias raised in Naomi Wolf’s *The Making of a Slut*. Professor Monique Ferrell served as judge.

2010: *Drown*, a short story collection by Pulitzer Prize winning writer Junot Diaz. Culminating event: “Fiesta 1980,” a presentation of student creative works including poetry, prose, drama, video, and dance generated by the reading selections from *Drown*.

2011: *Drown*, a short story collection by Pulitzer Prize winning writer Junot Diaz. Culminating events: *Tu Sabes?*, a reading and meet-the-author discussion with NYCCT Professor Monique Ferrell and “Belonging to English,” a full program of student creative works including a student literary contest and presentations of poetry, prose, drama, video, and dance generated by the reading selections from *Drown*.

2012-2015: *Outliers: The Story of Success*, a bestselling and controversial exploration of various aspects of individual success, by Malcolm Gladwell. Culminating events have included presentations of creative works by students in reading and writing courses including theatrical interpretations, poetry, prose, and a quiz show.