Final Draft - Essay 2 Prompt: What does Camus’ The Plague offer us in 2021? Paper details Genre and Audience: Write an academic essay that you envision sharing with family, friends, or on social media. For 3% extra credit on your final draft, post your essay on a blogsite (in addition to submitting your essay on Canvas), and provide a link to the blog in the comments section of your final draft. If you don’t have a blog, you can sign up for a free one at the following sites: Wordpress.com, Wix, Weebly, Medium, Blogger, Tumblr. Background: Since January 2020, most everyone has been reading endless articles about the coronavirus in an effort to learn more the disease that has changed our lives so drastically. We have doomscrolled our news apps for the latest details about how COVID spreads and when our turn would arrive for a vaccine. While many have relied on media such as newspapers, magazines, and Twitter for information, far fewer people have turned to the realm of the humanities to help them make sense of our present moment. However, I would suggest that art, and specifically literature, offers a just as meaningful—and, perhaps, a more human—way to process the complexities of our time. Literature teaches us not only about the world but about ourselves. Prompt and Purpose: Many people—myself included—are still struggling to come to terms (emotionally, mentally, and/or physically) with the pandemic. You have read Camus’ The Plague, but your audience has not, so with your insider knowledge, what central insight from the novel would you like to share? Since we are still navigating this ongoing (though hopefully improving), challenging COVID pandemic, and the novel is about a pandemic, what do you think should be our takeaway from the novel? For your essay, you should persuade your reader to see the COVID-19 pandemic and ourselves from your new perspective informed by the novel. In short, use The Plague as an interpretive lens for analyzing and comparing our own situation today. Scope: This is a relatively short essay, 1000-1250 words. Thus, I ask that you narrow your essay by focusing in great depth on only one character from the novel, such as Grand, Rieux, Tarrou, Paneloux, Rambert, Cottard, or Othon. Each of these characters responds to the pandemic in a unique way, so each will offer much to write about. You don’t necessarily need to choose an honorable character; feel free to focus on a flawed character (and, actually, they’re all flawed characters)—if that’s the character that will best help you illustrate your point. In order to enjoy writing this essay, you should write about the character in the novel who most interested you. Analyze your character throughout your entire essay. Requirements: In your introduction, preferably in the last sentence, state your thesis. Make a claim someone could agree or disagree with, and provide a central supporting reason to back up that claim. Try to include a counterargument so that your thesis passes the “so what” test. Make sure each of your paragraphs includes a topic sentence, preferably the first or second sentence of the paragraph, that supports your thesis and announces your point for that paragraph. Between and within your paragraphs, guide your reader through your argument using transitions. Develop your points with several (about one per paragraph) effectively integrated quotes from the novel (remember the signal phrase and sandwich!) and intense, sustained analysis of those quotes. Avoid skipping from point-to-point, quote-to-quote, without spending significant time and sentences. Show off your critical thinking and prove that you have analyzed your character in depth. Support your thesis! Use MLA format, including in-text citations and a works cited page (create an entry for the specific version of The Plague that you read). Use grammar that fits the context of your project. Please use third-person point of view, though you may use first-person sparingly (please avoid second-person pronouns, such as you and your). Plagiarized essays will receive zero points. Getting Started: To anchor your essay in the The Plague, you might benefit from brainstorming about the novel’s themes, such as exile, loss of individuality, social solidarity, individual responsibility, the response to the suffering of the innocent, God’s will, abstraction, acceptance and revolt in the face of absurdity, time, friendship, heroism vs. common decency, and the denial and acceptance of mortality. Revisit our discussion boards for a review of these themes.