

Engl 200-1 *Spring '18*
Introduction to the Study of Literature
(GEP: HU; GDR: HU2)

(This syllabus is subject to change.)

Class Time: M 1730-2000

Class Location: CCC 128 (The plan is to move to a different room in CCC after the first week.)

Instructor: Tomoko Kuribayashi, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: TR 1400-1450, W 1430-1520 (not on 1/24, 2/14, 3/14, 4/11, 5/9), and by appointment

Course Description

What is literature? What does it do? What can it do? Why have we humans always had some kind of literature, be it oral or written, be it poetry, plays or fiction? With those questions in mind, this course will introduce you to a selection of fiction, poetry and drama in English or in English translation by writers from various cultures, nations, and time periods. You will be asked to examine each piece of literature carefully, engage in class and small group discussions, submit short writing in class (and possibly online) and take exams (and/or possibly write short papers), so that you can find out what literature is about and, hopefully, will be able to enjoy literature more in the future, in the myriad forms it takes.

Intended Objectives

At the end of the semester, you should be able to analyze a literary piece based on careful interpretation of its details. In other words, you will be able to identify important details in a reading, interpret the details in a meaningful way, and put together an analysis based on what you make of the details. That's the bottom line of the course. You also will become familiar with various literary techniques that professional writers employ. In addition, you will be encouraged to think about what messages or ideas are conveyed through and by literary pieces, and to consider stories, poems, and plays in their socio-cultural context. Furthermore, you can delve deeper into the academic discipline of literary studies by comparing and contrasting two or more literary works in their various aspects as well as by learning the language in which "professionals" discuss literature.

GEP Learning Outcome (Humanities)

Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to

1. Read closely, think critically, and write effectively about texts or cultural artifacts that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and

meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality, and human dignity).

2. Investigate and thoughtfully respond to a variety of ideas, beliefs or values held by persons in situations other than one's own.

Textbooks

Joseph Kelly, ed. *The Seagull Reader: Literature*. 3 vols. Third Edition. Norton, 2015. (Text Rental)

Paula Vogel. *How I Learned to Drive*. Dramatists Play Service, Revised Edition, 1997. (Purchase)

In addition, there will be some shorter readings that you will be asked to bring to class, either as printouts or on an electronic device.

Major Assessment Tools

1. Three Exams, Including a Final Exam
2. In-Class Writing and/or Quizzes

Final Grade Break-Down

Exams	30% x 3 = 90%
In-Class Writing/Quizzes	10%

*Please read the statements below to find out how absences can affect your final grade.

Responsibilities and Assessment Info

Attendance

Attendance is key to success in this course! Class activities are organized to help you understand how literature works, so it is a lot easier to attend class regularly than to try to figure it out on your own, especially if you are not familiar with what we call serious literature. Do not miss class if you can at all help it. But for those times that you have conflicting obligations, I will excuse your first one absence (no questions asked), after which each absence will lower your final grade by a letter grade unless an explanation is given and accepted as legitimate by me. For example, if you miss a total of two classes with no legitimate excuse, your final grade will be a B at best; if you miss three classes altogether, your final grade will be a C at best. Coming late to class or leaving early will be considered partial absence and can affect your final grade.

Reading Assignments

You need to read the assigned literary work (and any other related material if assigned) in advance for each class period. Some topics and questions may be distributed in advance to help

focus your reading of the pieces. If you read the piece carefully, class time will be more interesting and productive for you; if you do not do the reading, you will be dazed and confused. As you read each piece, it will be a good idea to write down what you notice in the reading and/or highlight interesting details and key words in the piece. Preparing well by reading carefully and thoughtfully will also help you with the in-class writing and quizzes (see below).

Class Participation

Active participation in class not only will make class time more interesting to you (and to others including the instructor), but also can improve your final grade. I will add up to 0.222 to the final grade on the scale of 4.00 for excellent class participation. This can make the difference between two final grades, for example, B+ and A-. You can prepare to contribute to class (and possibly small group) discussions in a meaningful way by carefully reading the assigned piece and giving serious thought to its various aspects and characteristics. This will also help you with the in-class writing and quizzes, so why not read the assigned piece the best way you can?

Exams

You will take three exams, including a final exam. Each exam is likely to consist of multiple short answer questions and one essay question. The first exam is expected to cover fiction (stories), the second to deal with drama (plays), and the final exam to focus on poetry. Some information on each exam will be provided at least a week in advance. In the week an exam takes place, roughly the first half of the class time will be dedicated to the exam, and the second half will be given to discussion of new readings. (In other words, you will be expected to stay the whole class time.) It is possible that, if deemed pedagogically appropriate and productive, one or more exams will be replaced by short papers, in which case a paper's deadline may fall on Sunday (so as not to interfere with preparation for the class meeting on Monday). If any exam should be replaced by a paper, the change will be discussed in class and a written description will be provided.

In-Class Writing or Quizzes

In a course that meets multiple times a week in-class writing or a quiz may be generally unannounced, but since this is an evening course you can expect to be asked to do some writing every week. This short writing exercise will be about the reading(s) assigned for the day's class (in most or all cases you will not be allowed to refer to the textbook) and you are expected to write a short paragraph to show you have done the reading carefully and thoughtfully (in other words, the writing will not be limited to identification questions). On occasion, instead of short writing you may be asked to answer several questions on the reading(s). On principle, in-class writing or quiz may not be made up if you happen to be absent when it is given. In-class writing will be graded Pass/Fail, but partial credit may be awarded when appropriate. A quiz will be assigned credit based on how many questions are answered correctly.

Use of Electronic Devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used during class unless they are directly related to the academic work being done. For example, you may use a tablet to review readings assigned for class discussion and/or homework, but I may ask you to get explicit permission from me in advance for such use. If you are expecting a phone call or message related to an emergency while in class, you may let me know in advance and leave your cell phone on, but

please take the call outside the room if/when it comes in. If a cell phone or another type of electronic device is used for non-academic purposes in the classroom and it proves to be disruptive or otherwise problematic, the person using it may be asked to leave the room. In general, it is expected that phones and other electronic devices be turned off in the classroom unless they are used for explicitly academic purposes related to the ongoing class activities.

Recording of Classroom Activities (English Department Policy)

Students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policy will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom, and possibly being reported to the Dean of Students.

Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

For information on more general, campus-wide regulations, please go to the UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities document at <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>. Information especially relevant to this course is presented in Chapter 14, which begins on page 11 of the document.

Tentative Schedule

*For many of the readings, the page numbers below refer to the rental text, *The Seagull Reader*. Read the blurb on the author whenever available.

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| 1/22 | M | Introduction/Syllabus and Handouts / Elements of Fiction/ Kate Chopin (<i>The Seagull Reader: Stories</i> 98-101) |
| 1/29 | M | Joyce Carol Oates "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" (<i>Stories</i> 316-33)/ Tillie Olsen "I Stand Here Ironing" (381-89) |
| 2/5 | M | James Baldwin "Sonny's Blues" (29-61)/ Raymond Carver "Cathedral" (61-76) |
| 2/12 | M | Sherman Alexie "What You Pawn I Will Redeem" (8-28)/ Edith Wharton "Roman Fever" (488-501) |
| 2/19 | M | Katherine Anne Porter "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" (397-406)/ Jamaica Kincaid "Girl" (228-30)/ TBA |
| 2/26 | M | Introduction to Plays/ Susan Glaspell <i>Trifles</i> (<i>The Seagull Reader: Plays</i> 253-68) / Anton Chekhov <i>The Seagull</i> (most likely PDF) |
| 3/5 | M | First Exam / <i>The Seagull</i> Continued |
| 3/12 | M | Lorraine Hansberry <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (<i>The Seagull Reader: Plays</i> 268-356) |
| 3/19 | M | <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> Continued |

<< Spring Break >>

4/2 M Paula Vogel *How I Learned to Drive* (Purchase)

4/9 M *How I Learned to Drive* Continued

Most of the readings for discussion of poetry will be assigned from the rental. There may be some handouts and/or PDFs.

4/16 M **Second Exam**/ Introduction to Poetry/ Pleasures of Poetry (Bring the Orange Rental)

4/23 M Poems about Love and Sexuality/ Metaphors and Similes / Symbol and Irony

4/30 M Poems about Family/ Poems about Nature

5/7 M Poems about Teaching and Learning

5/14 M **Final Exam** (1915-2115)

