

English 200: Introduction of the Study of Literature
Syllabus

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English 200 is designed as a foundation course for English majors and others interested in the in-depth analysis of literature. This class has many objectives. Through a close focus on a handful of texts representing the main genres of literature—poetry, drama, and prose fiction—we will try to figure out what exactly constitutes literary study and how best to go about it. We'll experiment with some of the central methods of literary analysis and principles of literary research and find ways to situate ourselves in the sometimes dizzying relationship between author, text, and reader.

Note further that in addition to introducing you to information that will be useful to you as you pursue a major in English, this course also contributes to the General Education Program's "Communication in the Major" requirement. Learning outcomes for this requirement stipulate that successful students will be able to

- Apply discipline-specific standards of oral and written communication to compose an articulate, grammatically correct, and organized presentation or piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence, and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience, and to
- Critique their own and others' writing and oral presentations to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

Assignments in this course will primarily address skills indicated under the first bullet point.

ENGLISH 200 COURSE REQUIREMENTS

We will be using the following texts:

- *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism, and Theory (LCT)* by Bennett and Royle (5th ed) (rental)
- *A Glossary of Literary Terms (GLT)* by MH Abrams 10th ed or earlier (purchase cheaply somewhere online)
- Also, you'll need a source for MLA documentation conventions. *Hacker's Rules for Writers* (8th ed with updates), which you should still have from Freshman Comp, will do fine

Your grade in this class will be based on your continued conscientious application to the things we're reading, discussing, and writing. If you read all the assigned material carefully and thoughtfully, come to class prepared to talk and think about it and work on it with your colleagues, and strive to write journal entries and essays you feel proud of, you will enjoy spectacular, resounding success. Specifically, I will evaluate the following tasks:

- A Reflective Essay: Early in the semester I'll ask you to write a short essay (3-4 pages) in which you reflect on your experience with literature thus far: for example, the factors that prompted you to become an English major, the nature and extent of your formal and informal experience with literary study, your expectations regarding what you will gain from this program, and the ways you believe it will prepare you to fulfill your long-term aspirations. I will read these and score them as Complete / Incomplete (C / I). One copy will be kept on file in the Department office (you should also keep a copy) and will be used to assess your development when you complete the required Senior Project before you complete the major. It will not be considered as part of your academic record.
- A formal Group Presentation: These will be undertaken throughout the semester and will involve close readings of primary texts supplemented by biographical and historical context as well as insights gleaned from readings in LCT. Library research is required. Also note that these presentations will provide the basis for the midterm and final examinations.
- Journal Entries: These will consist of weekly responses to the primary works on the syllabus supplemented by consultation of secondary sources (all of which is located on our D2L page under the Content tab). They should come in at about a typed, double-spaced page (roughly 300 words) and are due at the beginning of class every Monday.
- An Annotated Bibliography: Your final project will be a five-source annotated bibliography on some aspect of "Hamlet." Formatting and other instructions will be distributed and discussed well in advance of the due date.
- Quizzes: You will be faced with four quizzes throughout the term, drawn from entries in Abrams's *Glossary of Literary Terms*. Specifics for each will be distributed and discussed well in advance of the due dates.
- Midterm and Final Examinations: These will provide you the opportunity to dilate at length on matters arising from the primary texts we will have read and to connect them to ideas we've worked with in both Bennet and Royle and Abrams. Format, as well as strategies for preparation, will be discussed well in advance.
- Participation in daily workshops and discussions

The breakdown of your grade will work roughly as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Reflective Essay | 50 points |
| • Group Presentation | 300 points |
| • Journal | 300 points |
| • Quizzes | 50 points (12.5 points @) |
| • Annotated Bibliography | 100 points |
| • Midterm Exam | 50 points |
| • Final Exam | 100 points |
| • Preparation, Participation | 50 points |

The math whizzes among you will already have inferred that the total number of points available is 1000. I don't award extra credit points, but you will have plenty of opportunities

to earn points the regular way. Here's a breakdown of how the points available translate into the A's, B's, and C's required by the Registrar:

| | 100 pt. assnmt | 300 pt. assnmt | Course |
|----|----------------|----------------|--------|
| A+ | 100 | 300 | 97% |
| A | 95 | 285 | 93% |
| A- | 91.5 | 274.5 | 90% |
| B+ | 88.5 | 265.5 | 87% |
| B | 85 | 255 | 83% |
| B- | 81.5 | 244.5 | 80% |
| C+ | 78.5 | 235.5 | 77% |
| C | 75 | 225 | 73% |
| C- | 71.5 | 214.5 | 70% |
| D | 65 | 195 | 60% |
| F | 30 | 90 | |

Reading: Plan to have the reading for a given week done before the first class meeting that week. The readings and films will provide the bases for our discussions and Journal assignments, and we will very frequently be doing exercises and other activities that will require intimate knowledge of what you've read. Class will be miserable if you haven't read what we're working on, and great fun if you have. **Bottom line: Do the reading.**

Journals: A Journal entry (hard copy) will be due at the beginning of class every Monday. The Journal will be the site of a large percentage of your writing in this course. In it you will reflect on things we read and view, respond to specific questions, and begin marshaling ideas about what we read. Note also that you need to consult a secondary source for each journal entry. These are available on our D2L page under the Content tab. The journal will also give you an opportunity to reflect on the readings as well as on your conceptions of yourself and the things you value, and to develop your own ideas and voice. The Journal is an arena where you can express yourself honestly and openly and is not quite as structured as a formal paper. Nonetheless successful journaling requires careful thought and effort. **Spelling, grammar, mechanics, and strong writing are all important parts of this exercise.** Think of the Journal as prewriting or exploratory writing, writing that you work through in order to massage and refine your ideas and understanding of a subject. While you hope it will impress people, you don't necessarily expect it to wind up in a formal draft in its current form. We will (anonymously) read and evaluate Journal entries regularly in class, so put forth effort that you will feel comfortable having your classmates read. Journals are scored holistically and will typically receive a "check," "plus," or "minus." Point-wise, this translates to roughly 26.5 for a check, 28.5 for a plus, and 22.5 for a minus (basically a B+, an A, or a C).

Presentations: Each student will undertake a formal oral group presentation. We'll be setting up groups and choosing topics during the first two weeks of class.

Presentations will take place throughout the class and will cover one of the authors on the syllabus for that day as well as relevant chapters from *Literature, Criticism, and Theory*. Presenters will prepare

- background information and historical context on the author

- readings of some or all of that author's works on the syllabus, which, like the author background material, should reflect engagement with secondary sources
- a specific connection to a chapter or chapters from LCT (that is, suggestions about how the ideas in LCT can enhance our understanding of the primary works)
- a formal Write-up which you will give to me.

Essentially, your group will be leading a class on that author. You should strive to deliver a product you can be proud of and one that will enhance your colleagues' knowledge about your author.

Consider the kinds of things you would find helpful and informative in such a presentation, and try to make yours as useful as possible. Plan to cover biographical and historical context, and to provide some critical insight on the works you focus on. **Research is required for the presentation;** plan to consult at least three library sources. Your library research should prove invaluable in helping you locate and explicate important passages. **These interpretations will constitute the heart of your presentation.** Further, consider producing handouts, making use of audio or video aids, and designing exercises to actively engage your classmates.

Also due at the time of your presentation, as suggested above, is a 1-2 page write-up, essentially a copy of your notes or outline, and a bibliography of the sources you've consulted.

Email: All of you, as you know, are assigned an email account when you arrive. *Get to know it and get into the habit of checking your email every evening.* I will frequently send reminders, copies of assignments, and other important stuff via email, and it's your responsibility to make sure you get it.

A note on attendance: Attendance is mandatory. I allow you three absences for the semester with no questions asked. Beyond this, excuses notwithstanding, I will begin reducing your grade by 25 points for each absence. If you know you'll need to be absent at some point during the semester—whether for extracurricular activities like sports or personal obligations like weddings—plan to spend your three absences on these. In-class essays missed due to absence must be made up under timed conditions as soon as possible. Quizzes and workshops cannot be made up. Also please note that I cannot re-teach the class by email: if you miss class, contact another student to find out what you missed. Of course, I'll be happy to send any handouts you miss, and you're always welcome to show up at my office hours to go over anything.

Plagiarism: Do not shortchange yourself and mislead your colleagues by presenting the work of another as your own. Plagiarism is **THE** cardinal academic sin, and I take it very seriously. Proof of this offense will result at the very least in failure for that assignment, and the penalties can get much more serious very quickly. Think your own thoughts, do your own work, and broadcast it proudly. Know too that plagiarism is always easy to detect and prove, and that, frankly, it's less work to do your own work than to craft a convincing piece of

plagiarism. For more information on university standards of academic conduct, follow this link: <http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/rights/RRBOOKLET8-2005-06.pdf>.

CALENDAR

Wk 1 (1/22-1/25)

- Introduction
- Introduction to Library Research
- Read RW 395-430 on research and 445-457 on working with sources
- Read "Literature" and "Genre" in GLT (149-151)

Wk 2 (1/28-2/1)

- Introduction to poetry
- Read "Sonnet 18" and "Sonnet 130" by Shakespeare (available under the Content tab on our D2L page)
- Read "Desire" in LCT
- Read "Meter," "Lyric," "Rhyme," and "Figurative language" in GLT

Wk 3 (2/4-2/8)

- Read "Poem 199" by Emily Dickinson
- Read "Figures and Tropes" in LCT
- Read "Autobiography" and "Symbols" in GLT

Wk 4 (2/11-2/15)

- Read "Acquainted with the Night" by Robert Frost
- Read "Feelings" in LCT
- Read "Stanza," "Persona, tone, and voice" and "Binary opposition" in GLT

Wk 5 (2/18-2/22)

- Read "Heritage" by Countee Cullen and "Daddy" by Sylvia Plath
- Read "Racial Difference" and "Sexual Difference" in LCT
- Read "Harlem Renaissance" and "Ambiguity" in GLT

Wk 6 (2/25-3/1)

- Read "Kublah Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and "The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred Lord Tennyson
- Read "Readers and Reading" in LCT
- Read "Irony" in GLT
- QUIZ #1 (Wednesday)

Wk 7 (3/4-3/8)

- Introduction to fiction
 - Read "The Yellow Wall Paper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman
 - Read "Narrative" in LCT
 - Read "Short story," "Plot" and "Fiction and truth" in GLT
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Wk 8 (3/11-3/15)

- "The Storm" and "The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin
- Read "Laughter" in LCT
- Read "Local color" and "Point of view" in GLT
- QUIZ #2 (Wednesday)

Spring Break! 3/16-3/24

Wk 9 (3/25-3/29)

- Read "Good Country People" by Flannery O'Connor
- Read "Character" in LCT
- MIDTERM EXAM (Wednesday)

Wk 10 (4/1-4/5)

- Read "A Rose for Emily" and "That Evening Sun" by William Faulkner
- Read "Suspense" in LCT
- Read "Local color" in GLT

Wk 11 (4/8-4/12)

- Begin "Hamlet"
- Read "Monuments" in LCT
- Read "Tragedy" in GLT
- QUIZ #3 (Wednesday)

Wk 12 (4/15-4/19)

- Hamlet continued
- Read "Love" in LCT
- Read "Pantomime and dumb show" in GLT

Wk 13 (4/22-4/26)

- Hamlet continued
- Read "War" in LCT
- Read "Satire" in GLT

Wk 14 (4/29-5/3)

- Hamlet continued
- Read "The End" in LCT
- Read "Paradox" in GLT
- QUIZ #4 (Wednesday)

Wk 15 (5/6-5/10)

- Conclusions
- Annotated Bibliography due Wednesday

Final Exams (5/13-5/17)

Our Exam: Wednesday, May 15th, 10:15-12:15 am