

ENGLISH 102 – LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

Assistant Professor Janet Hagen

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-1:00

Thursday 4-5:30 and by appointment

*Weekend online hours (email): Saturday morning

Location: C Wing

Welcome to “Literature and Composition,” English 102. In this course we will focus on how to read serious literature, develop an interpretation of what we read, and then explain and support our interpretations in writing. The objective of the course is to develop critical thinking and writing skills. In the process of developing these skills, we will focus on the three genres of fiction, poetry, and drama from a thematic approach to understand the interpretive elements in the text and the conditions that affect the reader. During the semester you will also be given instruction in composition and will be required to write frequently.

**Prerequisite: ENG 101*

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

Read and think critically

- Demonstrate an understanding of the connection between reading literature and critical thinking.
- Use the basic elements of formalist criticism to analyze a work of literature, including theme, tone, setting, point of view, characterization, plot, and figurative language.
- Recognize and use other critical strategies beyond formalism to analyze literature, including some of the following: psychological, feminist, new historical, cultural, Marxist, post-colonial, reader response.
- Distinguish how different critical theories affect interpretation and levels of meaning; recognize the validity of using different critical approaches in literary analysis.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of reading literature presenting diverse perspectives.
- Formulate and articulate their own perspectives about both meaning and structure in a work of literature supported with specifics from the text.

Write critically and analytically

- Write responses that articulate their perspectives about both meaning and structure in a work of literature supported with specifics from the text.
- Write formal academic essays that articulate their arguments about both meaning and structure in a work of literature supported with specifics from the text.

Demonstrate information literacy

Further develop research skills by demonstrating an ability to:

- Recognize when it is appropriate to use outside sources
- Evaluate sources for accuracy, validity, and academic relevance
- Cite sources using MLA citation format
- Employ strategies for avoiding plagiarism

Apply the foundations of strong academic skills

- Identify the literary genres of poetry, fiction, and drama, and some of the forms and structures within those genres.
- Recognize how reading literature aids in the understanding of the human condition.
- Produce academic documents that adhere to MLA formatting conventions.
- Work with others to analyze literature and develop valid interpretations.
- Formulate questions that encourage critical thinking and a deeper understanding of literature.

Required Texts

- Henderson, Day, and Waller. *Literature and Ourselves*, 6th edition
- Díaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

Other Required Materials

A two-pocket folder, stapler, and a journal notebook (no three-ring binders)

Grade Percentages

Essays

1	10%	Peer review	10%
2	15%	Class participation,	
3	15%	journal assignments, & in-class writing	30%
4	20%		

EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENT AND GRADES

ESSAYS (70)%: During this session you will be required to write four formal essays. As my expectations increase, so will the grade percentage awarded for each essay. The essay assignments will be handed out in class and will focus on the thematic units we will have been reading and discussing.

PEER REVIEW (10%): Before turning in your essay, you will be required to develop a formal typed draft of your essay to bring to class for a peer review workshop (along with copies of your draft to share with your peers). (Number of copies is designated on syllabus.) This draft should be the best essay you can write and should be **completed** with the assigned amount of pages typed. In class you will be assigned into groups, where you will be responsible to give feedback to your peers based on the requirements I will explain and hand out during that class period. After you receive written input from your peers, it is expected you will then revise your essay. You will be graded on how effectively you review your peers' essays. ***If you miss a peer review day or come to class without a fully typed draft for review and the required amount of copies, you will not be able to participate in peer review and it will affect your grade negatively.*** (You will not be allowed to leave class to go make copies. You must be prepared at the **beginning** of class.) Finally, when you turn in your final paper you will need to place it in a pocket folder with the original essay (before peer review), the peer reviews, and your final essay to be graded.

Paper Format: There is no such thing as a hand-written formal essay. Periodically, I will assign hand-written writings (or will accept them), but all formal essays are to be typed on a computer or word processor, double-spaced (not triple or two-and-half spaces), with one inch margins and fonts no larger than 12 points. (A good example of what I will be expecting is font the size of Times New Roman 12.) Be forewarned that if you include extra spaces between paragraphs or type in extra large margins or fonts, etc., your paper will be returned without a grade or it will affect your grade negatively. All essays **must** follow MLA citation format (the citation format you learned in English 101). (See page 306 in Lester Faigley's *The Brief Penguin Handbook* for an example of the correct format for an academic essay.) If you need to make last minute corrections, handwriting on your essay is acceptable (as long as there aren't too many mistakes). ****Pet Peeve: Sloppy papers. It is your job to proofread your paper. If I can't read your paper due to careless errors such as spelling mistakes, I will return it.***

CLASS PARTICIPATION and JOURNAL ASSIGNMENTS (30%): A literature course such as this requires class discussion, with your input vital for the success of the course. Thus, I will expect that you will have read the assigned material before class and will be able to fully participate, individually and, if designated, in a group. As noted on the syllabus, I will also expect you to write a daily response to the literature that is assigned. A response is not a summary of the work; it's a critical interrogation of it that represents your feelings about the work, why you feel as you do, and what you learned from

it. (Other ways to approach your response: Ask what it challenged you to think about, what questions it raises about human nature or relationships, what patterns you noticed and what you think they mean.) I will collect your journal during the semester (see syllabus for due dates). Responses must be dated with the title of the work you are responding to identified. They must also be legible. If you think that I can't read your writing, I recommend that you type your responses. (If I can't read your writing, your grade will be affected negatively.)

OTHER POLICIES

Deadlines: There is no such thing as late work. If you have an emergency, please contact me before the due date to make other arrangements. Only in a documented emergency will I accept email submissions, which must be okayed with me ahead of time. (All late work will be docked one full letter grade per day.)

Attendance: In order for the class to be successful it is important that you attend regularly. You will be allowed three unexcused absences. After that your grade will be lowered one full letter grade for each class you miss. **If you must miss class, please remember that you will still be held accountable for the material covered in class and all assignments that are due that day.** (An excused absent includes, for example, illness and/or injury and requires written verification.)

Tardiness: *Please be in class on time.* Within the first five minutes of class I will take attendance. If you arrive after the five minutes, I will mark you late. Being late twice will equal one unexcused absence. Being late four times will equal two unexcused absences, etc. (Leaving early counts as one absence.)

Breaks: Unless it is an emergency, please refrain from leaving the class at all times. Doing so is disruptive and it will affect your class participation grade negatively.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with academic integrity severely limits a person's ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor.

General Definition (Student Discipline Policy, section 2:10, Board of Trustees of Connecticut Community Colleges)

Academic Dishonesty shall in general mean conduct which has as its intent or effect the false representation of a student's academic performance, including but not limited to

- (a) cheating on an examination,
- (b) collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course,
- (c) plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers (whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained) as one's own,
- (d) stealing or having unauthorized access to examination or course materials,
- (e) falsifying records of laboratory or other data,
- (f) submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course, and
- (g) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

Tutoring: Three Rivers has an excellent writing center, where tutors are trained to assist students in developing better writing skills. You can also access help via email at TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu. Include your name, student ID, and a brief explanation of the assignment. (Do not wait until the last minute.)

Students with disabilities: Any student with a hidden or visible disability which may require classroom modifications should see me about her/his disability within the first week or two of class. I will ask you to see one of the learning disabilities counselors on campus so that together we can work out an appropriate plan to meet your needs.

Cell phones and beepers: School regulations require that all cell phones and beepers be turned off in learning environments. If it is imperative for you to be available by cell phone or a beeper, please speak to me before class to arrive at a suitable agreement. (No text messaging either during class.) (Consequences to be discussed . . .)

Class cancellations: If class is cancelled, a notice will be posted outside the door. I will also try to email you, so please make sure your email address is current and listed in the school directory. School cancellations due to bad weather will be posted on the TRCC homepage and also recorded on the school's main phone number: 860-886-0177.

SPRING 2009

Please bring your books to class every day. You'll need them to participate in class activities and assignments.

JANUARY

Week One

22 Introduction to course. What have we been reading and why do we read? What constitutes "serious" literature? What is the connection between reading literature and becoming better critical thinkers and writers?

Week Two

29 In *Literature and Ourselves* read "Reading Literature," 1-5 and **Poetry** 13-17; Formalist Criticism 1128; Family 41-42. Read these poems and write journal responses to each one (see page 4 for an example): "My Papa's Waltz" 131; "Daddy" 134; "My Father Is a Simple Man" 136; "Nikki-Rosa" 138; "Future Connected By" 141.

Week Three

FEBRUARY

5 **Fiction** 9-13; Read and write journal responses to "A Domestic Dilemma" 64; "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" 106 and "Because My Father Always Said He Was the Only Indian Who Saw Jimi Hendrix Play *The Star-Spangled Banner* at Woodstock" 120.

Week Four

12 Read "Writing about Literature" 21-39.

Week Five

19 Peer Review - bring 4 completed copies of your essay (required to participate). **JOURNAL DUE**

Week Six

26 ***ESSAY ONE DUE** (in folder with peer reviews); Men and Women 228; Gender Criticism 1130; "Barbie Doll" 323; "Breaking Tradition" 324; "Désirée's Baby" 269 - journal entries due

Week Seven

MARCH

5 "Hills Like White Elephants" 297; "The Yellow Wallpaper" 274; "A Temporary Matter" 301; "Home Burial" 396 - journal entries

Week Eight

12 Read "Writing about Film" 1133-1148; watch *Vertigo*

**** SPRING BREAK - MARCH 14-22**

Week Nine

26 Peer Review - bring five copies (required). **COLLECT JOURNAL**

Week Ten

APRIL

2 ***ESSAY TWO DUE** (in folder with peer reviews). **Drama** 17-21; *Fences*, 143 - Read play in its entirety. Journal entry

Week Eleven

9 Make-up day

Week Twelve

16 Watch *The Piano Lesson* - journal entry. Read "The Dramatic Vision of August Wilson" 199; "Boundaries, Logistics, and Identity . . ." 207; "August Wilson's Women" 216; "An Interview with August Wilson" 219; in your journal identify the important ideas from each work that encourage a deeper understanding of Wilson's work.

Week Thirteen

23 **Peer Review** - bring five copies of final paper (required)

Week Fourteen

30 ***ESSAY THREE DUE** in folder with peer reviews. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* - Intro. and Chapters 1-3, pages 1-165 - journal entry for each chapter

MAY

Week Fifteen

7 Finish *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* - journal entry for each chapter

Week Sixteen

14 **Last day of class. JOURNAL DUE. Peer Review** - bring five copies. Final essays due in Blackboard Vista by Sunday, May 17 at 5 p.m.

**Final grades will be posted on the web. If you would like your essay and journal back right away, please enclose a SASE with it when you turn it in. Otherwise, please pick up your work in my office next semester.*