

English 102.T5 Syllabus – Literature and Composition

English 102, section T5
Tuesday 6:30 pm to 9:15 pm
Classroom: E223
Instructor: Greg Souza (Available by Appointment)
Email: gsouza@trcc.comnet.edu

Overview

Three Rivers officially describes this course as follows:

Students learn how to read serious literature, how to develop an interpretation, and how to explain and support their ideas in writing. Through the study of selected works of fiction, poetry, and drama, students learn the elements of textual analysis and become familiar with the ways in which other critical approaches affect interpretation. In addition to continued instruction in composition, students are required to read and write frequently.

Textbooks

This course requires that you obtain a copy of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature, 9th Edition* edited by Michael Meyer. Since this class expects you to adhere to the conventions of MLA format, I strongly recommend purchasing a copy of Diana Hacker's most recent *A Writer's Reference* or another similar style and grammar handbook. If you already have a relatively recent handbook containing the rules of MLA, this will likely suffice. Though the rules of MLA format are widely available on the internet, internet sources require much greater caution since their accuracy is at times questionable.

Writing Requirements

This course will require **weekly writing assignments** (to be defined in greater detail in class) in addition to **three major essays** varying in length from five to eight pages. At this point in your career, it is expected that you have learned how to write in drafts and produce grammatically sound (if not always flawless) prose containing logical and well-supported arguments. As such, this course will require the following of you:

- 20 pages of finished academic writing divided over three major essays.
 - At least one essay that will require independent research.
 - In-class graded writing in the form of a midterm and a final exam.
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Learning Outcomes

The course's basic writing assignments are designed to facilitate the following major learning outcomes.

Critical Reading and Thinking Skills

This course will help you to...

- 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 your own perspectives about meaning and structure in a work of literature supported with specifics from the text.

Critical and Analytical Writing Skills

This course will help you to...

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

Information Literacy

This course will help you 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

This course will help you to...

- 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.
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Expected Student Behaviors

Your successful completion of this course relies on three essential habits: always come to class with a writing implement, always arrive to class having done all necessary reading, and always arrive to class with the text in hand.

Furthermore, this course should be a safe space for the free and open expression of ideas, and so you are all expected to demonstrate the utmost respect for one another during class discussion. A lively discourse about the subject matter is at the heart of any literature class, and ideas may often conflict; however, we can disagree tactfully and productively in order to advance our ideas.

On the matter of cell phones and other electronic devices: please turn them off at the beginning of class. If you have a special need for a cell phone, (translation apps, for instance) please approach me at the beginning of class to discuss what exceptions we need to make.

Finally, it will be helpful to check your email daily. I (and your other professors) may use email to supplement or clarify class materials. MyCommNet Alert is a system that sends text messages and emails to anyone signed up in the event of a campus emergency. Additionally, TRCC sends messages when the college is delayed or closed due to weather. All students are encouraged to sign up for myCommNet Alert. A tutorial is available on the Educational Technology and Distance Learning Students page of the web site. Copy and paste / transcribe this URL below into your internet browser if you wish to proceed through the tutorial.

<http://www.trcc.comnet.edu/div_it/educationaltechnology/Tutorials/myCommNetAlert/MIR3.html>

Fine Print Policies

Submitting Work:

The weekly reading response assignments will be turned in at the end of class each class on Thursday, but you will submit each draft of your three major essays **electronically** via our blackboard page. If you have any special concerns regarding the larger electronic submission policy, see me to discuss an alternative arrangement.

Late Papers:

In short, there are none. I will not accept late papers. In exchange for the timely receipt of your work, I will endeavor to return it in an equally timely fashion. If you have extenuating circumstances that might limit your ability to complete your paper, please approach me well in advance of the deadline so that we can work out a solution. I am always willing to help and to make alternative arrangements – but *only* in advance.

Plagiarism:

From the Three Rivers faculty handbook:

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.

I will not tolerate plagiarized work or any form of academic dishonesty. If you are confused about the definition of plagiarism or about appropriate citation, please discuss this with me immediately. The consequences for plagiarism can include failure of the assignment and/or failure of the course in addition to other penalties enacted at the discretion of the college.

One of the aims in this course is for you to learn how to conduct yourself as part of a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others, as that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. Please note that ignorance of academic conventions or of Three Rivers' policies never excuses a violation; therefore, if you have questions during the semester, you would be wise to consult with me.

Certainly, you are encouraged to study together discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, or go to the Writing Center with your drafts. However, when you use another's ideas or language (directly, in summary, or in paraphrase) you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation.

In other words: plagiarism is a big deal. If you are ever tempted to plagiarize, come to me first. Do not let stress or lack of time tarnish your academic record.

Attendance and Participation:

Participation is essential to maintaining lively academic discourse; therefore, I expect you to attend every class. Participation will account for 10% of your final course grade, and it broadly refers to the degree to which you demonstrate a rigorous engagement with the course. This can take a few forms. The easiest way to demonstrate this is simply to make an effort to speak during each class session. Express your ideas or respond to those of others and help the class discussion to progress. This behavior will ultimately be reflected in your final grade. If you're less comfortable speaking in class, I also consider visits with writing center tutors or private discussions / tutorials with me examples of a meaningful attempt to engage with this course. In other words, there are many ways to satisfy this portion of the grade just as long as you're turning in an effort. I will continually update your participation grade based on your behavior throughout the semester, and you will be informed of this and other portions of your grade at mid-term. However, you're welcome to approach me regarding the matter sooner.

Your participation grade could be reduced by some of the following common scenarios, and I reserve the right to determine your participation grade based on my estimation of each offense's severity.

Obviously you cannot truly participate if you do not attend the class. I understand that life is not as predictable as my syllabus might prefer, so I allow for one unexcused absence before your

final grade is affected. Beyond that, your participation grade will automatically be reduced to a 59 as of the second unexcused absence and 0 for the third. This can have a profound impact on your final grade. Please inform me **in advance** of any medical or family obligations, and I will be happy to try to accommodate extenuating circumstances.

A consistent habit of lateness will also reduce your participation grade. It is profoundly distracting and disruptive to have numerous people drifting in after the start of class.

Any unauthorized use of electronics will result in a deduction from your final participation grade. If you are in class, you are expected to give your attention to your instructor or your classmates. If you are looking at a cell phone, you are broadcasting to the class that you are simply not present, even if you're physically there.

Finally, hostility or general rudeness towards your instructor or your classmates will absolutely result in a reduction of your final participation grade. Proceed always with tact and respect.

Disabilities:

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

| TRCC Disabilities Service Providers Counseling & Advising Office Room A-119 | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Matt Liscum (860) 383-5240 | Physical Disabilities Sensory Disabilities Medical Disabilities Mental Health Disabilities |
| Chris Scarborough (860) 892-5751 | Learning Disabilities ADD/ADHD Autism Spectrum |

Grading

Component**Percentage**

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Participation | 10% |
| Short Assignments | 10% |
| Exams | 20% |
| Paper 1 | 15% |
| Paper 2 | 20% |
| Paper 3 | 25% |

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|----|-------|----|-------|
| A | 93+ | C | 73-76 |
| A- | 90-92 | C- | 70-72 |
| B+ | 87-89 | D+ | 67-69 |
| B | 83-86 | D | 63-66 |
| B- | 80-82 | D- | 60-62 |
| C+ | 77-79 | F | 0-59 |

I feel it important that you all have in writing from me a summation of my thoughts on grading. Each major assignment I give you will indicate the specific criteria of greatest concern to me in terms of the final grade you receive. However, what follows is a general breakdown of what sorts of papers will generally receive what sort of grades.

A

DaVinci said that “art is never finished; only abandoned.” There is no paper that couldn’t stand up to some form of revision; however, an “A” paper achieves clarity and persuasiveness through a **thorough and well-supported argument**, communicated with **precise diction**, and framed by **highly logical organization**. Naturally, this description also assumes the final paper has adequately addressed the assignment.

B

A “B” is not a grade worthy of shame. It suggests work that shares many qualities in common with an “A” paper, but generally features a few too many opportunities for revision left unexplored. For instance, it may feature a strong argument with solid organization, but perhaps the diction was occasionally confusing to the point of some distraction. In any case, it represents a very respectable effort.

C

Many consider “C” work to be average; however, I would like us all to strive for better. Once more, “C” work may share many traits with a “B” paper, but generally, a “C” paper features some fundamental flaw or flaws that noticeably mar the quality of the argument.

D

A “D” paper will generally feature fundamental flaws to nearly all aspects of the argument and organization, but represents enough of an effort at academic writing to merit a passing grade.

F

Certainly, I do not wish to have to give anyone a “D” or an “F,” and I specifically reserve the “F” for examples of writing that simply fail to conform to any reasonable standards of academic writing and literary analysis. Such a paper would likely be bereft of any argument or support for one’s argument, feature distractingly poor diction, and have a total lack of structure.

As a final note, while I have provided these elaborations, grading is still a subjective process. I will always substantiate your grade with detailed notes, and if you find either note or grade confusing, please see me so that we can discuss them.

Class Schedule

What follows is our class schedule as currently planned. I may alter our readings and due dates based on the interests / needs of the class, but I will only do so with due consultation and / or fair warning.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | |
| 24-Jan | No Class |
| Week 2 - Plot and Structure | |
| 29-Jan | "What is Close Reading"? discussion of "The Flowers," discussion of "Three Girls" |
| Week 3 - Symbols and Characters | |
| 5-Feb | Discussion of "Clothes" and "The Hand" Due: Read "Clothes" by Banjeree Divakaruni (p 265) Due: "The Hand" by Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (274) |
| Week 4 - Symbols and Characters Continued | |
| 12-Feb | Discuss "Battle Royale" |

Due: Read "Battle Royal" by Ralph Ellison (p 277)

Week 5 - Critical Case Study

19-Feb "Barn Burning" by Faulkner, discussion of critical selections
 Due: Read "Barn Burning" by Faulkner (p 503)
 Due: Read Faulkner Critical Selections (TBA)

22-Feb Due: Digital Submission of Rough Draft

Week 6 - Writing Week

26-Feb Peer Review / Writing Workshop

Week 7 - Poetic Form and Meter

5-Mar Introduction to Poetry, Discussion of Shakespearean Sonnet Form,
 Discussion of the Villanelle and the Sestina
 Due: Read "My Mistress' Eyes are Nothing Like the Sun" (p 976),
 "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?" (p 976)

 Due: Read "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Thomas (p 981),
 "Sestina" by Swinburne (p 983), "All American Sestina" by Mayers (p 984)
 Due: Final Draft of Essay 1

Week 8 - Poetic Diction

12-Mar Discussion of Poetic Diction
 Due: Read "The Tiger" (p 691) and "The Lamb" (961) by Blake
 Due: Read Herrick, "To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time" (p 811),
 Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" (p 812)

Week 9

19-Mar Spring Break

Week 10 - Mid Term Exam

26-Mar Mid Term Exam

Due: Digital Submission of Essay 2 Rough Draft

Week 11 - Class Poetry Selections

2-Apr

Class Selections

Due: Bring in two poems from the Bedford handbook that you may wish to write about

Week 12 - Writing Week

9-Apr

Peer Review / Writing Workshop

Week 13 - Reading Drama - The One Act Play

16-Apr

Intro to Drama, Discussion of "Trifles," "Naked Lunch" and "Mistaken Identity"

Due: Read "Trifles" by Glaspell (p 1366)

Due: "Naked Lunch" by Hollinger (p 1385)

Due: "Mistaken Identity" by Cooper (p 1389)

Due: Final Draft of Essay 2

Week 14 - Naturalism

23-Apr

*A Doll's House*Due: Read *A Doll's House* by Ibsen (p 1764)

Week 15 - Modern American Drama

30-Apr

*Death of a Salesman*Due: Read *Death of a Salesman* by Miller (p 1869)

Week 16 - Writing Week

7-May

Peer Review / Writing Workshop

Week 17 - Final Exam

14-May

Final Exam

16-
Mar

Due: Final Draft of Essay 3 (Digital Submission)