

ENG 102: Literature and Composition R 2:30-5:15pm Room D203

Instructor: Susan M. Topping

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Office: C254 Office Hours: R 12:30-2:00, and by appointment.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students are taught 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 are expected to learn the traditional 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 continually and write frequently in preparation for every class.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

*The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. Eighth edition. Ed. Michael Meyer.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

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.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

Essays

You will be asked to write three formal essays on topics generated from your reading and class discussions. Essay #1 will be 4-6 pages in length (1000-1500 words); Essays #2 and 3 will be 6-8 pages (1500-2000 words) each. Each essay will follow a different process: Essay #1: i) topic approved by me; ii) write first draft/response; iii) first draft undergoes peer review; iv) instructor reads and comments; v) revise essay; vi) submit the entire packet of work (topic, draft with my comments, postwrites, peer review, final draft) for grade.

Essay #2: i) topic formally approved by me; ii) write first draft/response; iii) first draft undergoes peer review; iv) revise essay; v) submit the entire packet of work (topic, draft, peer review, final draft) for grade.

Essay #3 : i) topic formally approved by me; ii) write essay (preferably in drafts!) and submit for grade.

Although further, more specific criteria will be given out for each assignment, general guidelines are as follows: while it is important that you demonstrate your ability to respond to the readings, explore the draft process, and complete all assignments, all essays will be graded on the quality of the finished product which will take into account grammar, rhetorical strategies, and intellectual complexity, together with evidence of research skills, documentation, use of quotations and paraphrases, and ability to sustain an argument in clear prose. However, if you submit an incomplete packet, your grade will be affected. In addition, if you miss a writing workshop day, or come to class without work for review, you cannot make up this work and this will negatively affect your grade.

Only those students who hand in the completed essay packet on time and receive a grade of C or below will have the option to revise the paper; however, all such re-writes must first be discussed with me during office hours.

Please note that while I actively encourage you to seek help from the Writing Center or myself, I do not accept work that has received help from any other source including parents, siblings, significant others etc. I expect you to accept responsibility for the authorship of your written work.

**ALL WORK MUST BE COMPLETED ON TIME, TYPED AND FOLLOW MLA FORMAT. LATE ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED UP TO ONE WEEK PAST THE**

DUE DATE BUT WILL BE DOWNGRADED ONE FULL LETTER GRADE. LATE ESSAYS MAY NOT BE REVISED. ANY ESSAY THAT USES OUTSIDE SOURCES MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH COPIES OF SOURCES AND THE ESSAY MARKED ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS. I WILL NOT READ ANY ESSAY THAT IS SUBMITTED WITHOUT COPIES OF ALL SOURCES USED.

PLEASE NOTE: If you hand in your essay late, it will go to the bottom of the pile of essays waiting to be graded. Thus, late essays may not be returned quickly, and any problems you have with your written work may not be uncovered until quite late in the semester. It is your responsibility to hand in all work on time.

### **Weekly Assignments**

In addition to formal essays, we will be doing both in and out of class writing assignments. If you have not done the reading, you will not be able to successfully complete these assignments which will include quizzes, summaries, short essays etc. Although these will receive a check minus, check or check plus grade at the time of completion, I may collect them during the semester to grade them in their entirety. Thus you are responsible for keeping all of your in-class assignments in a folder. In addition to the in-class writing assignments, you will also be responsible for completing reading responses at various times throughout the semester which ask you to reflect upon the assigned readings by writing a response that will be at least two typed pages in length (minimum 500 words) and use MLA form. Although these responses may be fairly informal, I expect you to seriously engage in the ideas and issues the texts present. In addition to finding your own topics, I will at times provide you with a question or ask you to respond to the questions asked after each selection in our text. Because your responses will be used in class to generate ideas about the issues we are exploring, it is essential that they are completed on time. In addition, you are responsible for keeping copies of ALL of your work in a folder which may be handed in for grade during the semester. Although I expect you to type up the in-class assignments for your folder if I require its submission, you will hand in both hand written and typed versions; however, no revisions, late work or other amendments are allowed. If I see evidence of manipulation (and this includes correcting technical errors!) from the in-class version to the typed version, the entire folder will receive a zero.

### **Class Participation**

Constructive participation in both discussion and writers' workshop is expected; therefore, it is important that you come to class ready to discuss the reading and writing assignments. If you are not prepared, you will find it difficult to participate in class conversations and your work will reflect your lack of engagement.

### **FINAL GRADES**

Essay #1	20%
Essay #2	20%
Essay #3	25%
In-class work and Reading Responses (including participation)	5%
In-class exams	30%

### **COURSE POLICY**

**Attendance**

Attendance is a requirement. Absences will have a negative affect on your grade. If you miss class, it is up to you to find out what you have missed and make up the work in whatever way you can.

**Classroom Decorum**

If you are late, leave class early, or allow your cell phone to ring, you are being disruptive. I expect you to come to class on time with all the necessary texts and remain in the classroom for the entire period. Disruptive or inappropriate classroom behavior will have a negative affect on your grade.

**Withdrawal Dates**

Students may officially withdraw at the Registrar's Office up until December 9th. Any student who stops attending class, but does not officially withdraw, will receive a grade of F for the course. However, withdrawal grades may have a negative impact on financial aid and academic progress. Please see an advisor before you withdraw.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the intentional use of someone else's words or ideas. It is a serious violation of academic standards that is subject to one or more of the following penalties: a failing grade for the paper; a failing grade for the course; a report to the administrative authorities for appropriate action (i.e. a notation on the student's permanent record, suspension, or expulsion). Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity policy in our on-line catalogue.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Any student with a hidden or visible disability which may require classroom modification should see me during the first week of class so that an appropriate plan to meet your needs may be arranged.

**MESSAGES AND CONFERENCES**

If you need to reach me, please call my office phone or email me at [stopping@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:stopping@trcc.commnet.edu) I am also available during office hours and look forward to meeting with you to discuss your work. If my office hours are not convenient for you, please make an appointment to see me at another time.

**EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS**

I encourage you to communicate with me via email; however, please be mindful that any email communication with me should be regarded as a formal communication, and thus, emails that do not follow standard written English conventions will be neither read nor replied to.

**EMAIL SUBMISSIONS**

I expect you to come to class with a hard copy of your assignments; however, it is vital that any work submitted via email be saved in Word. Whatever word processing program you are using, please save the document in html format so that I can open the attachment. I can not open WordPad and some other formats.. I will consider essays sent in these formats as late.

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TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments are from *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* unless otherwise noted.

#### WEEK 1.

R 8/26 No Class

Out of Class Assignment: Read Stephen Holst's "The Zebra Storyteller" (available online at <http://www.archipelago.org/vol3-1/holst.htm> and reproduced at the end of this syllabus), and write a 750 word reading response (see syllabus for directions) on the "function of the storyteller" (Holst 1) as both you and the story define it.

Introduction "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" (handout)

#### WEEK 2

R 9/2 Reading Due: Introduction (1-6); "From Reading to Writing" (47-62) 'A Story of an Hour' (15). "Explorations and Formulas" (23-45) including "From *A Secret Sorrow*" and "A Sorrowful Woman."

Writing Due: Reading Response (see syllabus for guidelines): Choose any quotation from one of the stories and explicate (unfold/unwrap) it. Connect the issues raised in the explication to the rest of the story. 500 words. Use MLA form.

#### WEEK 3

R 9/9 Reading Due: "Explorations and Formulas" (23-45) including "From *A Secret Sorrow*" and "A Sorrowful Woman." "Soldier's Home" (185); "How to Tell a True War Story" (617); "Lust" (339); "Killings" (107); "A Rose for Emily" (95).

Writing Due: Reading Response: Explore a thematic or formal connection you see between two of the stories.

#### WEEK 4.

R 9/16 Reading Due: "55 Miles to the Gas Pump" (603); "The Answer is No" (690); "Girl" (719); "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (732); "Everyday Use" (757) 'There Was Once' (614).

#### WEEK 5

R 9/23 Writing Due: "As-good-as-it-gets" draft Essay #1 Due

Peer Review: Please bring 3 copies of your essay to class.

#### WEEK 6

R 9/30 Writing Workshop

Assignment Due: Read "Reading Drama Responsively" (1365-1380)

#### WEEK 7

R 10/7 Writing Workshop

Reading Due: "A Study of Sophocles" (1418-1422); *Antigone* (1469-1518).

#### WEEK 8

R 10/14 Discussion cont.

#### WEEK 9

R 10/21 Reading Due: "Shakespeare's Theater" (1523-30) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1532-88).

Writing Due: Final Draft Essay #1 (including draft with my comments, peer reviews, postwrites, revised essay).

WEEK 10

R 10/28 IN-CLASS EXAM

Reading Due: read for 30 minutes in the poetry section and come to class with the author, title, page # of two poems.

WEEK 11

R 11/4

WEEK 12

R 11/11 Poetry

WEEK 13

R 11/18 Poetry Writing Due: “As-good-as-it-gets” draft Essay #2

Peer Review: Please bring 3 copies of your essay to class.

WEEK 14

R 11/25 NO CLASSES THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 15

R 11/30 Essay #3 Due

WEEK 16

R 11/7 LAST DAY OF CLASSES

FINAL EXAM

## **The Zebra StoryTeller**

### **Spencer Holst**

Once upon a time there was a Siamese cat who pretended to be a lion and spoke inappropriate Zebraic.

That language is whinnied by the race of striped horses in Africa.

Here now: An innocent zebra is walking in a jungle, and approaching from another direction is the little cat; they meet.

“Hello there!” says the Siamese cat in perfectly pronounced Zebraic. “It certainly is a pleasant day, isn’t it? The sun is shining, the birds are singing, isn’t the world a lovely place to live today!”

The zebra is so astonished at hearing a Siamese cat speaking like a zebra, why, he’s just fit to be tied.

So the little cat quickly ties him up, kills him, and drags the better parts of the carcass back to his den.

The cat successfully hunted zebras many months in this manner, dining on filet mignon of zebra every night, and from the better hides he made bow neckties and wide belts after the fashion of the decadent princes of the Old Siamese court.

He began boasting to his friends he was a lion, and he gave them as proof the fact that he hunted zebras.

The delicate noses of the zebras told them there was really no lion in the neighborhood. The zebra deaths caused many to avoid the region. Superstitious, they decided the woods were haunted by the ghost of a lion.

One day the storyteller of the zebras was ambling, and through his mind ran plots for stories to amuse the other zebras, when suddenly his eyes brightened, and he said, “That’s it! I’ll tell a story about a Siamese cat who learns to speak our language! What an idea! That’ll make ’em laugh!”

Just then the Siamese cat appeared before him, and said, “Hello there! Pleasant day today, isn’t it!”

The zebra storyteller wasn’t fit to be tied at hearing a cat speaking his language, because he’d been thinking about that very thing.

He took a good look at the cat, and he didn’t know why, but there was something about his looks he didn’t like, so he kicked him with a hoof and killed him.

That is the function of the storyteller.

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