



## **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.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

### *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.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to give you practice in a variety of writing situations. Although you will be doing different kinds of writing assignments to bridge the gap many perceive between personal and academic writing, most of this course will be devoted to the practical reflection on the rhetorical aims, intellectual strategies, and discursive processes that inform successful academic writing. In other words, you will be expected to read and respond to your peers' writing, as well as summarize, analyze, interpret and argue with various published texts. In working together, our general goal is to develop our ability to read and write rhetorically effective and intellectually complex texts.

We will be doing a lot of writing this semester, and you will need to plan your time accordingly.

## TEXTS and MATERIALS:

### REQUIRED

- *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. Ed. Michael Meyer. 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> ed.
- A paperback collegiate dictionary of your choice, to be brought to every class!
- Two manila (or other slim) folders, one for handing in formal essays and drafts and one for keeping a portfolio
- Storage device (memory stick or CD) for keeping back-ups of all you work.

## COURSE POLICIES

Attendance is essential to your success in class. In my experience, students who miss more than 15% of class rarely pass. If you must miss class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed, making up the work, and coming prepared to the next class with all assignments completed.

Participation is a requirement. Ten percent of a project's grade will be deducted from your participation portion of your grade for:

- any workshop/peer review you miss or attend without the required typed draft
- any peer review sheet you fail to complete
- failure to contribute fairly and fully to any group assignment (poetry, fiction, and drama presentations)
- missing Vista discussion post

Classroom Decorum includes respecting one another's opinions by listening openly and responding politely, in agreement or disagreement, arriving on time, remaining the entire class period, and turning your cell phone off BEFORE you enter the classroom. Disruptive behavior will negatively affect your final grade. During in-class quizzes, tests, and exams, you are not allowed to leave the room until I have collected everyone's work.

**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; and a report to the administrative authorities for appropriate action. Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity policy in our online catalogue ([http://www.trcc.comnet.edu/gen\\_info/catalog/Academic\\_standards.htm#academicintegritypolicy](http://www.trcc.comnet.edu/gen_info/catalog/Academic_standards.htm#academicintegritypolicy)).

In addition, 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 full responsibility for the authorship of your written work. All assignments you write must be original to this class.

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

### WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS

Until December 15<sup>th</sup>, you may officially withdraw at the Registrar's Office. If you stop attending class, but do not officially withdraw, you will receive a grade of F for the course.

### MESSAGES AND CONFERENCES

If you need to reach me, please email me at [prof.stclair@gmail.com](mailto:prof.stclair@gmail.com) or call my office phone. I am also available during office hours or by appointment and look forward to meeting with you to discuss your work.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Vista On-Line Blackboard Discussions: For each reading you are expected to contribute a **minimum** of two (more are welcome, especially if an idea has ignited your imagination!) thoughtful and detailed posts to engage in dialogue with the reading, with peers, and with me. These are informal posts, as if sharing conversations over a cup of coffee or meal. These are neither essays nor summaries; they are thoughtful ruminations for framing an approach, articulating a question, or exploring connections within one text or among several. Do not think about them as finished or polished pieces of work, but as reflective work, a way to think about what you are thinking. Thus, I am more interested in your ideas than the ways you are presenting them. Hence your contributions will be graded more on content, *what* is being said, and less on format, *how* it is being said. Grammar, in other words, will not be part of the grade; however, please make every effort to respect your audience and write as clearly and meaningfully as possible. The intent is to help us to reflect and re-visit the complex and challenging ideas the readings present. I will distribute a handout that details my expectations and the logistics of the conversation.

I will also make available other topics, such as a grammar thread, where you can post questions about grammar and style, and other threads as issues surface that invite conversation.

Formal Essays: On the due date, I require all drafts, **two** copies of the final and **one** copy of each draft, to be submitted in a folder at the BEGINNING of class; otherwise, the essay will be considered late!

### LATE WORK:

Essays: Ten percent of the final grade will be deducted for EACH class period an essay is late. Late essays will be accepted up to one week after the initial due date. Since every essay is required to receive a passing grade, you will fail this course if you fail to hand in the essay within that time frame. Late work may not be graded and returned as promptly as work handed in on time. Consequently, any problems that surface in your writing may not be uncovered until quite late in the semester, leaving you less time to address them.

No credit will be given for Vista posts after their stated deadline.

In-class quizzes and assignments CANNOT be made up, regardless of reason, outside of a religious holiday. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. If you are tardy the day of a planned or surprise quiz, you will not be given extra time to complete it.

PLEASE NOTE: I MUST SEE THE WORK IN PROGRESS AND WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY SUBMISSIONS FOR GRADE THAT HAVE NOT GONE THROUGH PEER REVIEW. IN ADDITION, I REQUIRE THAT COPIES OF ANY SOURCES YOU USE OUTSIDE OF CLASS TEXTS BE SUBMITTED WITH ALL DRAFTS. I WILL NOT READ WORK SUBMITTED WITHOUT THESE COPIES.

If I feel that the reading is not being done, I reserve the right to give pop quizzes and will then adjust the final grades accordingly.

### GRADING CRITERIA:

Although more specific criteria will be given out for each assignment, general guidelines are as follows: Essays and assignments will be graded on your ability to demonstrate evidence of organizing thoughts, making connections within and among the readings, exploring the draft process, and completing all assignment requirements.

Formal 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.

### FINAL CLASS GRADE:

Presentations (Four)	140
Vista Dialogues	160
Essay 1	200
Essay 2	200
Essay 3	200
Final Exam/Portfolio	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>

### Important Dates:

Sept. 15	Last Day to Add/Drop & Partial Tuition Refund
Sept. 29	Last Day to Select Audit Option
Oct. 13	Columbus Day, College Closed
Nov. 10	Last Day to Select Pass/Fail Option
Nov. 10	Last Day to Submit Incomplete Work from Spring
Nov. 25 - 30	Thanksgiving Recess
Dec. 15	Last Day to Withdraw from Classes (signature required)
Dec. 31	Grades Available on Web

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**  
**subject to change**

Assignments are listed as Write or Read. These are due the day on which they're listed.  
 A \* next to a day indicates the due date of a formal essay  
 Bring your text book AND dictionary to EVERY class  
 Pages in *italics* refer to the 7<sup>th</sup> edition, and those in **bold**, to the 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

**Monday 9/8**

Read:

- “A Story about the Body,” p. 1047
- Formalist Strategies, p. 2084-2086
- Susan Sontag, “Against Interpretation,” p. 2102

Write:

- Brainstorming notes (typed or written for class discussion): What meaning does the title contribute to the poem? How would the meaning change for each if these alternative titles 1) *The Story about a Body* and 2) *A Story about Her Body*.
- On a separate piece of paper: 1) Questions you have about the Sontag reading AND 2) Questions about or issues to explore in the prose poem

In-class:

- Group assignments

**Monday 9/15 PRESENTATIONS!**

Read:

- Using quotations, p. 2077-2078; **2127-2128**

**Monday 9/22**

Read:

- Suggestions for approaching poetry, 720-721; **788-789**
- Group poem

In-Class: Group Work

**Wednesday 9/3 Welcome!**

In-Class:

- Syllabus Review & Vista Blackboard Demo
- “In a Station of the Metro,” p. 894
- Formalist Strategies, analysis & interpretation

**Wednesday 9/10**

Read:

- critical strategy and sample essay assigned to your group
- “Hazel Tells Laverne,” p. 763; **838**
- Grimm’s “The Frog King”

In-class:

- Finish “A Story about the Body” discussion
- Group Work on strategy & poem

**Wednesday 9/17 PRESENTATIONS!**

In-class: Discuss poetry salon.

**Wednesday 9/24 Poetry Salon (Love)**

Read:

- “The Flea,” p. 1200 ; **1323**
- “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun,” p. 918; **1010**

<p><b>Monday 9/29 Poetry Salon (Fear)</b></p> <p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Tyger,” p. 904; <b>995</b></li> <li>• “The Red Hat,” p. 900; <b>991</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Wednesday 10/1 Poetry Salon (Grief &amp; Loss)</b></p> <p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There’s a certain Slant of light,” p. 2082; <b>2133</b></li> <li>• “April and Silence,” p. 1188; <b>1312</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Monday 10/6 Poetry Salon (War)</b></p> <p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner,” p. 758; <b>832</b></li> <li>• “Rite of Passage,” p. 952; <b>1047</b></li> </ul> <p><u>In-class:</u> From <i>Bird by Bird</i></p>	<p><b>Wednesday 10/8 SFD 1</b></p> <p><u>Write:</u> Draft 1, Poetry Essay</p>
<p><b>Monday 10/13 Columbus Day</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>No Class!</u></p>	<p><b>Wednesday 10/15 GSD Day</b></p> <p><u>Write:</u> Draft 2, Poetry Essay</p>
<p><b>*Monday 10/20 PFD Day</b></p> <p><u>Write:</u> Final Draft Due (2 copies, plus 1 copy of each draft)</p> <p><u>Read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading drama responsively, p. 1245-1247; <b>1365-1366</b></li> <li>• Elements of Drama, p. 1263-1267; <b>1383-1387</b></li> <li>• “Trifles,” p. 1248-; <b>1368-</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Wednesday 10/22</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Study of Sophocles &amp; Tragedy, p. 1292-1299; <b>1418 – 1426;</b></li> <li>• “Oedipus the King,” p. 1299-1340; <b>1426-1468</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Monday 10/27</b></p> <p><u>In-class:</u> Oedipus Presentations</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 10/29</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern Drama, 1580-1584; <b>1708-1762</b></li> <li>• “A Raisin in the Sun,” 1733- ; <b>1836-</b></li> </ul> <p><u>In-class:</u> Finish Oedipus Presentations</p>
<p><b>Monday 11/3</b></p> <p>Movie</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 11/5</b></p> <p>Movie</p>
<p><b>Monday 11/10 SFD</b></p> <p><u>Write:</u> Draft 1, Drama Essay</p>	<p><b>Wednesday 11/12 GSD</b></p> <p><u>Write:</u> Draft 2, Drama Essay</p>

