

Introduction to British Literature: English 115 Section BE1

"If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book."

– J.K. Rowling

Spring 2019

Building A-Room 325

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30am-10:45am

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3-4pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11-1pm; and by appointment

I. Required Books

Macbeth, William Shakespeare

Frankenstein, Mary Shelley

Dubliners, James Joyce

Project Gutenberg website with free access to many texts throughout the semester

Recommended Books

*The Bedford Glossary of Literary Terms**, third edition, Ross Murfin and Supruia M. Ray, Bedford/ St Martin's, Boston

*No Fear Shakespare, Macbeth** (has standard English alongside Shakespeare's)

II. Course Objectives:

This class is designed to introduce you to British literature and the ways to interpret a range of works within their historical and cultural contexts. This class will also ask you to pose scholarly arguments about a work's various meanings with interesting and thorough analysis. You will learn how to close-read a text and you will apply different methods of analysis to your own critical arguments on a text. You will also become better acquainted with how English majors communicate their ideas to one another, therefore we will be learning the jargon along the way, incorporating new terms into your vocabulary as we read plays, novels, and poetry.

III. Course Requirements: Grade Breakdown

This class expects you to take your reading and writing seriously so you should be aware of the high expectations I will be placing on your analysis of texts. You will be given a rubric that gives a detailed explanation for what I look for in all the assignments and I will be available throughout the semester to discuss your work one-on-one. Be warned, I am looking for logic and creativity when it comes to argument and analysis. I also expect you to know the texts in detail and will give quizzes, a midterm, and

a final that will test your knowledge of our readings. I also want your participation and attendance and have set up the class to make sure all your voices are heard throughout the semester.

Tests and Quizzes:

Quizzes: 10%

Midterm: 15%

Final Exam: 25%

Participation and Homework:

Attendance and Contribution to Blackboard Discussions: 10%

Response Papers: 15%

Presentations: 10%

Forum Questions and Triple-Entry Notebook: 15%

IV. Course Requirements: Explanation of Assignments

1. **Quizzes.** You will be given twelve quizzes throughout the semester. They will test your knowledge of the reading you've done for that week's work along with the literary terms assigned for that day. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. You will not be able to make up these quizzes if you miss class. 9 quizzes are listed on our course schedule. There will be three pop quizzes.
2. **Midterm.** The midterm will cover all the reading and lecture notes from the first day of class till the last week of March. It will include multiple choice, true and false, matching, a couple short answers, and an understanding of terms, the notes from lectures, along with a detailed knowledge of the works you've read up until that point.
3. **Final Exam.** The final exam will be an extended version of the midterm, covering everything we've read in the class. There will be a two day review session at the end of the year.
4. **Participation.** Your involvement in this class is crucial for you to succeed. I expect everyone to contribute to discussion by either talking in class or using the online forums. I recognize that there are shy people so I will often break us into smaller groups on certain days. Keep in mind that merely pontificating your opinions does not necessarily equal good participation. If you are disruptive, rude, bombastic, or dismissive of other people's ideas, I will count that as bad participation for the day. Another aspect of participation is whether you actually show up for class. **You are allowed to miss two days without penalty to your participation grade.** Keep in mind that I still will **not** allow you to make up in-class assignments (quizzes/ in-class writing assignments) or send in the email question late. **If you miss more than two classes, your**

participation will go down ½ a letter grade (i.e., A to A-) for each missed class thereafter. I have little tolerance for students who are late for class. If you are consistently late for class (more than three times) it will start to affect your participation grade. If I see you on your cell phone during class I will deduct 1/3 off your participation for that day (if it occurs three times, you have a missed class—so keep that in mind for the big picture).

5. **Response Papers.** You will need to write a total of **three 2-3 page response papers** throughout the semester. Your response paper must consider an analytical question taken from class, forum discussions, or group discussions. There are a number of components that go into writing a polished argument about a piece of literature. This class will emphasize reading stories, novels, poetry, and plays within different critical constructs. I will expect analysis rather than conjecture, your ideas rather than your opinions, and what you think of a given text as opposed to your personal feelings.
6. **Presentations.** We will break into smaller groups and act out scenes from *Macbeth* at the end of the semester. Each group will have a director and actors to coordinate the scene. The presentations will be graded in terms of how your interpretation of the play creates a new and interesting reading of the literature.
7. **Forum Questions and Triple-Entry Notebook.** I will also expect you to send questions via Blackboard about the texts we read each day we have a new reading assignment. These interpretive questions will be counted towards your participation and act as a good equalizer for the quiet students. You will be given detailed directions on how to write a strong question for analysis of texts.

Blackboard questions are **due before 8 am** on the days marked in our schedule. You are given one amnesty for a missing Blackboard question.

The “Triple-Entry Notebook” is another way to ensure your understanding of the difficult aspects within the stories, poems, plays, and novels we will be reading throughout the semester. This activity asks you to consider what you found difficult within a passage/quote and to explain what you think the meaning of the passage is/how it relates to the rest of the text AND to then consider why you might have had difficulty with the text.

V. My Expectations:

There are a couple things you should know about my expectations for you as a student. I expect active students who want to learn. Use proper email-etiquette. If you miss anything due to absences I prefer that you contact one of your fellow students rather than emailing me and asking “did I miss anything important in class today?” So avoid this question or at least redirect towards another student. I will expect everyone to exchange email addresses and/or Wechat information with at least two other students and to contact them whenever class is missed. You have **two excused absences**. Use them wisely. I do not give full credit to late assignments. If something is turned in one day past the due date, it will be marked as a C, two days late, a D, etc. If you need to talk to me about confusion over the class or assignments, meet with me during office hours or make an appointment.

VI. Academic Integrity: The University of Illinois explains its own expectations for academic integrity in Article 1, Part 4 of the University Student Code. According to the code, using words or ideas from another source as if they were your own is plagiarism, a violation of academic integrity. Submitting your own work for more than one course without acknowledgment can also constitute plagiarism. Ignorance of the code is not an excuse, so if you have questions about the definition of plagiarism, please consult the code at the following web address: <http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/>.

I will be looking at the first drafts and your process along the way so it will be painfully obvious if you are writing ideas that are not your own. Using MLA format effectively should help you keep your sources cited correctly. Let me know if you're concerned about the proper way to cite a source. Something to keep in mind: it's always better to over-cite than to under-cite a source.

VII. Accommodations for students with disabilities: Disability accommodation: If you need special accommodations to succeed in this class, please tell me as soon as possible. If you need to contact DRES, their phone number is 333-4603 and their site is www.disability.uiuc.edu