

Block 3: 2016: English 201: Introduction to Literary Studies

Professor Leslie Kathleen Hankins

Office Hours: 3-4 Friday at the Van Etten Lacey House coffeeshop, and by appointment.

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The syllabus is in 2 separate documents: [Overview Syllabus](#) & [Schedule Syllabus](#)



Inspiration for the Course: Quotations from our texts:

“For though reading seems so simple—a mere matter of knowing the alphabet—it is indeed so difficult that it is doubtful whether anybody knows anything about it. Paris is the capital of France; King John signed the Magna Charta; those are facts; those can be taught; but how are we to teach people so to read *Paradise Lost* as to see that it is a great poem, or *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* so as to see that it is a good novel? How are we to learn the art of reading for ourselves? Without attempting to lay down laws upon a subject that has not been legalized, I will make a few suggestions, which may serve to show you how not to read, or to stimulate you to think out better methods of your own.”

“How Should One Read a Book?” Virginia Woolf (1926)

. . . the ‘core’ activity of English, which is reading; we learn to read the lines, and then between the lines, and then beyond the lines.

English in Practice. Peter Barry

So what is theory? Four main points have emerged:

1. Theory is interdisciplinary—discourse with effects outside an original discipline.
2. Theory is analytical and speculative—an attempt to work out what is involved in what we call text or language or writing or meaning or the subject.
3. Theory is a critique of common sense, of concepts taken as natural.
4. Theory is reflexive, thinking about thinking, enquiry into the categories we use in making sense of things, in literature and in other discursive practices.

As a result, theory is intimidating.

Literary Theory, Jonathan Culler

Texts: Specified editions are required

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*.

Barry, Peter. *English in Practice: In Pursuit of English Studies*. 2nd edition.

Dickens, Charles. *A Christmas Carol*. Edited by Richard Kelly. Broadview Press.

Van Etten, Winifred. "The Cheerful Idiot." 1930.

Woolf, Virginia. *Jacob's Room* & *A Room of One's Own*.

FIRE!! Devoted to Younger Negro Artists (facsimile little magazine) 1926.

Edson, Margaret. *W;t: A Play*. Pulitzer prize winner, 1999.

Sun-mi Hwang *The Hen Who Dreamed She Could Fly*. 2000

Overview Syllabus

201. Introduction to Literary Studies

Introduces students to methods of reading, analyzing, and interpreting literature. Focus on understanding conventions and technical aspects of a literary work and on introduction to multiple genres of literature. Students do close reading and are introduced to additional methods of critical inquiry involving literature. Shows students how to apply critical and literary vocabulary, and to develop writing and research skills. (Humanities)

English 201 is an introduction to the delightful & constantly morphing field of English/Literary Studies, and will consider why we do English studies, what English studies we do, and how we do those English studies. We will ask a lot of “Why?” and “So what?” questions as we engage with the controversies surrounding the discipline. And, we will work to acquire skill sets—such as close reading, critical thinking, and contextual analysis skills—that ground us in the words, ideas, theories and worlds on which English studies are based. We will also immerse ourselves in the challenging and rich world of theory that has shaped Literary Studies for the past several decades. And we will do some creative play with the book arts.

Objectives for the course:

- ❖ provide a nuanced, wide-ranging understanding of the field of English/Literary Studies
- ❖ offer experience in close reading that opens your eyes
- ❖ demonstrate engagement with contextual reading that broadens your view
- ❖ alert you to the complexity of theoretical approaches used in English Studies
- ❖ inspire you with a mélange of various texts from diverse times and places
- ❖ introduce you to key terms in literary study
- ❖ engage you with the adventure of seeking and exploring scholarly materials and research
- ❖ introduce to creative play with the book arts
- ❖ encourage you to become an English major if you so desire

Projects for the Course that work to attain the objectives (with Grade Percentage)

1. Midterm with objective and take home essay section. (20%)
2. Close reading presentation and paper on passage from "The Cheerful Idiot" (20%)
3. Research project: Annotated bibliography and Prospectus for a proposed paper on an focused aspect of *FIRE!!* (Note: you do not complete the paper; you research for it, and write up a proposal about what continued research and work you would do) (20%)
4. Broadside project with artist's statement (this project can be solo or duo). If duo, each person write up their own artist's statement. (20%)
5. Final Exam, with take home essay and objective section. (20%)

EXPECTATIONS IN A NUTSHELL:

On-time, fully prepared all the time attendance is required. If you have any questions or confusion about an assignment, please raise those in class, conferences, or email well before the due date. It is a good idea to make sure you fully understand the assignment well in advance of the day it is due. Because such an interactive course needs to be revised often, please be prepared for changes in the syllabus. Hours 12:30-3 should be kept open for class, and we will have presentations from the Consulting Librarian and Conferences scheduled at other times of day.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS: Please know this information:

See me immediately if you have any problems keeping up with the course. It is more difficult to repair serious gaps as the block goes on.

Read the syllabus thoroughly and often.

You must be present in class daily and for all screenings, presentations, librarian appointments, conferences and workshops in order to pass the course. All work must be handed in on time unless the professor is willing to make specific arrangements with you for an extension. Your classroom presence contributes to your grade; for workshops and discussions, your absence cannot be made up to your peers. You should not have unexcused absences, but be aware that if you do, you may fail the course with more than 2. Late papers may not be accepted, and if accepted may be penalized by at least a letter grade.

I am eager to help you find topics that will be intriguing for you, and welcome conferences. To use the time most effectively, I expect you to be prepared for conferences, to have read the material and to have thought about the projects. You may not have all the answers, but I expect you to have taken some time to formulate a few questions.

Always cite sources and include a Works Cited if you used any sources—and that includes web finds and other students' papers. Learn what correct MLA form is and use it regularly. Plagiarism may result in failing the course. Using a paper you have handed in for another course, or which someone else has handed in for a course counts as plagiarism. You are in this class to work on your writing; using someone else's writing will not help you. Please do explore all the research out there and bring in the materials, but cite them fairly and use them as a springboard to your own ideas, not as a replacement for them.

The Writing Studio Resource and Consulting Librarian Resources

It is a wise practice to use the Writing Studio regularly; make appointments in advance to meet with the Writing Associate often. Tap the resources of our Consulting Librarians! Their expertise is invaluable. Of course, no matter how rushed you are, be considerate of their time and make appointments to allow time for calm work.

GRADE STANDARDS and Guidelines It is important to acknowledge that students earn their grades in college. They are not something the professor "gives" you. You may earn an A or an F or something in between; it depends upon your achievements, which often reflect your effort, though you are not graded for effort alone. You are expected to put solid intense effort into every course on the block plan, and to hand in all work at an acceptable level. You may not pass the course if you are missing ANY assignments. You may fail the course with 2 or more absences. You cannot pass without doing all the work at a passing level, and you are expected to challenge yourself.

You may earn an **F** for poor or missing work, failure to carry your share of the load, plagiarism, absences, etc.

You may earn a **D** for slack or poor work that does not come up to the standard expectations.

You may earn a **C** for doing all the work, understanding all the readings, and contributing solid good work that is at the level of basic expectations for a demanding college course.

You may earn a **B** for very good work that exceeds expectations and demonstrates intellectual engagement, thorough understanding of all the readings and materials, and solid, positive contributions to class.

You may earn an **A** for superb work that excels beyond expectations and demonstrates impressive intellectual engagement, outstanding understanding of all readings and materials, and creative and dazzling initiative.

Information on general Cornell College policies & English 201:

1.
 - a. Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading "Academic Honesty."

2.
 - a. Students with disabilities:
Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see <http://cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml>

Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.

At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Meeting Cornell College Educational Priorities:

The English 201 course meets these objectives and more:

- *In both written and verbal form, effectively articulate, evaluate and critique various production concepts using professional language, theory and standards. (Communication, Reasoning)*
- *To develop and hone skills for reading and writing about challenging texts. (Inquiry, Communication, Reasoning)*
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- *See below for more information*

Educational Priorities	Students will...
Knowledge	integrate and apply knowledge from a focused area of study as well as a broad general education which includes disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences.
	We integrate and apply knowledge from English Studies as a discipline & through interdisciplinary explorations of literature, historical documents, film, and cultural studies.
Inquiry	respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems using information literacy tools, research skills, creative thinking, and analysis.

Educational Priorities	Students will...
	We use information literary tools in collaboration with the Consulting Librarian as we learn to search for scholarly articles on <i>A Room of One's Own</i> and theories and on Disability Studies that we can use to analyze "The Cheerful Idiot". We use creative thinking and analysis in our papers exploring literary texts and contexts. We respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems of industrialism, economic exploitation, and poverty through papers exploring the historical context of Dickens' story.
Reasoning	evaluate evidence; interpret data; and use logical, mathematical, and statistical problem-solving tools.
	We interpret textual data and use logical analysis through close reading strategies that turn a microscope onto the literary text.
Communication	speak and write clearly, listen and read actively, and engage with others in productive dialogue.
	Through group projects and oral presentations of papers, we hone skills of speaking and writing clearly, listening and reading actively, and engaging with others in productive dialogue.
Intercultural Literacy	connect with diverse ideas and with people whose experiences differ from their own and that may be separated from them by time, space, or culture.
	Through engaging with texts and contexts from 19 th century London, we explore the social milieu of that industrial landscape, one we can relate to broader global issues in the marketplace today. Through our immersion with the African-American literary magazine from the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, we learn about a rich cultural moment in African American history, art, music, film and literature. Disability Studies offer a lens into diversity.
Ethical Behavior	recognize personal, academic, and professional standards and act with integrity.
	Through our immersion in the play <i>W;t</i> , which probes the ethics of medical care and grapples with issues of integrity and suffering, we deepen our awareness of profession standards and complex ethical issues.

Educational Priorities	Students will...
Citizenship	collaborate with others and contribute in their communities and the larger world.
	Group project build skills in collaboration that will bear fruit in future workplaces and roles as citizens
Vocation	discover and prepare for the range of opportunities and challenges that await them beyond their college experience.
	Forging an intellectual community and working with others in productive ways build key skills. Likewise, using independent problem-solving and task-management to design and focus papers prepares students to take charge of their education and will be useful in the work future.
Well-Being	respect the ways physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being may contribute to a balanced life.
Vocation	discover and prepare for the range of opportunities and challenges that await them beyond their college experience.