

ENGLISH 181: WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

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Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:30 Th 12:30-2 and by appointment

Course objectives: This course will teach you how to analyze works of literature from a variety of cultures and historical periods. We will include works by Southern writers to complement the Southern Studies seminar. Your work will include class participation, in-class exercises and quizzes, six essays, a research paper, and a final examination. You will be graded on your ability:

- to write persuasive, clearly-organized essays which demonstrate your mastery of effective argument and your thorough understanding of sentence structure, grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary
- to conduct library research and write a formal research paper in the proper format
- to analyze and explicate literary texts, in both written and oral presentations
- to identify and analyze major literary genres and literary styles
- to identify the biographical, geographical, historical and literary contexts for the works we will read in this course, and to compare and contrast differences between these texts.

Course Requirements:

1) Write five critical essays. On the class meeting **before** writing workshop days, you must bring to class **two copies** of a **complete** draft of your essay. I will not accept outlines or incomplete drafts of your essay. On writing workshop days, you should also be prepared to present a brief oral report on your essay.

2) Write a formal research paper.

3) Participate fully in all classroom work.

4) Complete all other class assignments, including written exercises and quizzes.

There will be no makeups for missed classes.

5) Complete the final examination.

Required:

The Bedford Introduction to Literature. 5th edition

Hurston, Zora Neale. Their Eyes Were Watching God

portfolio folder to hold all of your drafts and papers

Recommended:

The Bedford Handbook

Dictionary (strongly recommended: American Heritage)

Policies:

Attendance: You should be present for every class and prepared to participate. If you are absent, you are responsible for informing yourself about any missed assignments or announcements, and for material covered during that class. All absences should be for good reason; however, you may miss two classes without explanation. I will lower your grade for every unexcused absence after these two. Excessive absences (more than five) may be cause for dropping you from the class.

Tardiness: I expect you to be on time for every class.

Classroom Demeanor: No eating, sleeping or private conversations. I expect you to show respect to me and to your fellow students. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave.

Class Participation: This will count for 15% of your grade. For full credit, you will need to attend every class ready to participate. This means not just responding when called on, but coming to class with questions from the reading and topics for discussion, responding to other students' comments on the text, and taking active responsibility for the liveliness and pertinence of discussion.

Plagiarism: In this course, as in all other courses, you are bound by the Honor Code. Therefore, the work you submit for this class must be your own. If you use any outside sources in your writing for this course, you must acknowledge them by using the MLA system of documentation, which is presented in detail in *The Bedford Handbook*. **All Websites or other Internet sources must be acknowledged and documented.** If you have any questions regarding the Honor Code as it applies to this course, please consult me or pages 94-97 of the Oxford College catalog.

Grade breakdown:

Essays	50%
Research Paper	20%
Class Participation	15%
Final Exam	15%

All grades for this course will be recorded using the plus/minus scale described on page 34 of the Oxford College catalog.

Outline of Topics to be covered:

August 31	Introduction and Objectives
September 3	Labor Day
September 5	Fiction and Writing About Fiction Reading: Hawthorne "Young Goodman Brown" 310 Alice Munro "An Ounce of Cure" 434 Writing About Fiction 40-59
Sept 7	Reading: "Eveline" 512. Drafts of Essay #1 due in class
Sept 10	Writing Workshop
Sept 12	Essay #1 due. Reading: Poetry's Appeal to the Senses 752-757; be ready to discuss "Poem" 753 "Root Cellar" 756 "Blackberry Eating" 832
Sept 14	Figures of Speech 775-779 and "a woman is not a potted plant" 700 "The Flea" 1090
Sept 17	"Writing About Poetry" 710-716 "We Real Cool" 743
Sept 19	"Diction" 717-722 "Dulce et Decorum Est" 763
Sept 21	"Diction and Tone in Four Love Poems" 728-736 Draft of Essay 2 due in class
Sept 24	Writing Workshop
Sept 26	Essay #2 due. Reading: <u>Their Eyes Were Watching God</u> .
Sept 28-Oct 12	<u>Their Eyes Were Watching God</u>
Oct 10	Topics and Sources due for Research paper
Oct 15	Fall Break
Oct 17	Drafts of Essay #3 due
Oct 19	Writing Workshop
Oct 22	Essay #3 due.
Oct 22-Nov 2	Drama: <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>
Nov 5-7	<u>The Glass Menagerie</u>
Nov 9	Workshop
Nov 12-21	The Research Paper. We will work on using sources, outlines, revision during this time. Essay #4 due Nov 12
Nov 14-21	Writing In Other Disciplines
Nov 19	Outline/partial draft of research paper due.
Nov 21	Writing in Other Disciplines
Nov 22-24	Thanksgiving Break

Nov 26	Workshop on Research paper
Nov 28-30	Southern Literature
Dec 3	Southern Literature
	Research paper due
Dec 7	Essay #5 due/Southern Literature
Dec 10	Review

Final Exam: Thursday, Dec 13th, 2-5 PM