

English 181 -- Writing About Literature
Fall 2005
MWF 12:50-1:40
and TTH 10:00-11:15

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Language 103
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Office Hours: MWF 1:40-3:00 and by appointment

Required Texts: *An Introduction to Poetry*, Kennedy and Gioia; *efictions*, Hawley; materials on ereserve and learnlink; undetermined novel and plays

Objectives: This course is designed to introduce you to reading and writing about literature. You will learn terms and concepts that will help you understand and interpret poetry, fiction, and drama, and you will practice using those terms and concepts in formal writing assignments.

Attendance: Attendance in this course is essential for a successful performance. There is no absence policy; however, the daily reading quizzes cannot be made up and will act as an attendance policy. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. How you use your absences is up to your discretion. If students are consistently absent from class, I reserve the right to institute an absence policy.

Deadlines for Assignments: Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any late assignments will lose 1/3 a letter grade for each day (not class period) they are late.

Plagiarism: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented using MLA format. Your name on any assignment submitted in this class indicates that you abide by the Oxford College Honor Code, that you have neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work, and that the work is totally your own and has been written exclusively for this course. It is your responsibility to understand the Honor Code. You can read the Honor Code information in the Oxford College Catalog.

Requirements:

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| - Close reading of the literature | - Research paper of 7- 8 pages |
| - Class participation | - One midterm Exam |
| - Daily Reading Quizzes | - One Final Exam |
| - 6 Rhetorical Analyses: 4 two-page and 2 four-page | (approximately 25-30 pages of writing) |

Format For Papers: All final essays must be typed either on a typewriter or on a word processor. They must be double-spaced and stapled. I will not accept folded or paper-clipped papers. In the top left-hand corner of the front page, place your name on the first line, my name on the second line, and the date on the third line. All essays must have titles.

Rhetorical Analyses: These are short typed papers on the readings. You should have a clear argument articulated in a thesis, organized logically, and well-supported with specific references to the texts. You should spend only one to two sentences summarizing the text, one to two sentences explaining what you plan to argue, and the rest of the paper making a short and concise critical analysis of the text. These are designed to make writing the larger paper easier and more familiar. You should use no secondary sources on these assignments, and you should use parenthetical documentation when you quote from the primary source.

Quizzes: We will have unannounced daily reading quizzes, so keep up with the reading. You will take the quiz in the first five minutes of class. There will be no make-up quizzes.

Final Grades will be based on the following percentages:

- 30% 6 Rhetorical Analyses
- 15% Daily Reading Quizzes
- 15% Midterm Exam
- 20% Research Paper
- 20% Final Exam

Other things to know:

I do not allow cell phones in class. Make sure your phone is turned off or that you leave it at home. If your phone goes off in class, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent for the day.

Throw nothing away.

If I am late and there is no notice at the door, you should wait fifteen minutes before leaving. Prepare the next day's assignments for the next meeting.

I reserve the right to amend or modify anything on this statement by means of future hand-outs.

Itinerary

Th 9/1 Introduction

T 9/6 IP: Reading a Poem (3-18) and Listening to a Voice (21-47); especially Browning, Williams, Auden, Owen; Words (53-79) and Saying and Suggesting (80-93); esp. Williams, Graves, Sandburg, Herrick, Cummings

Th 9/8 IP: Imagery (94-112); esp. Pound, Bishop, Hopkins; plus Hughes "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (421)

T 9/13 IP: Figures of Speech (118-140); esp. Shakespeare, Dickinson; plus Keats "Ode on Melancholy" (on conference) IP: Song (141-164); esp. Robinson, Simon, Randall, Smith, Auden, Dylan, Anonymous; plus Hughes "The Weary Blues" (423); Writing About a Poem (616-632); **RA #1 (2 pages)**

Th 9/15 IP: Sound and Rhythm (165-211); esp. Hopkins, Yeats, Stillman, Brooks, Hughes

T 9/20 IP: Closed Form (212-236); esp. Millay; Open Form (237-257); IP: Symbol (259-276); plus Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (501), Donne "The Flea" (467) and "Valediction" (468), Dickinson "Because I Could Not Stop for Death" (407)

Th 9/22 IP: Myth and Narrative (278-295); esp. Yeats, Wordsworth; plus Hardy "Hap" (488) and "The Convergence of the Twain" (486) **RA #2 (2 pages) on Shakespeare's "Sonnet 20" (on conference)**

T 9/27 IP: Poetry and Personal Identity (306-327); plus Harlem Renaissance poets (on conference) IP: Herrick "To the Virgins" (495) and Marvell "To His Coy Mistress" (512);

Th 9/29 IP: Recognizing Excellence (370-394); esp. McKuen, Stafford, Yeats, Shelley, Shakespeare; What is Poetry (396-400) **RA #3 (2 pages)**

T 10/4 IP: Parody (336-343); Arnold, "Dover Beach" (IP: 445); Hecht, "Dover Bitch," De Vries, "To His Importunate Mistress," Skirrow, "Ode on a Grecian Urn Summarized," Koch, "Variations on a Theme by William Carlos Williams" (all on the conference); Critical Approaches to Literature (658-692)

Th 10/6 **Midterm Exam**

T 10/11 **Mid-semester Break**

All Stories from *efictions*: The Short Story: An Anthology, unless otherwise specified

Th 10/13 Chopin (1-4); Maupassant (5-12); handout on “Questions for Reading Critically”

T 10/18 Jewett (229-236); Wright (285-295)

Th 10/20 Vonnegut (63-68); Jackson (81-88)

T 10/25 O’Connor (25-40 and 49-62); **RA #4 Due**

Th 10/27 Walker (103-110); Faulkner (215-228)

T 11/1 Card, *Ender’s Game*

Th 11/3 Card, *Ender’s Game*

T 11/8 **Library Day**

Th 11/10 Card, *Speaker For the Dead*

T 11/15 Card, *Speaker*; **RA #5 Due**

Th 11/17 Wilde (195-200); Saki (255-260)

T 11/22 Welty (155-164); Poe (165-172)

Th 11/24 **Thanksgiving Holiday**

T 11/29 **Research Paper Final Draft Due**; Allen (on ereserve)

Th 12/1 Camus (13-24); Faulkner (41-48)

T 12/6 O’Brien (on ereserve) Read in this order: 1. “How to Tell a True War Story,” 2. “The Man I Killed,” 3. “Ambush,” and 4. “Good Form”; **RA #6 Due**

Th 12/8 Carver (237-254); Forrester (on ereserve)

T 12/13 **Research Paper Draft due; Peer Reviews**

W 12/14 **Reading Day**

Th 12/15 **Final Exam 2:00-5:00pm**

Rhetorical Analysis Assignments

RA #1 due Tuesday 9/13

Read the poem “The Fish” by Mary Oliver (attached to this document) and reread “The Fish” by Elizabeth Bishop (in your books). These two poems have similar themes and subjects but with major differences in symbolism, description, and narrative. Discuss the similarities and differences in these two approaches to catching a fish. This paper should not be a simple list of similarities and differences; you **MUST** have a clear thesis and then support it with ample references to the poems themselves. Do not quote more than three lines at a time. Use MLA style for your parenthetical documentation. Use no outside sources; this should represent **YOUR** reading of these poems. The paper must be at least two full pages long, meaning do not include a half a page of heading on page one, and go to the bottom of page two (or beyond).

RA #2 due Thursday 9/22

Read Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 20” (attached to this document). You will explicate this poem. You should have a thesis in which you state what the theme of the poem is, and then you will need to discuss how all the elements of the poem, rhythm, meter, rhyme, symbolism, metaphor, simile, personification, etc., contribute to that theme. You will also need to scan the poem’s rhythm and meter, as this will be important to the poem’s meaning. Your paper should not be a listing of different elements. Make sure your paper is clearly organized and guided by your thesis statement. You do not need to cover every single element listed above if it is not significant to your thesis. Remember to look up any words you do not know. Same length guidelines as RA #1. No outside sources.

RA #3 due Thursday 9/29

Read Herrick’s “To the Virgins” and Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress” (both in your books). Both are carpe diem poems; decide which poem provides the more convincing argument, and then make an argument supporting your position. You will need a clear thesis and support it with evidence from the poems. Same length guidelines as RA’s #1 and #2. No outside sources.

The Fish by Mary Oliver

The first fish
I ever caught
would not lie down
quiet in the pail
but flailed and sucked
at the burning
amazement of the air
and died
in the slow pouring off
of rainbows. Later
I opened his body and separated
the flesh from the bones
and ate him. Now the sea
is in me. I am the fish, the fish
glitters in me; we are risen, tangled together, certain to fall
back to the sea. Out of pain,
and pain, and more pain
we feed this feverish plot, we are nourished
by the mystery.

SONNET 20
by William Shakespeare

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all 'hues' in his controlling,
Much steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.