

ENGLISH 181: WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

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Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:00 , Tuesday 1-2 and by appointment

Course objectives: This course will be a Theory Practice/Service Learning course. We will be mentoring fifth grade students at Palmer Stone Elementary School as they work on their writing, reading and research skills. Through these efforts, we will also be learning about the barriers to successful writing for these students, the significance of mastering writing skills, and the role of writing in relation to educational development. One of your essays will be based on your experience tutoring the fifth grade students; you may also choose to write your research paper on children, development and writing. This unit of the course will give us an opportunity to consider the importance of writing not only within our academic setting but also the civic importance of teaching reading and writing to all Americans.

We will also analyze works of literature from a variety of cultures and historical periods. Your work will include class participation, in-class exercises and quizzes, five 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 mentor the Palmer Stone students respectfully
- to help your student identify and make progress on his or her writing difficulties

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, including class sessions at Palmer Stone Elementary.

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. Excessive absences (more than five) may be cause for dropping you from the class. Please make every effort to attend sessions at Palmer Stone Elementary; our success will depend on everyone's full participation in the mentoring sessions.

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 10% 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	10%
Mentoring	5%
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.

Tentative Outline of Topics to be covered:

August 29	Introduction and Objectives
September 3	Fiction and Writing About Fiction Reading: Hawthorne "Young Goodman Brown" 310 Alice Munro "An Ounce of Cure" 434 Writing About Fiction 40-59
Sept 5	Reading: "Eveline" 512 "Popular Mechanics" 286. 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 Figures of Speech 775-779 and "a woman is not a potted plant" 700 "The Flea" 1090 "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" (1184)
Sept 17	"Writing About Poetry" 710-716 "We Real Cool" 743 "The Double-Play" (1187) Sonnets 888-891, Sestina 896-898 "Diction" 717-722 "Dulce et Decorum Est" 763 Draft of Essay 2 due in class
Sept 19	Writing Workshop
*Week of Sept 23-26	Essay #2 due September 23. Reading: <u>Their Eyes Were Watching God.</u>
*Week of Oct 1-2	<u>Their Eyes Were Watching God</u>
*Week of Oct 8-10	<u>Their Eyes Were Watching God</u>
Oct 15	Fall Break—no class
Oct 17	Drafts of Essay #3 due
*Oct 22	Writing Workshop/Begin <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>
Oct 24	Essay #3 due.
*Oct 29-Oct 31	Drama: <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>
*Nov 5-Nov 7	<u>The Glass Menagerie</u>
*Nov 12	Workshop
*Nov 12-14	The Research Paper. We will work on using sources, outlines, revision during this time. Essay #4 due Nov 14
*Nov 19-21	Final meetings/discussion on tutoring at Palmer Stone
Nov 21	Outline/partial draft of research paper due.

Nov 26	Workshop on Research paper
Nov 27-29	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 3-5	Southern Literature
Dec 5	Research paper due
Dec 10	Essay #5 due/Southern Literature
Dec 10	Review

* During this period, we will be scheduling classes at Palmer Stone, so this part of the schedule will change as we firm up specific dates for the Theory/Practice sessions.