

## ENGLISH 181.1J: WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

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Office Hours: MTWTh 10-11 and by appointment

Course objectives: This course will teach you how to analyze works of literature in a variety of genres. In our reading of Hemingway, Woolf, Lahiri and other writers we will focus on two themes: the construction of identity and the purpose of education. Your work will include class participation, in-class exercises and quizzes, three essays, six response papers, 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 research paper which shows a command of research skills, argumentative writing and proper research 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 two critical essays, 3-5 pages long. You will need to bring a complete draft of your essay for each writing workshop day. 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 five short (1-2 page) response papers.

- 2) Write a formal research paper, 6-10 pages long.

- 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:

Adiga The White Tiger

Hemingway In Our Time

Lahiri Interpreter of Maladies

Woolf A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas

And a portfolio folder to hold all of your drafts and papers

#### 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. You have a maximum of three absences, excused or unexcused; if you become so ill that you need to miss more than a week and a half of class, we will need to make arrangements for you to catch up your work. In that case, I will need some kind of documentation of your illness.

**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 20% 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. Quizzes, in-class assignments, learnlink conference contributions and short writing assignments will all be part of your participation grade.

**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 MLA Handbook and *The Bedford Handbook*, both available in the library. **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 the Oxford College catalog.

Final Grade breakdown (I use the +/- scale):

Essay	10%
Response papers:	25%
Midterm	10%
Research Paper	20%
Class Participation	20%
Final Exam	15%

#### **Tentative Outline of Topics to be covered:**

Jan 14	Introduction and Objectives; Storytelling; in-class writing assignment
Jan 18	Martin Luther King holiday
Jan 19	Modernism and Identity: Reading "On The Quai at Smyrna" from <u>In Our Time</u> .
Jan 21	Reading: <u>In Our Time</u> . <b>First 1-2 page response due</b>

Jan 26	Reading <u>In Our Time</u> .
Jan 28	<u>In Our Time</u> ; <b>Second 1-2 response paper due</b>
Feb 2	Virginia Woolf short stories (handout)
Feb 4	The role of education: Woolf <u>A Room of One's Own</u>
Feb 9-11	<u>A Room of One's Own</u> Feb 11: <b>Third 1-2 page response due</b>
Feb 16-23	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Identity: Lahiri <u>Interpreter of Maladies</u> .
Feb 25	<b>Essay #1 draft workshop day</b>
Mar 2	<b>Revised Essay #1 due</b> with self-analysis of strengths/weaknesses in writing skills
Mar 4	Midterm
March 8-12 Spring Break	
Mar 16	Role of education: <u>Three Guineas</u>
Mar 18	<u>Three Guineas</u> ; Malcolm X (handout)
Mar 23	<b>Fourth response paper due</b>
Mar 25	Library research day
Mar 30-Apr 1	Poetry TBA
Apr 1	<b>Research proposals and three sources due</b>
Apr 6	Adiga <u>The White Tiger</u>
Apr 8	<b>Annotated Bibliography due</b>
Apr 13	<b>Research paper workshop day</b>
Apr 15	<u>The White Tiger</u>
Apr 20	<b>Research paper due</b>
Apr 22	<b>Fifth response paper due with portfolio</b>
Apr 27	Review for final