

English 220.04: Intro. to Writing About Literature
Spring 2019
M/T/W/TH 3:20-4:54
Room: 408 Hunter West

Instructor: James Regan
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Office Hours: W, 5:00-6:00pm
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Course Description

With an emphasis on close reading, English 220 is intended to develop in students the analytical and interpretive skills necessary for both written and verbal critical response to literature that is firmly grounded in the text. It also establishes a common knowledge base, however minimal, in literature in English, and it equips students with the vocabulary and techniques for describing and analyzing literary works, with an emphasis on developing critical writing skills specific to literary analysis. In addition, the course develops in students an appreciation and understanding of the aesthetic qualities of literature, as well as an awareness that literature is part of a larger ongoing cultural, social, and historical dialogue that informs, influences, and inspires our experience.

While this is not a survey, the course will introduce you to a wide range of literary forms, and periods, and, as a result help you to cultivate an appreciation and understanding for the aesthetic qualities of literature. We will also examine the cultural, social, and historical influences that shaped these works and the influences they continue to have on our current society. These intersections of the historical moment with our present offer us perhaps the best opportunity to examine our own experience and, thus, to fully enter a text.

We will be reading a lot.

Course Goals

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Write analytical essays in all three literary genres, a précis and annotated bibliography of critical works, and a research paper of 7-8 pages that demonstrates close reading skills, the ability to create a clear thesis statement, and the ability to develop a well organized argument based on that thesis through critical reasoning and evidence from both the literary text(s) and critical sources.
2. Discuss fiction, poetry, and Shakespearean drama verbally through the use of close reading skills and, where appropriate, basic literary terminology.
3. Demonstrate some familiarity with literary criticism in class discussion and writing, or both.
4. Demonstrate the ability to compare and/or contrast two literary works in a final exam essay.
5. Provide constructive critical comments on classmates' written work through peer review and group discussion.

Required Texts (can be purchased from the Hunter College Bookstore)

Joyce, James. *Dubliners*. New York: Penguin Books, 1996. Print.
ISBN 13: 978-0140247749

Price: ~\$15

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. New York: Penguin, 1998. Print.

ISBN 13: 978-0451526922

Price: ~\$7

You can use the following link to purchase these from the bookstore.

<http://hunter.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/1986776/>

Course Requirements

We will be examining literature closely—practicing focused, critical reading and thinking—and in addition to the primary texts listed above you will also read a selection of literary criticism. Some of these essays appear in the primary texts, and those that don't I will post on Blackboard. Whether we are using documents posted on Blackboard or not, you will be responsible for checking the class page every day for announcements and updates. If we have a particularly spirited class discussion, I may post a follow-up question on the discussion forum in which case your participation will be evaluated as if you were in class.

Your participation in-class is critical not only to your own success but to that of the class as a whole. I will assign in-class writing exercises and group work, but most importantly each day you will be responsible for preparing *at least* one discussion question in response to the assigned reading (you will submit these via TurnItIn before class begins). Because your ability write well is directly informed by your ability to read and think critically, we will have class time dedicated to peer-review, during which you will articulate a response to the ideas of your classmates, and identify ways they might strengthen their work. Everything you submit must be in proper MLA format.

You can find copies of the syllabus and any formal writing assignments on Blackboard.

Grading Policy

The formal assignments for the semester are as follows:

(3) 1-2 page response papers, two of which will be a précis of a critical article	10%
(1) 3-4 page critical essay	20%
(1) 7-8 page research paper	30%
Midterm/Final Exam	10%
Class Participation	30%

*Class participation includes contributions to class discussion, group work, and bringing reading questions to each class session. Your participation is evaluated based on both the quantity *and* quality of participation.

Class Policies

Attendance/Tardiness: At Hunter, you cannot receive a failing grade simply because you do not attend. Failing to attend class, however, will substantially lower your participation grade and likely affect the way that you integrate the information you are learning and, thus, how effectively you can apply it to the assignments throughout the semester.

Late Work: I do not accept late work of any kind—email, Blackboard, or essay submissions. All work should be submitted via TurnItIn prior to the beginning of class on the day it is due. All formal writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced, with standard margins and in twelve point font (either Times New Roman or Ariel).

Electronic devices: Computers/laptops/iPads or other similar tablets are permitted for note taking. All other devices (including cell phones) are prohibited.

Email Policy: I am happy to answer questions or discuss your ideas further outside of class. This is, however, a professional environment so when emailing me be sure to compose your messages accordingly. If you miss class, do not contact me to find out what you have missed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as word-for-word copying without acknowledgment of the language or ideas of another writer. Plagiarism is also putting someone else's ideas into your own words without attribution, and using language in paraphrasing or summarizing that is too close to the author's, even if it is attributed. Obviously, having another person write or dictate all of part of one's composition is forbidden. In addition, a writer should copy no printed passage, no matter how brief, without acknowledging its source and either placing it in quotation marks or setting it aside as a blocked quotation. This applies to even the briefest of phrases if they are truly individual or distinctive.

Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The college is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

Academic Accommodation

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call (212-772-4875)/TTY (212-650-3230).

How to be successful in this class:

1. Come to class on time and prepared to participate. Participation includes having assignments completed, bringing needed materials, contributing to discussion in a positive manner, and working on what is assigned during the class period.
2. Keep this syllabus and any changes made to it on hand. Know when writing assignments are due. Know when reading should be completed.
3. Keep all of your work. Do not throw anything away.
4. Ask questions. It is your responsibility to find out what you need to know in order to be successful in your academic endeavors, as well as in the other areas of your life. Check the class Blackboard site at least once a week.

If any problems should arise, you may contact me (or I may contact you) to discuss them. If a problem seems too difficult for us to resolve, mediation is available through the English Department.

Course Schedule

***Homework is due on the day it is listed in the Course Schedule before class begins (via TurnItIn).**

****Note: This schedule is subject to change**

Week One

Wednesday 5/29	Introduction; Syllabus; James Joyce: "Araby"
Thursday	James Joyce: "The Dead"

Week One

Monday 6/3	Leonard: "Dubliners" James Joyce: "The Dead"
Tuesday	James Joyce: "The Dead" Précis Due
Wednesday	James Joyce: "The Dead"
Thursday	James Joyce: "The Dead" 1st Response Paper Due

Week Two

Monday 6/10	<i>Hamlet</i> Intro to Shakespeare/Elizabethan Dramatic Conventions
Tuesday	<i>Hamlet</i> Heilbrun, "The Character of Hamlet's Mother" Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems"
Wednesday	<i>Hamlet</i> Précis due
Thursday	<i>Hamlet</i> Research paper assigned

Week Three

Monday 6/17

Hamlet

Tuesday

Hamlet

Wednesday

“Sonny’s Blues”

Thursday

“Sonny’s Blues”

Research paper proposal due

Week Four

Monday 6/24

“Sonny’s Blues”

Research Paper Introduction Due (in class workshop)

Tuesday

“Sonny’s Blues”

Wednesday

“Sonny’s Blues”

Thursday

“Sonny’s Blues”

Preliminary bibliography due

Week Five

Monday 7/1

Explicating a Poem

Sonnets:

Shakespeare, “Sonnets 64, 116, 146”

Donne, “Holy Sonnets”

Paredes “The Gulf”

Villanelles:

Plath “Mad Girl’s Love Song”

Thomas “Do Not Go Gentle”

Yau “Chinese Villanelle”

Tuesday

Wordsworth: “I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud,” “The World Is Too Much With Us”

Dickinson: “My Life Closed Twice” “My Triumph Lasted Till The Drums”

Poetry: Close Reading

Images and Their Uses

Wednesday

Yeats: “The Second Coming,” “A Prayer For My Daughter,” “Sailing to Byzantium”

First draft of research paper due (peer review)

Thursday

NO CLASS

Week Six

Monday 7/8

Eliot: “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”

Tuesday

Lorde: “Power”

Hughes: “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”

“Let America Be America Again”

Wednesday

Whitman: “Song of Myself” (*excerpts*)

Final Exam:

Day and time to be announced.

Choice of writing on Sylvia Plath’s “Daddy” or Emiri Baraka’s “Preface to a Twenty-Volume Suicide Note.”

