

English 215: Foundations of Literary Study: Genre (Section 02)

Winter 2016 MW 4:30-5:45 AuSable Hall 2314

Instructor: Dr. Ilse Schweitzer VanDonkelaar
 Email: schweitl@gvsu.edu (give me 24 hours to respond)
 Office: Lake Huron Hall 237
 Office Hours: MW 11-1 and by appointment

Required Texts:

The Norton Introduction to Literature, Shorter 12th edition, ed. Kelly J. Mays (Norton), ISBN: 978-0393938920

Web access: As this course will be “digitally enhanced,” you will need to have access to Blackboard to complete some readings, quizzes, and to turn in some assignments.

Course Description

In this course, we will read and engage with a variety of literary genres (including fiction, poetry, and drama) within and across a range of historical periods and cultural and national contexts. As we discuss these texts, we will interrogate the defining characteristics of and boundaries between those genres, and discuss how the conventions of literary genre can limit and liberate authors, poets, and other wordsmiths. When possible, we will also investigate movements and forms within genres (magical realism, southern gothic, etc.), newer and emerging genres (e.g. graphic texts), and discuss how new and social media are influencing the literary canon. In addition to learning about genre, we will refresh our knowledge of the formal elements of literature, and will develop skills of close reading, textual support, inter-textual analysis, and critical thinking. Prerequisite: WRT 150.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

1. Be introduced to a variety of literary works in genres of poetry, short fiction, and drama, among others.
2. Discuss the formal elements of prose, poetry, drama, and other (emerging) literary forms; review and expand our basic vocabulary of literary analysis and figurative language.
3. Try out interpretations of texts in a classroom setting and actively participate in dynamic conversations about literature.
4. Demonstrate improvement and revision of writing skills and literary analysis in a series of short papers, reviewing correct MLA-style documentation.

Coursework:

Reading, participation, and class activities: Our class will be discussion-based and fairly light on lecture. You will be expected to complete the reading assignments prior to each class meeting, to attend class regularly, and to contribute to class discussion often. Your comments and questions to some extent determine the shape and direction of the course -- your active engagement will help me to make this class a productive, positive experience for all of us! I will keep track of the quantity and quality of your contributions to discussion, so be sure to *think* and *speak up* often. In-class writing assignments and your contributions to group-work assignments will also count toward the “participation” portion of your grade.

Daily classwork points: For each class meeting, you can earn a possible 4 points for participation. I will award points thus:

0 points -- absence OR student is disengaged with class, unprepared (no text book), or using phone or laptop for activities unrelated to class.

1 point -- student is present, brings book or reading, at times attentive in class.

3 points -- student is present, with text book, attentive, taking notes, perhaps volunteers once in discussion; if working in groups, student contributes to group efforts.

4 points -- student is fully prepared, actively engaged in the class, taking notes and actively participating in discussion; if working in groups, student is actively engaged in group.

arriving more than 10 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes early will automatically earn you a score of 1 point for that day

Writing prompts:

From time to time I will assign writing prompts to lead us into discussion. I will not always collect these for grading. Those that I collect will be scored thusly:

— (minus): Unsatisfactory. Student has put little effort into the response or obviously has not completed the reading or answered the question. Earns 1 point.

√ (check mark): Satisfactory. Student has made a good effort to answer the question, has shown that s/he has completed the reading. Earns 3 points.

+ (plus): Exemplary. Student has answered the question thoroughly, has referred to specific moments or details in the text to support her / his answer, and prompt is well-written. Earns 4 points.

Online assignments:

There will be several days over the course of the semester when we will not meet in person but will instead complete activities on Blackboard. These are noted in the schedule; should weather be bad this semester, I may cancel class and put more lessons online. Online assignments are due by the end of the week.

Short Analysis Papers: Over the course of the semester, you will complete **three** short analysis papers. For each paper, you should choose one text covered in each of our three units (fiction, poetry, drama) and write about 3 pages (do not exceed 4 pages!) about your chosen text. There are several ways to approach these papers... you may choose a short passage or section of the text and perform a close reading of that passage; OR you may write about how one section of the text relates to the larger themes of the work; OR you may choose two texts and compare how authors treat a shared theme, or compare how the authors make use of a certain literary element or kind of figurative language. No matter how you approach your paper, you **must** incorporate material from the text (e.g. quotations!) to support your observations. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each day of late submission and **MUST** be turned in within a week of original due date. Papers should follow MLA format.

Reading Quizzes: Over the course of the semester, you will complete five in-class reading quizzes. These will measure whether you are keeping up with the assigned reading and whether you are thinking about what you are reading. Quiz questions will be in short-answer format; expect 5 questions per quiz with an expectation of 2-3 sentences needed to answer each question. Quizzes will cover all material covered in the preceding weeks (as well as the reading due on that day). **Quizzes cannot be made up.**

Midterm Exam: Held on Wednesday, February 22, during class. Expect exam to include some identification, definition, passage IDs, and short answer questions.

Final Exam: Held on Wednesday, April 27, 4-5:50pm. Exam will likely include some passage identifications, short answer questions, and essay questions. Exam will likely include a take-home essay portion that will be DUE on the day of the final exam.

Grading Breakdown by Assignment:

Classwork (participation / daily writing assignments / online and group work): 25%

Short papers: 30% (10% each)

Reading quizzes: 10% (2% each)

Midterm: 15%

Final exam: 20%

A = 94-100	A- = 90-93	B+ = 87-89	B = 84-86	B- = 80-83	C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76	C- = 70-73	D+ = 67-69	D = 64-66	F = 0-63	

Communication and Blackboard:

Any updates and notices (change of venue, change in assignment, instructor absence, etc.) will go out over email and will be posted on the Blackboard site. PLEASE CHECK EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD REGULARLY! I promise to make my best attempt to get this information to you as soon as possible.

Other Policies...

Respect: The classroom (this includes our online class space!) is a place of respect, civilized discussion, and open-mindedness. We will likely disagree with each other from time to time about literary interpretations (among other things), but we will learn to do so respectfully and sensitively. Please be aware your tone online and in person.

Attendance: is expected. I will take attendance at the start of each class. Arriving more than 10 minutes late (or leaving more than 10 minutes early) will result in a penalty of your classwork points for the day. Arriving more than 20 minutes late will be counted as an absence. ****EVERY** component of your grade draws upon the material we explore in class discussion and in lecture, so be here!** If you miss class, it is YOUR responsibility to find out what content you missed, preferably by first asking your classmates. Any absences beyond three will result in a deduction of 3% from your final grade, *per day*. I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences... if you run into a situation where you must miss multiple classes, talk to me.

Computers and cell phones: **You may use a laptop to take notes**, read the handouts posted on Blackboard, and find information relevant to our discussion. You may NOT use your laptop for Facebooking, watching cat videos, or otherwise wasting time or distracting yourself during class. If this becomes a problem, I will disallow laptops in class for everyone. **No cell phones out during class.** Lectures and class discussions **may not be** recorded in any fashion by students.

Late work: Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date OR when indicated on Blackboard (i.e. for quizzes). One letter grade will be lost for every calendar day that an assignment is late. Class activities and quizzes cannot be made up at a later date.

FERPA: Because of FERPA regulations, I cannot discuss your grade via phone or email. If you would like to discuss your academic standing and progress in this class, I am happy to meet with you during my office hours.

Plagiarism: IF YOU ARE CAUGHT PLAGIARIZING, you will face academic sanctions including possible failure of this course and a letter sent to the appropriate campus offices. We will discuss what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty in this course, but if you have any questions or uncertainty about the issue, PLEASE ASK ME. I'm happy to talk about it.

Students with Disabilities:

If you need academic accommodations because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact Disability Support Resources at 331-2490. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

Course Schedule

****PLEASE REGARD THIS SCHEDULE AS SOMEWHAT FLUID. I may move some readings and assignments around if we fall behind, or due to weather****

M, Jan 11 -- Introductions, syllabus review, close reading activity

W, Jan 13 -- Introduction to Literature and Fiction, “20/20,” selection from *Persepolis* (*Norton Anthology*, pp. 1-31)

M, Jan 18 -- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -- NO CLASS

W, Jan 20 -- Plot and “Sonny’s Blues” (pp. 85-115), “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (pp. 599-605)

M, Jan 25 -- Character (pp. 218-225), “Recitatif” (pp. 238-252), “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (pp. 470-481) **QUIZ**

W, Jan 27 -- Narration and Point of View, “The Cask of Amontillado” (pp. 174-184), “The Yellow Wallpaper” (pp. 526-536)

M, Feb 1 -- Setting (pp. 284-290), “A Pair of Tickets” (pp. 302-316), “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (pp. 405-410)

W, Feb 3 -- “Hills Like White Elephants” and “A Rose for Emily” (pp. 628-638)

M, Feb 8 -- Symbol and Figurative Language, “The Birthmark” (pp. 334-350), “Araby” (pp. 168-173) **QUIZ**

W, Feb 10 -- Initiation Stories, “The Lesson” (pp. 145-152), “A&P” OR “St. Lucy’s Home...”

M, Feb 15 -- “Black Box” (pp. 193-216) **PAPER #1 DUE.**

W, Feb 17 -- “Responding to Poetry” (pp. 712-719), “Speaker: Whose Voice Do We Hear?” (pp. 735-743), “My Last Duchess” (p. 1103), “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (pp. 1110-1113)

M, Feb 22 -- **MIDTERM (will cover short fiction unit)**

W, Feb 24 -- “Situation and Setting” (pp. 761-776)

M, Feb 29 -- “Language: Word Choice and Order” (pp. 822-833), “Digging” (p. 1116) **QUIZ**

W, Mar 2 -- “Visual Imagery and Figures of Speech” (pp. 834-847), “Symbol” (pp. 847-854)

SPRING BREAK

M, Mar 14 -- “Sounds of Poetry” (pp. 863-879), “The Raven” (pp. 1127-1130)

W, Mar 16 -- “Internal Structure” (pp. 897-906); “External Form” (pp. 918-928) **PAPER #2 DUE.**

M, Mar 21 -- “Exploring Gender” (pp. 749-756), “Barbie Doll” (p. 1124) **QUIZ**

W, Mar 23 -- Intro to Drama (pp. 1178-1187), Shakespeare’s life as context (pp. 1288-1294)

M, Mar 28 -- *Hamlet*, acts I & II

W, Mar 30 -- *Hamlet*, act III

M, Apr 4 -- *Hamlet*, act IV **QUIZ**

W, Apr 6 -- *Hamlet*, act V

M, Apr 11 -- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, pp. 1817-1848

W, Apr 13 -- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, pp. 1848-1868 **PAPER #3 DUE.**

M, Apr 18 -- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, pp. 1868-1883

W, Apr 20 -- final thoughts, review, and evaluations.

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, April 27, at 4pm. Exam will cover poetry and drama units. Will include close reading / scanning activities for poetry; passage identifications from dramas; and essay.