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ENG 2205-001: Introduction to Literary Studies

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**Course Description**

This course is designed for students beginning the English major. Together we will consider what it is that serious students of literature do, how we do what we do, and why we do literary studies at all. If you’re just beginning your studies as an English major (which is exactly when you should take this course), you should expect to be challenged as you are introduced to some of the fundamental problems in literary studies—problems of textuality, interpretation, research, and context. Although you have probably taken English classes all your life, those classes were likely not designed for preparing you for advanced literary study. In courses in the major, your professors will expect you to be prepared to use—in almost every class session—interpretive strategies and research tools and techniques that go far beyond what is asked of general education (or high school) students. What these strategies are, how you can deploy them for study and a deeper enjoyment of literary works, are the central topics of this course.

**Course Requirements**

- Essay 1: 15%
- Essay 2: 15%
- Exam 1: 10%
- Exam 2 (cumulative): 15%
- Short Writing, Quizzes: 20%
- Participation: 15%
- Ringuette Cup: 10%

**Course Format & Activities**

This course is primarily a discussion-based course. As such, your success depends upon your active involvement in class discussion and your commitment to careful, close, and sustained reading. Your primary activity in class is twofold: to listen closely to the conversation and engage it actively. Outside of class, your primary activity is to read as much as possible and to prepare for class conversation—which may mean secondary research, looking up words or concepts, preparing response papers, or writing down thoughts and ideas (the latter is particularly good if you’re

**Texts**

- Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland* 1865.
- Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* 1898.
- *E-texts of Selected Prose Fiction and Poetry*

**Plenary Meetings**

Throughout the semester, we will meet for plenary sessions with the other two sections of English 2205. In addition to fostering interaction with other majors and faculty, these sessions help to demonstrate that we’re not alone in what we’re doing in our section of 2205—that you’re part of something larger. We want this course to help you see that the concepts and skills that you will be introduced to are ones that you should use in your other English courses.
Participation ~
Your active participation is required. The focus of this course is on helping you understand the complexity of language and literary works. This requires practice—practice in writing, reading, and discussing. Your questions and insights are vital to creating an intellectual community in the classroom. You should also be prepared for me to call on you frequently for input.

Brief Writings & Quizzes ~
Frequently, you will need to prepare brief writings for class, which are due in class on the assigned date. Such writings are usually related to the text we're reading, but the tasks may vary. I usually collect these writings and assign a plus, check, or minus score (above average, average, below average). Although I expect you to communicate effectively in these writings, you should consider them relatively informal and an opportunity to take some intellectual risks. You should also be prepared for frequent quizzes over the reading material.

Papers ~
Assignment Sheet: For each major project (there are three), I will hand out an assignment sheet, outlining the specific task(s) and due date. Your writing and thinking in these papers should be careful, substantial, and polished; therefore, you should plan on writing a first draft (which, if you're like me, are almost always weak in some way) so you can have an opportunity to revise.

Submitting Papers. Please observe deadlines carefully. Unless you have made prior arrangements with me (or unless it's stipulated in the assignment sheet), you may not turn in an assignment via email.

Late Papers. Major writing projects will be deducted 10% for each calendar day they are late. If you encounter unexpected difficulties in completing your work, please talk to me before the day the assignment is due.

Revision Policy. If you want to revise a writing project, you must get prior approval from me, which you need to do in person. It's best to do this in a conference so we can discuss your paper at length (if necessary). Any revisions (or conferences to revise) must be done within one week of receiving (from me) the graded paper.

Attendance Policy ~
• You need to attend every class session. I abide by the University's definition of an excused absence, and I generally allow two unexcused absences—no questions asked. On the third absence—and for every absence thereafter—I will deduct 5% from your final grade.
• Six or more absences equate to an automatic "F" for the course.
• For any day that you are not in class, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered, new assignments given, changes in the syllabus, or any homework due for the next meeting. Unless the absence is excused, any homework due on a day you were absent may not be turned in late or made up.
• It is also your responsibility to provide the appropriate documentation to verify an excused absence within a week of the absence, which you should do in person, not via email.
• Please do not email me to tell me you were not in class or why. This is best done in person either after the next class or during my office hours.

Conferences ~
The reading and concepts for this course will be challenging at times. Therefore, it is important for you to come to my office and talk to me if you feel you need some extra help or if we don't get a chance to discuss your particular concerns during class time. Also, feel free to talk with me about your writing projects. I will be happy to look over your work or help you brainstorm. No question is too small.
Computer & Classroom Etiquette~
You're welcome to bring your notebook computer to class. However, I ask that you observe common rules of
etiquette and decorum when you use it. In brief, you may use it to take notes or complete an in-class writing
activity. You may not use it for anything not directly related to class work. Also, please turn off (or mute) cell
phones. Out of respect for the class and the integrity of class activities, absolutely no text messaging during class
is allowed.

Academic Honesty ~
Students are of course responsible for knowing Eastern Illinois University's regulations and policies regarding
academic honesty. Plagiarism, even if unknowing or accidental, can result in your failing the course and in further
action by the university. Please note the English Department's statement on plagiarism. Any teacher who
discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/ or thoughts of
another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the
English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty,
up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the
course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. If you have any questions about what constitutes
plagiarism, feel free to ask me to clarify.

Electronic Writing Portfolio ~
This course is a writing-centered course and, as such, your papers satisfy the requirements for the Electronic
Writing Portfolio. If you plan on using work from this course for your EWP, I ask that you complete this before
the last two weeks of the semester.

Students with Disabilities ~
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator
of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
ENG 2205 Syllabus

Week 1:
M Aug 19: Introduction
W Aug 21: *Alice in Wonderland* pp. 1-44;
   **Introductory Plenary Session**, Doudna Lecture Hall (1210 DFAC)
F Aug 23: *Alice in Wonderland* pp. 45-99

Week 2:
M Aug 26: *Through the Looking Glass* pp. 103-119
W Aug 28: *Through the Looking Glass* pp. 120-168
F Aug 30: *Through the Looking Glass* 169-209; **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC**

Week 3:
M Sept 2: No class – Labor Day
W Sept 4: **Plenary Session, 1210**
F Sept 6: Poetry (readings TBA)

Week 4:
M Sept 9: Poetry (readings TBA)
W Sept 11: Poetry (readings TBA)
F Sept 13: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC**

Week 5:
M Sept 16: Poetry (readings TBA)
W Sept 18: Poetry (reading TBA)
F Sept 20: Poetry (reading TBA)

Week 6:
M Sept 23: **Poetry Explications due; Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC**
W Sept 25: *MND* Act I
F Sept 27: *MND* Act II

Week 7:
M Sept 30: *MND* Act III
W Oct 2: *MND* Acts IV and V
F Oct 4: MND Continue Discussion

Week 8:
M Oct 7: *MND* performance work
W Oct 9: Mid-term Exam
F Oct 11: No Class – Fall Break
Week 9:
M Oct 14: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC** MND performances
W Oct 16: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC** MND performances;
*The Turn of the Screw* pp. 22-29
F Oct 18: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC** MND performances;
*The Turn of the Screw* pp. 29-78

Week 10:
M Oct 21: *The Turn of the Screw* pp. 78-120; **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC**
W Oct 23: *The Turn of the Screw* pp. 121-149
F Oct 25: *The Turn of the Screw* pp. 150-186; essay topics discussed in class

Week 11:
M Oct 28: **Essay drafts due**: workshop
W Oct 30: workshop
F Nov 2: workshop

Week 12:
M Nov 4: workshop
W Nov 6: workshop
F Nov 8: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC** (intro to *Geek Love* and essay assignment; **MND** winner announced)
*Turn of the Screw* Essay due

Week 13:
M Nov 11: *Geek Love* pp. 3-73
W Nov 13: *Geek Love* pp. 74-116
F Nov 15: *Geek Love* pp. 117-166

Week 14:
M Nov 18: *Geek Love* pp. 167-256
W Nov 20: *Geek Love* pp. 257-315
F Nov 22: *Geek Love* pp. 316-347
**Ringuette Cup submissions due**

Week 15: (Nov 25-29) No Classes – Thanksgiving Break

Week 16:
M Dec 2: **Plenary Session, 1210 DFAC**; Ringuette Cup winners announced
*Geek Love* essay due. **Discuss final exam.**
W Dec 4: poetry performances
F Dec 6: poetry performances

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, December 10, 10:15-12:15
Nonsense Verse: a form of “light” verse (meaning, comic or witty), usually marked by its rhythmic quality, lack of logic, nonsense words, and/or mixture of foreign words or oxymoronic expressions. Limericks are a form of nonsense verse. Besides Lewis Carroll, other famous writers of nonsense verse include, among others, Edward Lear, Ogden Nash, Dr. Seuss, and Roald Dahl.

“I see” said the blind man to his deaf and dumb daughter as he picked up his hammer and saw.

One bright morning in the middle of the night,  
Two dead boys got up to fight.  
Back-to-back they faced one another,  
Drew their swords and shot each other.  
One was blind and the other couldn’t see,  
So they chose a dummy for a referee.  
A blind man went to see fair play,  
A dumb man went to shout "hooray!"  
A deaf policeman heard the noise,  
And came and killed those two dead boys.  
A paralyzed donkey walking by,  
Kicked the copper in the eye,  
Sent him through a rubber wall,  
Into a dry ditch and drowned them all.  
(If you don’t believe this lie is true,  
Ask the blind man -- he saw it too!)

Charades (in Jane Austen’s Emma)

Charade 1

My first doth affliction denote  
Which my second is destin’d to feel.  
And my whole is the best antidote  
That affliction to soften and heal.

Charade 2

My first displays the wealth and pomp of kings,  
Lords of the earth! their luxury and ease.  
Another view of man, my second brings,  
Behold him there, the monarch of the seas!  
But ah! united, what reverse we have!  
Man’s boasted power and freedom, all are flown;  
Lord of the earth and sea, he bends a slave,  
And woman, lovely woman, reigns alone.  
Thy ready wit the word will soon supply,  
May its approval beam in that soft eye!