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## ENG 1002G-039: Composition and Literature

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**SYLLABUS**  
**English 1002G Section 039, Spring 2007**  
**Composition and Literature**  
MWF 2:00-2:50, Coleman 3160, EIU

Professor: Dr. Letitia L. Moffitt  
Office: Coleman Hall room 3821  
Office Hours: MWF 10:00-10:50am and 1:00-1:50pm, or by appointment  
E-mail: llmoffitt@eiu.edu (for questions only; do not e-mail assignments without my permission)

**Objectives**

In this course, students will: 1) write expository and persuasive papers in which paragraphs, sentences, and words develop a central idea that corresponds to the reading of literary works; 2) write focused, adequately developed paragraphs and sentences that are direct, economical, free of ambiguity, and structurally appropriate for the ideas expressed and for the audience to whom it is directed; 3) read poetry, fiction, and drama expressing a wide range of cultural perspectives and think critically and write analytically about them; 4) develop research skills, including effective use of source materials and the principles of documentation; and 5) develop the ability to evaluate, criticize and revise their own and their peers' writing.

**Texts**

Charters, Ann, ed. *The Story and Its Writer*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.  
Klaus, Carl H. et al., eds. *Stages of Drama: Classical to Contemporary Theater*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003.  
Meyer, Michael. *Poetry: An Introduction*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003.

**Grading Breakdown**

Paper 1, Fiction, one story	
Draft .....	5%
Final .....	15%
Paper 2, Fiction, two stories	
Draft .....	5%
Final .....	15%
Paper 3, Poetry	
Draft .....	5%
Final .....	15%
Paper 4, Drama	
Draft .....	5%
Final .....	15%
Reading quizzes .....	10%
Participation .....	10%

## Papers

**Drafts:** For each of your four papers, you will write a complete draft that you will turn in at a 20-minute conference with me. We will discuss the draft; I will return the draft to you, and you *must* attach this copy with your final paper (don't forget!). If you miss your conference, your draft won't count and your draft grade will be "F." Each draft counts for 5% of your total grade.

**Format:** All drafts and final papers must be typed and printed from a word processor in readable font (12 pt. Times New Roman or equivalent), normal margins (1" top and bottom, 1.25" left and right), double-spaced, your name on each page, all pages numbered and fastened together with a staple (don't do that corner-fold-over thing and expect the pages to stay together). Don't get cute with margins or font size in order to stretch, say, three pages into four. If you are required to write three full pages, and the third page has any amount of white space, or if the paper fills three pages with a lot of repetition and "fluff," that won't be considered three *full* pages. If you run out of things to say well before three pages, you need to do a lot more than just fill up the empty space; you probably need to go back and put more thought into your paper as a whole.

Final papers also must be free of hand-written corrections or blobs of correction fluid (this does not apply to drafts). It is important that you proofread your final paper thoroughly *before* you print the final version that you hand in. What this means is that you need to give yourself enough time to look for and correct any typing, spelling, grammar and punctuation errors, rather than dashing off the paper at the last minute. If you have a brilliant paper that is unreadable because of these kinds of minor errors, no one will ever realize its brilliance.

I will provide detailed instruction sheets for each paper, but I won't repeat anything I've already said—that is, I'm not going to tell you every time that you have to double-space your papers; I'm going to assume that you should have learned that already!

**Deadlines:** Papers are due at the *beginning* of class on the due date. If your paper is late by one day (that is, if you turn it in during the middle or end of the due date's class, after class, or at the beginning of the following class), its grade will go down one *full* grade level (that is, from A to B, A- to B-, etc.). If you don't hand in your paper at the beginning of the class following the due date, I won't accept it and your grade for that paper will be F. Do not e-mail me papers without my permission, or put them in my mailbox or slide them under my office door or leave them in the classroom if I'm not there, because I might not get them this way unless you have made arrangements with me beforehand. I can't grade a paper that you honestly tried to get to me but somehow got lost; I can only grade what actually exists, *in my hands*, by the deadline.

**Important note:** I accept *no excuses* for late papers, and I grant no excused extensions—not even for "good" excuses (sick/doctor's appointment/job interview/wedding/funeral). I am especially not interested in technological glitches (printer not working/computer ate my file/no computers available). You have the class schedule in your hands right now, so you know when the papers are due. If you must miss a due date's class, for whatever reason, get a friend to hand in your paper or make other arrangements with me. It is not my responsibility to get your work from you; it is your responsibility to get it to me.

I don't make this rule to be mean, but simply because we are on a very tight schedule and it is crucial that you don't fall behind. If you do, you may never catch up again! Besides, handing the paper in is the easy part; writing it is the hard part. Don't ace the hard part only to blow the easy part.

### **Attendance**

I will not take formal attendance for this class. *HOWEVER...!* If you got excited when you read that and started planning your social calendar for the rest of the term figuring you'd have 2:00 free every day, think again. In *every* class, we will do something that counts toward your grade, and most of these activities cannot be made up if you are absent. I will not give make-ups for reading quizzes (which you'll have almost every day), for example, and unless you have a time machine, you can't possibly make up in-class activities such as peer review. Just because I don't pass around a sign-in sheet or do a "role call" doesn't mean that your absences won't matter.

I maintain this policy for one key reason: The point of coming to class isn't so that you can "get credit" for being in class. Attendance means substantially more than having a pulse. If you show up to class but then take a nap, IM your friends, work on assignments for other courses, talk about things that have no relevance to the class, etc., you might as well have stayed home because you aren't really "attending," and in fact you may be annoying other students. (Look it up in Webster's: the first definition given for "attend" is "to pay attention," not "to be present.")

Sometimes students who miss class want to make it clear that they really, sincerely meant to attend but couldn't because of circumstances beyond their control. I understand this—yet the truth is, the reason *why* you were absent doesn't matter, because it doesn't change the fact that you still missed what happened in class, regardless of whether you have a "good" excuse with written documentation. This is not high school; I don't need to see "notes" from doctors, parents, or anyone else. Understand this: *You don't need an "excuse" if you are absent; you need to keep up with the work.* If you come up to me and announce "I was sick!" and stick a doctor's note under my nose, all I can say is, "Sorry; hope you feel better," because I *can't* realistically say "That's OK, don't worry, it won't affect your grade," given that it *could* very well affect your grade—after all, you are now one class behind everyone else.

So don't worry: I won't dislike you if you are absent, but I will be concerned that you are behind the rest of the class—and you should be concerned as well. Related to this, if you are absent, do not simply ask me "what did I miss" and expect me to tell you in 10 words or less; I can't condense a 50-minute class into one sentence. If you are concerned that you may fall behind because of an absence or absences, come to my office hours and we'll see what we can do.

Again, the point here is *not* that you should slavishly drag yourself to class when you have a fever of 104. It is natural to expect that events may force you to miss class. My point is simply this: attend as many classes as you humanly can (and *come prepared*); if you miss class, for whatever reason, make sure you keep up with the work, and expect there to be consequences that range from negligible (if the absences are isolated incidents) to severe (if you make a habit of it).

## Reading Quizzes

That got your attention, didn't it. Don't worry: this is a *really* easy 10% of your grade—if you do the reading. Each time you are assigned a reading, at the beginning of class I will give a very short quiz based on that reading. The questions will be extremely easy, such that anyone who has read the text all the way through should be able to answer them instantly—but anyone who hasn't read probably won't be able to guess. (There may also be discussion questions on the quizzes; your answers to them won't count as part of the quiz grade, but will form the basis for our discussion of the text and may help your participation grade.) The point, if you haven't figured it out already, is to ensure that you *do the reading*. Students sometimes think reading assignments “don't count” because they don't require you to hand anything in. That would be a mistake: Reading is a crucial part of this class, and you can't possibly pass if you don't read.

## Participation

Participation means more than just saying whatever you feel like saying. It is also more than a matter of raising your hand and saying something, anything, just to “get it over with” in order to “fulfill” your participation requirement. Students who come to class on time, listen to others, help and encourage others, ask or answer questions, contribute to discussions, focus on and engage in classroom activities—these are all students who are actively participating in class.

## Plagiarism Warning

Plagiarism means word-for-word unacknowledged copying of another writer's work *or* unacknowledged paraphrasing of another writer's ideas. This can range from something as small as copying a sentence from a website without properly acknowledging the source, all the way up to turning in someone else's paper as your own. The minimum penalty is a grade of “F” on the assignment. In addition, you may fail the course, be placed on probation, or even be expelled.

The bottom line: absolutely do not for one second consider plagiarizing any part of any assignment, ever. It's simply not worth it. If you are having trouble writing an assignment or meeting a deadline, or if you aren't sure what might be considered plagiarism, please come and talk to me about it.

## Final Word

This is probably not the most exciting document you've ever had to read in your life, but please: *Keep this syllabus!* Refer to it whenever you have any questions about the class, because I guarantee you that a good half of the questions that are asked during the course of a semester have already been answered here. Do not let this document somehow fly out of your hands the second you leave the room; it contains important information.

Also, if you ever have questions about anything in this document (or, really, anything at all related to the class), *ask them*. You are responsible for doing what needs to be done in this class; it is not an acceptable excuse for you to say, “I didn't understand what you meant so I couldn't do the work.” If you don't understand, find out. That's what you're here for, after all!

## Grading Criteria for Papers

### Purpose:

“A” range: The essay has a clearly focused purpose and is sufficiently narrowed for a short essay.

“B” range: The essay has a fairly clear purpose and, but the writer doesn’t always consistently craft the essay toward that purpose.

“C” range: The essay has a purpose, but that purpose may be too broad.

“D” range: The essay has little clear sense of purpose; instead of focusing on a single topic, the essay jumps from one topic to another and makes no clear point.

### Reasoning and Supporting Evidence:

“A” range: The writer provides specific, clear supporting details, offering enough evidence to make a point convincingly. The reasoning is valid, and there are no irrelevant details.

“B” range: Reasoning and evidence are fairly clear and appropriate but not always vivid and convincing.

“C” range: The writer’s evidence may be too general to fulfill the essay’s purpose effectively. The essay may offer a few specific details but not enough to be convincing. There may be a few irrelevant details or flaws in reasoning.

“D” range: Evidence or supporting details are few and possibly irrelevant, and there may be several flaws in reasoning.

### Organization:

“A” range: The arrangement of ideas in the essay is appropriate for the writer’s subject and purpose. The introduction is engaging; the conclusion is satisfying. Transitions are effective, clear and varied. The reader can easily understand the direction of the essay.

“B” range: The essay is usually easy to follow, though introduction, conclusion, transitions and/or overall arrangement of ideas may be less than completely effective.

“C” range: Some thought has been given to the arrangement of ideas, but supporting points may not be in their best order. Introduction and/or conclusion are present but not well thought out. Lack of transitions may make the essay hard to follow.

“D” range: Organization is confusing. The reader may have great difficulty following the essay.

### Writing Style:

“A” range: Writing is under the writer’s control. Wording is thoughtful, varied, and precise. The writer has obviously edited and proofread, and there are few if any grammatical, punctuation, spelling or typographical errors.

“B” range: Writing is competent, perhaps not varied and accurate enough for the “A” range, but effort is there.

“C” range: Wording is generally correct but “bland,” or perhaps the essay contains exaggerated language, wordy structures, or clichés. The essay also likely contains errors of grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling.

“D” range: Essay bears the clear markings of something the author dashed off without giving sufficient thought (typos, grammatical mistakes, redundancies).

F papers: An “F” assignment either doesn’t exist (meaning that the writer didn’t turn it in on time as specified), or did not meet any of the minimum requirements of the assignment, or was plagiarized (in part or in whole).

Note #1: An “A” grade is the top grade that can be achieved and does not simply reflect good effort; it reflects a combination of strong effort and superlative results. There are no “easy A” grades.

Note #2: All grades are final. I do not negotiate grades.

Note #3: I don’t allow extra credit. Everything we do in this course goes toward the learning objectives, so “extra credit” would be pointless.

## General Schedule, Fiction Unit

Notes: Other assignments and activities will be announced in class as well; this is simply a general overview. Schedules for the poetry and drama units will be forthcoming. Schedule may be subject to change as necessary, but do not ever assume any changes until they are officially announced. Students are also responsible for keeping to the most current schedule—I will *not* accept “but I wasn’t sure if the schedule was right” or “I didn’t know which schedule was the current one” as an excuse for missing deadlines or not doing the reading.

<b>Date</b>	<b>What we’ll do in this class</b>	<b>What you’ll do at home for next class</b>
Mon., Jan. 8	Introduction	Read “Happy Endings,” p.43 in TSAIW*
Wed., Jan 10	Critical reading and stories	Read “Tell-Tale Heart,” p.1110
Fri., Jan 12	Narrative in stories	Read “Yellow Wallpaper,” p.468
Mon., Jan 15	<i>Holiday; no class</i>	
Wed., Jan 17	Narrative in stories	Read “How to Date...,” p.352
Fri., Jan. 19	Narrative in stories	Read “Who’s Irish,” p.614
Mon., Jan. 22	Narrative in stories	Read “Cathedral,” p.168
Wed., Jan. 24	Narrative/character in stories	Read “Everything that Rises...,” p.1005
Fri., Jan. 26	Character in stories	Read “What We Talk About...,” p.187
Mon., Jan. 29	Character in stories	Work on Paper #1
Wed., Jan 31	Conferences; no class	Work on Paper #1
Fri., Feb. 2	Conferences; no class	Work on Paper #1
Mon., Feb. 5	<b>Paper #1 Due</b>	Read “How to Become a Writer,” p.909
Wed., Feb. 7	Form in stories	Read “Things They Carried,” p.990
Fri., Feb. 9	Form in stories	Read “Girl,” p.723, and “Hills...,” p.540
Mon., Feb. 12	Form in stories	Read “Swimmer,” p.213
Wed., Feb. 14	Form in stories	Read “Lottery,” p.587
Fri., Feb. 16	<i>Holiday; no class</i>	
Mon., Feb. 19	Form/purpose in stories	Read “A Good Man...,” p.1030
Wed., Feb. 21	Purpose in stories	Read “Saboteur,” p.632
Fri., Feb. 23	Purpose in stories	Work on Paper #2
Mon., Feb. 26	Conferences; no class	Work on Paper #2
Wed., Feb. 28	Conferences; no class	Work on Paper #2
Fri., Mar. 2	<b>Paper #2 Due</b>	

*\*The Story and Its Writer*; all readings will be in this book until we move on to the next unit. Bring this book to class every day during the fiction unit! (You will be mocked mercilessly if you don’t. I’m not kidding: bring the book.)