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ENG 4906-600 Issues in Teaching English Teaching Early Literary Texts in the Age of Text

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Issues in Teaching English: Teaching Early Literary Texts in the Age of Text
ENG 4906, Section 600
Online/Summer 2023 ~ 5/30/2023 – 7/22/2023

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Caldwell

Email:

Office Hours: MWF 12pm - 1pm and by appointment (see procedures below)

Required Course Texts

- All course readings will be posted on D2L
- Primary literary text of student's choice (any edition, print or electronic)

I. Course Description, Expectations, and Components of the Course

Course Description

We live in a one-click culture where efficiency and ease of use are qualities we have come to expect from most of the media we consume—including literary texts. And yet texts that pre-date the 20th century can be especially difficult to navigate for the 21st-century student and can hardly be called “user friendly.” This 8-week summer course is designed for teachers or pre-service teachers who are interested in thinking about how we teach “the classics” in effective and meaningful ways for our students. The course will largely be constructed as a workshop in which students work on developing or revamping their teaching of early texts. Participants in the course will be able to choose a primary text they want to focus on (e.g., *The Odyssey*, one of Shakespeare’s plays, *The Scarlet Letter*, or another appropriate text) while they craft instructional materials and learn new strategies and pedagogical approaches that increase student engagement and learning. Every week we will grapple with a new critical issue concerning questions of accessibility, culturally relevant pedagogy, literacy, periodization, textual pairings, the value of difficulty, adaptation, and more.

Minimum Technological Requirements for English 4906

- Reliable access to the Internet
- Ability to navigate various aspects of D2L, our learning management system
- Ability read documents using Word, PowerPoint, and Adobe Acrobat
- Ability to create and post documents using Microsoft Word or a comparable format
- Ability to record and post a short video of yourself

****If you need help with any of these technological requirements, please contact me.**

Course Expectations and Netiquette

Because this is an 8-week online graduate summer course, the reading and writing requirements will be particularly demanding. Please be prepared to devote considerable time to the reading, writing, and other assignments listed below. If you need help, you have several options for contacting me. I will answer queries both via D2L email and Panthermail (mcaldwell@eiu.edu), always within 24 hours, typically much sooner. You are also welcome to contact me to arrange a Zoom meeting. If you have questions or find yourself falling behind, please **do not wait** to contact me.

Regarding course netiquette, I ask you to observe the following policies:

- 1.) Be considerate of other discussion participants when interacting via the discussion board or any other electronic form for the duration of this course. Remember that often a writer's intention and tone can be lost in electronic formats. Err on the side of too much courtesy rather than too little.
- 2.) Dismissive, malicious, or otherwise inappropriate comments will not be tolerated.
- 3.) You are *absolutely* welcome to express your own ideas and opinion *and* to agree *or* disagree with your peers, I ask only that you do so courteously and in the spirit of rational and productive debate.
- 4.) If you do not respect your classmates or your tone is inappropriate, you may be asked to redo an assignment and/or lose credit for the assignment entirely. In particularly severe cases, you may fail or be dismissed from the course at my discretion.
- 5.) Read all feedback you receive from me and discuss any questions you have about your feedback. If you are ever in doubt about whether a post violates course netiquette, please email me *before* you post it.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Reflect on their current or future teaching practice of challenging literary texts in the high school classroom, understand the ways in which a text may be "difficult" to different students, and consider the value of adaptation, paired readings, culturally relevant pedagogy, and other classroom practices for their own teaching practice.
2. Reflect on the reading process and various issues-- theoretical, practical, cultural, and political--that contribute to different understandings and experiences for different readers.
3. Effectively design a new unit plan, or significantly revise a current unit plan, centered on a challenging literary text for the high school classroom, using a wide variety of pedagogical strategies to make classic literary texts more accessible to students.
4. Evaluate and offer constructive feedback on unit plans and teaching demonstration of peers.
5. Demonstrate teaching strategies that have been acquired over the course of the class.

Office Hours

My weekly office hours will be on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12 - 1 pm. This is the time I have set aside to have individual meetings with you if you are having a specific problem or would simply like to talk about the course material. Since these are virtual appointments, I will make them in 15-minute increments. You can use this Calendly link to set up an appointment during my regular office hours.

I'm also happy to make appointments at other times by request—just send me an email.

II. Course Assignments

Assignments, Grade Distribution and Scale

Assignment	Weight	Final Grading Scale	
Discussion Forum Post	20%		
Discussion Forum Responses	10%	90-100	A
Literature Review	10%	80-89	B
Final Project	40%	70-79	C
Teaching Demonstration	10%	60-69	D
Peer Feedback	10%	Below 60	F

For information about all course assignments, please see assignment sheets posted in D2L in the Assignments module.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). The English Department's policy on plagiarism states the following:

"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 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 Office of Student Standards."

To put this another way: plagiarism absolutely will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarists will be reported to the Office of Student Standards and will fail the course. If you are confused about plagiarism at any point in the semester, it is your responsibility to ask me about it before you turn in an assignment.

ENG 4906 Course Outline

Dates	Topics	Assignments
<p>Week 1: Defining Difficulty in Literature</p> <p>May 30 – June 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Orientation • Define “difficulty” in literature • Choose text for course • Identify frame or entry point 	<p>Reading—Module 1 content</p> <p>Discussion 1 (full group)—biography and the nature and value of difficulty</p>
<p>Week 2: Literacy and the Challenges of “Old English”</p> <p>June 5 - 11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student literacy • Choosing the right edition of a text (when possible) • Strategies for mitigating “old” English 	<p>Reading—Module 2 content</p> <p>Discussion 2 (small group)—entry points and challenges of “old” English</p>
<p>Week 3: Working with Different Kinds of Readers</p> <p>June 12 - 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching texts to struggling and reluctant readers • Working with English Language Learners (ELLs) • Tiered Text approach • Accessing prior knowledge when teaching early texts • Graphic Organizers and other strategies to lighten language load 	<p>Reading—Module 3 content</p> <p>Discussion 3 (small group)—exploring strategies for effectively teaching different kinds of readers</p>
<p>Week 4: Classic Texts and the Question of Relevance</p> <p>June 19 – 25</p> <p>(Juneteenth Holiday observed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally Relevant Pedagogy • Teaching the canon through disruption 	<p>Reading—Module 4 content</p> <p>Discussion 4 (small group)—exploring the value of culturally relevant pedagogy for teaching classic text to diverse student populations</p>
<p>Week 5: Teaching with Context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship between history and literature • History as perspective 	<p>Reading—Module 5 content</p> <p>Discussion 5 (small group)—using history or cultural</p>

June 26 - July 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose history are we teaching, whose are we ignoring 	<p>documents to demystify texts and open up perspectives</p> <p>Literature Review Assignment due by July 2 at 11:59pm</p>
<p>Week 6: Teaching with Adaptation</p> <p>July 3 – 9</p> <p>(July 4th holiday observed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation • Uses of film, music, graphic novels and other forms of adaptation in teaching classic literature • Paired texts • Constructing alternative points of view 	<p>Reading—Module 6 content</p> <p>Discussion 6 (small groups)—exploration of adaptation or paired text for your primary text</p>
<p>Week 6: Getting Creative with It</p> <p>July 10 - 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative writing prompts • Multimodal assignments • Performance-based assignments 	<p>Reading—Module 7 content</p> <p>Discussion 7 (small groups)—exploration of incorporating a creative element into your pedagogy</p> <p>Workshop draft of unit plan rationale in small groups</p>
<p>Week 8: Final Project Week</p> <p>July 27 - 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Unit Plans • Watch Mini-Lessons and complete Peer Evaluation/Feedback forms 	<p>Mini Lesson Posted by July 19</p> <p>Unit Plans Due by July 22</p> <p>Peer Evaluation forms due by July 22</p>

Have a great rest of your summer!

