

Spring 1-15-2007

ENG 2205-001: Introduction to Literary Studies

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Recommended Citation

Wharram, C, "ENG 2205-001: Introduction to Literary Studies" (2007). *Spring 2007*. 70.
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English 2205-001: INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES
Spring 2007 / MWF 12:00-12:50 / Coleman 3150

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Course Description

Here is a description for "Introduction to Literary Studies," according to the university website:

A study of fundamental issues underlying literary criticism and interpretation focusing on literary works, diverse critical practices, and historical backgrounds of critical strategies. Required of English Majors, open to others.

This class will introduce you to various conventions and practices of literary studies. During the semester, I hope to familiarize you with some skills that you will need in surviving the English Major. In order to pass this course you will need to demonstrate that you have:

- a thorough understanding of the historical development of English literature from the Early Modern Period to the present;
- a basic understanding of some of the genres and subgenres of literature;
- the ability to analyze literary texts closely, and show how texts produce meaning;
- the ability to cite texts accurately and profusely, using correct MLA format;
- the necessary skills in generating topics for and proceeding with a literary research paper.

You will be expected to participate in our class discussions on a daily basis, so you must come to class having read the course material. Much of the reading will be extensive and difficult: you should count on **at least** five hours of reading per week.

Texts

Behn. Oroonoko.

Brontë. Jane Eyre

Gay. The Beggar's Opera

Gibaldi. MLA Handbook

Rivkin and Ryan. Literary Theory

Stoker. Dracula

Williams. Three Vampire Tales

Hacker. A Pocket Style Manual.

Academic honesty: Students are responsible for knowing Eastern Illinois University regulations and policies regarding academic honesty. Plagiarism will likely result in your failing the course and in further action by the university. Here is 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.

Paper Policies

Papers—and all other assignments—are due at the beginning of class. **Late papers will not be commented upon, and be marked a half grade lower for every class period late.** Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero,” but must nevertheless be submitted in order to pass the course.

Your paper should be stapled and include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

Absence Policy:

When you are absent—especially when you are frequently absent—two things happen. First, your participation grade drops substantially. Second, you naturally fall behind in understanding course material and neither the class nor the Professor can catch you up on everything missed in a day's class. YOU need to decide when it is absolutely necessary to miss class. Be wise. It bears repeating: you cannot make up missed work and late assignments will be penalized. Whether these are excused or unexcused absences does not matter for this course. Being late for class will be counted as an absence.

If you are late for or miss more than five (5) class meetings, you cannot pass this course. If you think you will be late for or miss more than five classes, you should strongly reconsider registering for this class. Once you have missed six classes, you are welcome to continue visiting the class, but you will receive a failure on your transcript.

Emailing Policy:

I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or scheduled times) so that we can talk. **DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE.** Working groups will be assigned so that you can contact group members for notes and missed work.

Requirements

All assignments and exams must be turned in to pass the course.

Dracula Assignment: due Friday, January 19, 1:00 pm (10%)

Lyric Assignment: given Wed. Feb. 14, due Mon. Feb. 19 (10%)

Collaborative Kleist Assignment: given Mon Feb. 19, due Mon. Feb. 26 (10%)

Exams: Midterm, March 9 and 20 (15%)

Final Exam, Tuesday May 1, 12:30 to 14:30 (25%)

Brontë Assignments: ~ weeks 13-15 (15%)

Class Participation: see below (15%)

Dracula Assignment (10%)

Our first reading and assignment in this course will be on Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, a Gothic novel written at the turn of the twentieth century. Your task will be to find a critical work on *Dracula*, and write a summary of that article. In the third week of the semester, I will ask you to give a brief (five-minute), formal presentation to the class on the article.

Midterm Exam, March 9 and 20 (25%)

The midterm exam will consist of two parts: an in-class section, which must be written on March 9 during our class period (no exceptions) and a take-home section, which must be handed in during our first class after the spring break (March 20). The take-home section will require you to analyze two passages from our early-semester readings.

Collaborative Kleist Assignment (10%)

On e-reserve, you will find a short story (more correctly, a “novella”) written by Heinrich von Kleist. On February 19, I will give you an assignment to complete for the following week, and provide each group the opportunity to present their findings.

Critical Lyric Assignment (10%)

You will be given the lyrics to two songs on Valentine's Day. Your job will be to write a brief analysis of the songs and their relation to one another, to be handed in on February 19.

Brontë Assignments (15%)

Nearing the end of the semester, I will require you to produce a series of assignments on Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*. You will need to develop an interesting topic, as well as a list of critical works (some directly on the novel and some not) and a narrative explanation of the method you would take in writing a research paper on the topic you have developed.

Final Exam (25%)

The exams will verify your engagement with the class material through identification and short-answer questions. Like the midterm, the final exam will contain both take-home and in-class sections.

Class Participation (15%)

There will be a number of required, yet ungraded assignments throughout the quarter, constituting a substantial portion your class-participation grade. I will expect you to come to class having read the material, and with questions or comments on the readings. Some of the course material may be quite tough slogging: you should pinpoint specific moments of reading difficulty, and query me ("test" me, if you will) about them. If you attend class without reading the texts carefully and completely, you will almost certainly fail the two exams, and your class-participation grade will suffer immensely. If many of you come to class ill-prepared, we will have unannounced quizzes at the beginning of class. You cannot "make up" missed quizzes; however, if you perform inadequately on a quiz, you will be asked to write a paper demonstrating that you have read the tested material.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS MUST BE COMPLETED TO PASS THE COURSE

Important disclaimers...

Conduct

Instructors are responsible for maintaining order and a positive learning environment in the classroom. Students whose behavior is disruptive either to the instructor or to other students may be required to discontinue course activities and to cancel the course registration (or be disenrolled). In addition, students may be subject to disciplinary action.

Grades

Your instructor sets the requirements and grading criteria for specific assignments. Here are general standards for grades:

- A = Achievement that is outstanding and unique
- B = Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet the requirements
- C = Assignment meets the basic requirements in every respect
- D = Assignment meets only some of the requirements and is worthy of credit
- F = Assignment does not substantially meet the basic requirements

For in-class or other brief writing assignments, you will be graded on a scale of $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$, or $\sqrt{-}$. Work that is strongly engaged and on-topic will receive a $\sqrt{+}$. Satisfactory work that is on-topic will receive a $\sqrt{}$. Work that shows little engagement or is off-topic will get a $\sqrt{-}$.

Incompletes

Incompletes are not given except in the most extraordinary circumstances (e.g., medical emergency), which a student must be able to document, and only if just a small part of the course remains to be finished. The student and teacher must make a written agreement concerning the condition of the incomplete.

Cell Phones

All those caught not having turned off their cells and/or other electronic devices will be subject to relentless mockery, public shaming, and, if necessary, unimaginably medieval tortures.