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ENG 2205-001: Introduction to Literary Studies

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SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH 2205: INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES, SPRING 2010, SECTION 001

Required Texts and Materials

Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, Dover Thrift Edition
 Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (consider buying it)
 Richter, *Falling into Theory*, 2nd ed.
 Rivkin and Ryan, *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 2nd ed.
 Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Norton Critical Edition
 Stoker, *Dracula*, ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, Norton Critical Edition
 Additional readings and handouts to be provided by the professor

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students of English to fundamental issues in the discipline. While we will begin with close readings of primary texts from the genres of poetry and fiction, we will focus much of our attention on 1) critical responses to those texts and 2) the theories and methodologies informing those responses. Our forays into criticism will lead us to encounters with formalism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and historicism, among other interpretive practices. Along the way, we will not only learn strategies for reading texts but also raise and answer questions about formulating a research topic, conducting research, and documenting sources. The course requires careful preparation of challenging readings; measured contributions to class discussions; and engaged critical thought.

Writing-Intensive Course

You should consider submitting an essay written for this class to the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP). Please visit this link for information on the submission process: <<http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/ewpmain.php>>. The course deadline for EWP submissions is Thursday, April 29, 2010.

Description of Assignments

Group Analysis Presentation: in a group of three, you will use close reading to analyze a poem; then, you will present your interpretation to the class.

Review: you will write a paper (750-1000 words) explaining the argument of Stephen Arata's scholarly essay "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization."

Mid-term and Final Examinations: these examinations will test your knowledge of course readings and discussions through a variety of question formats, including identification, short answer, and essay.

Producible Interpretation Presentation: in a group of four or five, you will generate a "producible interpretation" of a scene from *The Beggar's Opera*.

Proposal / Annotated Bibliography: you will propose a topic for the contribution essay (650-800 words) and begin your research by compiling an annotated bibliography.

Contribution Essay and Presentation: you will write a research paper (2000 words) in which you contribute to the critical understanding of a work of literature and then present the results of your research to the class.

Daily Assignments

You will do reading responses, process writing, peer evaluations, group work, and various other daily assignments. If discussion logs, quizzes or additional in- and out-of-class writing may be assigned as part of the daily assignment grade. At the end of the semester, I will divide earned daily assignment points by the total possible to arrive at a grade.

Policies

Late work: Daily assignments will not be accepted late, and missed peer reviews cannot be made up. Presentations must be given on the dates for which you have scheduled them, except under the most extenuating circumstances. All major assignments are due at the start of class on the final due date. If you want an extension on a major assignment, you must seek the extension two full days in advance of the class period during which the assignment is due and cite compelling reasons for the request; otherwise, you will be penalized one letter grade for not turning in the paper on time and an additional letter grade for every twelve hours thereafter. After forty-eight hours, the assignment will not be accepted, and you will receive a zero on it. Only in the case of an excused absence may an examination be taken before or after the scheduled date. An absence will be excused in the case of

a properly documented illness or emergency, or of properly documented participation in an official university activity. A rescheduled examination may cover different material than the original.

Grading Scale: 100 to 90 = A, 89.99 to 80 = B, 79.99 to 70 = C, 69.99 to 60 = D, 59.99 and below F

Grading Percentages:	Group Analysis Presentation	5%
	Review	10%
	Mid-term Examination	20%
	Producible Interpretation Presentation	5%
	Proposal / Annotated Bibliography	5%
	Contribution Essay	20%
	Final Examination	20%
	Daily Assignments	5%
	Participation	10%

Assessment: You must turn in the major assignments (Group Analysis Presentation, Review, Producible Interpretation Presentation, Proposal / Annotated Bibliography, and Contribution Essay) to pass the class. For these assignments, I will provide formal assignment sheets. Your grade for a given assignment will be determined by how well your work fulfills the requirements outlined in the assignment sheet. You will receive written or verbal descriptions of daily assignments. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, the regularity and quality of your contributions to class discussion, and your level of engagement during group work and class activities. Chronic tardiness (more than three instances) or missing mandatory conferences may result in the loss of your entire participation grade.

Academic dishonesty: According to the *MLA Style Manual*, the word "plagiarism" has its origin in the Latin term for "kidnapper": plagiarists kidnap other writers' sentences, phrases, or ideas and present them as their own. The *Random House Dictionary* defines "plagiarism" as "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work." As these sources suggest, plagiarism often results from faulty documentation or careless note taking. *Always place quoted materials in quotation marks, and always cite quoted and/or paraphrased sources, even in rough drafts of papers or in presentations.* Respect for the intellectual work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources. Inexcusable acts of plagiarism include downloading or buying a paper from the internet; copying and pasting phrases or passages from electronic sources into your paper without citing them; submitting a paper written by another student as your own; borrowing the language and content of a website verbatim and using it as an "original" presentation; and so on. The penalty for academic dishonesty is failure in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

The Office of Disability Services: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE

(Please note: each reading should be completed before class on the day it is listed.)

Week One

- T Jan 12 Introduction to the course
Begin reading *Dracula* (9-327)
- R Jan 14 "Disliking Books at an Early Age," Graff (*Falling Into Theory*, 41)
"The Rise of English," Eagleton (*Falling Into Theory*, 49)
Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 9

Week Two

- T Jan 19 **Unit I: Close Reading: Critical Perspectives**
"Introduction: Formalisms," Rivkin and Ryan (*Literary Theory* 3-6, hereafter abbreviated LT)
Russian Formalism: "Art as Technique," Shklovsky (LT 15-21)
"Dulce et Decorum est," Owen (provided)
- R Jan 21 **New Criticism:** "The Language of Paradox," Brooks (LT 28-38)
"The Canonization," Donne (LT 38-9)
"Those Winter Sundays," Hayden (provided)
Group Analysis Presentation: assigned
Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 9

Week Three

- T Jan 26 **Marxism and *The Matrix***
 "The Factory," from *Capital*, Marx (provided 544-53)
 "Hegemony," Gramsci (LT 673)
 Group Analysis: choose poem, form groups, begin close reading
- R Jan 28 Finish close reading; plan all aspects of presentation
 Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 9

Week Four

- T Feb 2 Due: Group Analysis Presentations
- R Feb 4 Due: Group Analysis Presentations
Unit II: Case Study of *Dracula*
 "The Uncanny," Freud (LT 418-30)
 Continue reading *Dracula* (9-327); finish by T Feb 9

Week Five

- T Feb 9 Initial discussion of *Dracula*
- R Feb 11 Intro to Gothic, "Gothic Excess and Transgression," Botting (provided)
***Dracula*, Gender, and Sexuality**
 "Fictional Conventions and Sexuality in *Dracula*," Fry (35-8; provided)

Week Six

- T Feb 16 "'Your Girls that You All Love Are Mine,'" Griffin (137-48; provided)
 Review: assigned
- R Feb 18 "'A Wilde Desire Took Me,'" Schaffer (in Norton *Dracula* 470-82)
***Dracula*, Race, and Imperialism**
 "Count *Dracula* and the Martians," R. J. Dingley (13-24; provided)

Week Seven

- T Feb 23 Clip from film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*
 "The Occidental Tourist," Arata (in Norton *Dracula* 462-79)
- R Feb 25 Overview of mid-term examination
 First draft due: Review; peer review

Week Eight

- T Mar 2 Conferences
- R Mar 4 Conferences

Week Nine

- T Mar 9 Mid-term examination
- R Mar 11 Final draft due: Review
 Contribution Essay: assigned
 Research, compiling bibliography, writing proposal and annotations, MLA documentation

Spring Break

- TR Mar 16, 18 No classes

Week Ten

- T Mar 23 **Unit III: Interpreting Drama**
The Beggar's Opera, Gay (1-58)
 Excerpts from *Producible Interpretation*, Milhous and Hume
 Producible Interpretation Presentation: assigned, form groups
- R Mar 25 *The Beggar's Opera* continued
 Group meeting, work on producible interpretation

Week Eleven

- T Mar 30 Due: Producible Interpretation Presentations
- R Apr 1 Due: Contribution Proposal / Annotated Bibliography

Week Twelve

- T Apr 6 **Unit IV: Literary and Cultural Encounters: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**
Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Stevenson (1-63)
 R Apr 8 Garrett and Linehan (in Norton *Strange Case*, 189-97 and 204-13)

Week Thirteen

- T Apr 13 **Unit V: Filmic Encounters**
 Excerpt from *Aliens*
 R Apr 15 "Fembo: *Aliens'* Intentions," Greenberg (provided)

Week Fourteen

- T Apr 20 First Draft Due: Contribution Essay; peer review
 R Apr 22 Presentations

Week Fifteen

- T Apr 27 Presentations
 R Apr 29 Presentations
 Final Draft Due: Contribution Essay; deadline for EWP
Final Exam Thursday, May 6, 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

GROUP ANALYSIS PRESENTATION, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith

* Due on T Feb 2 or R Feb 4 (8-10 minutes)

In groups of three, analyze a poem 1) using close reading, and 2) making use of formalist terminology and reading practices discussed in class. Think of the text as an "objective structure" with a "verbal design" revealed through point of view, tone, imagery, rhyme, syntax, metaphor, diction, theme and/or other literary devices. If possible, incorporate formalist concepts such as defamiliarization, ambiguity, paradox, irony, and/or wonder into your analysis.

Step One: form a group of three (or perhaps four, depending on the number of people in class), and choose a poem from the options provided. (No two groups may pick the same poem.) Consider exchanging e-mail addresses or phone numbers with group members. Sign up for a presentation date.

Step Two: begin your close reading of the poem on T Jan 26.

Step Three: on R Jan 28, finish close reading; plan all aspects of presentation (e.g., divide up speaking and other responsibilities); practice. If you want, plan to use the multimedia presentation system at the front of the classroom or to produce a handout or other visual aid (skits count). Consider meeting outside of class or corresponding with one another by e-mail in order to discuss and organize the presentation.

Step Four: On T Feb 2 or R Feb 4, give your presentation and field questions afterward. If you need to use the multimedia system, arrive early to test the equipment.

Guidelines for the Group Analysis

- 1) The presentation offers a *developed* close reading of the poem, giving careful attention to its language and formal characteristics. You cite sufficient evidence from the poem to support your reading.
- 2) Your close reading of the poem evinces critical thought and employs appropriate formalist terminology in discussing the design and theme of the poem.
- 3) Your presentation is well organized and clearly communicates your group's main ideas to the audience.
- 4) Your group works together well and divides speaking responsibilities evenly.
- 5) Your group turns in a brief outline of the presentation on the due date.
- 6) Your outline cites any sources used in constructing the presentation.

REVIEW, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith

- * **First draft due on R Feb 25**; complete draft required for the peer review (minimum of 750 words)
- * **Conference on T Mar 2 or R Mar 4**
- * **Final draft due on R Mar 11**

Read and reread Stephen Arata's critical essay "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization" (Norton Critical Edition of *Dracula* 462-79). In no less than three pages (750 words), review Arata's argument.

Do not mistake this task for a simple one. Reviewing an argument requires more than summary, or a mere parroting back of what a critic said. A review carefully explains an argument and its component parts to a reader, asking such questions as: what central idea organizes the critic's argument? What claims does the critic make? Does the critic's evidence support those claims? Is the critic's account persuasive? Why or why not? Does the critic adopt a particular approach or methodology? A reviewer digests an argument for readers, putting the critic's argument in his or her own words, and evaluates the quality of the critic's scholarship.

Guidelines for the Review

- 1) Your introduction orients readers by offering specific details (for instance, the title of Arata's essay); defining key terms or concepts; identifying the main or overarching idea of Arata's essay; and/or beginning to indicate the value of Arata's scholarship.
- 2) You avoid generic comments (i.e., "Different critics make different arguments about *Dracula*") in the introduction and conclusion.
- 3) Your body paragraphs expound upon Arata's argument, explaining it in detail through close reading and specific examples. You support your reading of Arata's essay with paraphrase and direct quotation of the article. You introduce quotations, incorporate them smoothly, and explicate them adequately.
- 4) Throughout your essay, you go beyond mere paraphrase and summary of claims to achieve a thoughtful review of Arata's argument. Your review shows evidence of critical thinking and demonstrates a competent understanding of Arata's argument.
- 5) You offer a sufficiently developed and internally consistent account of Arata's argument. In particular, you explain important implications of his argument. For instance, what exactly does Arata mean when he claims: "Dracula suggests two equations in relation to English-Irish politics: not just, Dracula is to England as Ireland is to England, but, Dracula is to England as England is to Ireland" (469). Readers need your help.
- 6) You document your sources according to MLA style, using parenthetical references where appropriate and submitting a Works Cited page with each draft of the paper.
- 7) You revise and edit your paper as necessary. Revision may involve reorganizing or redrafting sections of the paper. As you edit the final draft, eliminate fused sentences, comma splices, fragments, mixed constructions, ambiguous or vague pronoun reference, usage problems, and wordiness, in particular.

PRODUCIBLE INTERPRETATION PRESENTATION, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith

- * **Due on T Mar 30 (8-11 minutes)**

Quotations from Judith Milhous and Robert Hume's *Producible Interpretation*

"Useful interpretation of . . . plays is best accomplished by methods that go beyond a close reading of texts. The new criticism of the last twenty-five years has made a substantial contribution to our understanding of . . . plays, but the limitations of such an approach have become increasingly evident" (ix).

"A playscript should be interpreted as what it is – a vehicle to be completed in performance – not as an aesthetic object complete in itself. Where a poem or a novel stands on its own, a play does not – an obvious fact, but one all too often ignored by recent critics" (ix).

"By 'producible interpretation' we mean a critical reading that a director could communicate to an audience in performance" (3).

"Production analysis. By this term we mean interpretation of the text specifically aimed at understanding it as a performance vehicle—reading 'reading with a directorial eye,' if you like" (10).

The Assignment

Part I: Engage in "production analysis" of a scene or scenes from *The Beggar's Opera*. Begin with close reading but move beyond it to consider how the scene(s) would be "completed in performance." Adopt the role of director, making decisions about casting and staging the scene. Choose actors living or dead whose past performances, in your view, qualify them for their roles. (Cast whomever you want, but make sure your decisions show measured thought.) What specific qualities would these actors bring to their characters? How would you direct the actors to play their characters and perform the scene(s)? How would you stage the scene(s) visually through blocking, costumes, scenery, props, and so on? If you want, modernize your interpretation of the scene. (For instance, could you adapt the play to the genre of the Italian gangster film and cast Marlon Brando as Peachum?) Spend 6 to 10 minutes explaining your "producible interpretation" of the scene.

Part II (Optional): Stage/perform the scene for the class in 5 minutes or less. Again, keep in mind the possibility of modernizing it (including rewriting dialogue in contemporary language).

CONTRIBUTION ASSIGNMENT, English 2205, Prof. J. Smith

Topics

You may focus on any work of literature you want for this assignment. When selecting a novel, short story, poem, etc., you should check the library for available sources, making sure that at least four recent pieces of criticism exist on the work (or author). If you prefer an assigned topic, write on Stoker's *Dracula*, Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, or Behn's *Oroonoko*.

CONTRIBUTION PROPOSAL / ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

* Due on R Apr 1

The contribution project proposal consists of two parts. **Part I**, a two-page document outlining your proposed project, should include three sections:

I. Proposed Topic and Approach: pick a literary work and explain the problem or issue you will address in your research on it. Broadly outline your proposed project, explaining your methodology or approach to the subject. (Brief example: "I will approach John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* from a historicist perspective, focusing on its depiction of the gentleman highwayman. Criminal biographies of the period often romanticize the gentleman highwayman, treating him as a cultural hero, but I suspect that Gay's Macheath serves a very different purpose in the play.")

II. Critical Review: pick a recent, important piece of criticism on the work with an approach similar to or related to yours. Explain its argument in *one highly developed paragraph*. (This piece of criticism will also appear on the annotated bibliography.)

III. Proposed Argument: state the purpose of your research. How will you contribute to scholarship or current debates in this research area? What argument will you make about the literary work in question? (Brief example: "I will contribute to scholarship on Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* by demonstrating that his portrayal of Macheath poses a challenge to the romanticized view of the gentleman highwayman as a cultural hero.")

Part II, an annotated bibliography of criticism on your literary work or topic, should:

* in MLA style, list 4 or more *scholarly* sources written after 1980. These sources must come from outside the course reading.

* provide a concise summary (2-4 sentences) of the approach and main idea of each source.

How to Annotate Sources for the Annotated Bibliography

A good annotation makes a summary statement about a critic's or theorist's methodology, purpose, and argument (especially the conclusions reached). However, it also goes beyond mere summary to address the quality of a scholarly or theoretical text. Is the critic's or theorist's work useful? How? Does the critic or theorist contribute new or original ideas to debates about the topic?

An MLA-Style Bibliographic Entry (see the *MLA Handbook* for more information)

Senf, Carol. "The Comedy of Class in Stoker's *Dracula*." *Critical interpretations of Dracula*. Ed. John Kramer. Oxford: Cambridge UP, 1971. 21-29.

A Weak Annotation of Senf

The scholarly article, "The Comedy of Class in Stoker's *Dracula*," was written by Carol Senf, a notable literary critic on *Dracula*. This talks about the language of class, which is its central argument. Aspects of *Dracula*'s vampirism are discussed in this context.

An Adequate Annotation of Senf

Combining Marxist analysis with close reading of the text, this essay takes the notion of *Dracula* as a bloated aristocrat to its logical extreme, reading Stoker's novel as a metaphor for class relations. In Senf's smart but poorly supported reading, *Dracula* is the supreme aristocrat and his feeding on blood symbolizes the way he saps the lower classes of their economic power. Specifically, she argues that his character is constructed in opposition to the interests of Victorian England's growing middle class.

CONTRIBUTION ESSAY

* **Complete first draft due for peer review T Apr 20**

* **Final draft of contribution essay due R Apr 29**

Write an essay (minimum of 2000 words) that builds on the work of your research project proposal. In it, put forward an argument that:

- * offers close reading and analysis of primary and secondary texts;
- * engages with recent criticism or theories relevant to study of your research topic;
- * shows some understanding of the literary and cultural contexts in which the literary work was produced;
- * makes an interesting and perhaps even original contribution to discussion of the literary work.

Please write clearly and analytically, follow MLA style, and cite a minimum of three secondary sources in the final draft of your contribution essay.

Guidelines for the Contribution Essay

- 1) Your introduction captures the attention of readers; orients them by defining key terms or concepts (or by providing other useful information); and explains the main or overarching idea of your essay.
- 2) You avoid generic or hollow comments throughout your paper (i.e., "Different critics make different arguments about *Dracula*").
- 3) Before critiquing or challenging a critic's argument, you explain it adequately, providing the necessary context your audience requires to understand your critique or challenge.
- 4) Your paragraphs (and your essay as a whole) sufficiently develop your ideas through various strategies, including close reading of primary and secondary texts; the incorporation of concrete and specific details; and careful citation of primary and secondary sources.
- 5) Your measured explanations and thoughtful responses to secondary sources show your ability to think critically about scholarly arguments.
- 6) Your conclusion emphasizes your contribution to our understanding of the literary work in question.
- 7) You follow MLA style with near flawless precision in the first and final drafts. Papers submitted without appropriate documentation will be returned to writers and considered late.
- 8) You cite a minimum of three *scholarly* sources in your final draft. You choose sources written after 1980.
- 9) You revise and edit your paper as necessary. Revision may involve reorganizing or redrafting sections of the paper. As you edit the final draft, you eliminate errors of grammar and writing style, in particular, fused sentences, comma splices, fragments, mixed constructions, ambiguous or vague pronoun reference, usage problems, weak verbs, and wordiness. Your prose is clear and concise.

10) You bring a complete draft for the peer review. Failure to do so will lower your final grade on the assignment by a letter.

PRESENTATION

Due on R Apr 22, T Apr 27, or R Apr 29, according to scheduling

On your scheduled presentation date, present the results of your contribution project to the class in a 4-6 minute presentation. During your presentation, briefly describe the initial aims and goals of your project. Then, move on to the results, explaining how your contribution essay developed over time and how you arrived at your main line of argument. What kind of critical thinking did you do about the topic? What conclusions did you reach through research and writing? Consider constructing a handout for the class and/or using audio/visual aids to illustrate key points. Be prepared to answer questions about your project.

Guidelines for the Contribution Presentation

- 1) In 4-6 minutes, you clearly explain the argument of your contribution essay.
- 2) You do not rely too heavily on audio/visual aids (for instance, read from a PowerPoint presentation).
- 3) You adequately answer questions about your argument/contribution.

* Failure to give the presentation will result in an "F" on the Contribution Essay. An excellent presentation will improve your grade on the written portion of the assignment, a weak presentation lower it.