

Spring 1-15-2009

ENG 2205-002: Introduction to Literary Studies

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English 2205
Introduction to Literary Studies
Spring 2009

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 11:00 am - 12:00 noon and by appointment

Course Information:

Why do we read literature, and what happens when we read it? How do we read it, and what questions can or should arise when we think about what we read? This course focuses on the questions that we might ask about literature—and, by extension, literary study—and on why these questions are worth asking. Our inquiries will be a start toward figuring out the value of literature and why we involve ourselves in this activity called “literary study.”

Required Texts:

Coleridge, *Coleridge's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Halmi, Magnuson, and Modiano
 Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
 Shelley, *Frankenstein*
 Wharton, *The House of Mirth*
 Course Packet for this course, available in Copy Express in the MLK Union

Recommended:

- A notebook, earmarked for this class, for use both in class and as a reading journal. I strongly encourage you to keep a reading journal throughout the semester.
- A good handbook of literary terms. Many are available (and in Booth Library), but look for one that has been edited and published with the past five to ten years. Examples: X.J. Kennedy, et al.: *Handbook of Literary Terms: Literature, Language, Theory*; William Harmon and Hugh Holman: *A Handbook to Literature*; Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray: *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*.
- A newspaper or other reputable, published news source (sorry, the *DEN* doesn't count). I recommend the *free* online subscription to *The New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com>).

Course Requirements:

1. Persistent and careful reading.
2. Independent Reading and Discussion Groups: In addition to work in class, each student is to join a reading and discussion group, for the purpose of discussing on your own, and among yourselves, the poetry, prose, and drama, the lectures and class discussions, and any topics that seem important to you to discuss. Talk about whatever you want concerning our reading and writing: I won't be monitoring or leading the groups. At the end of the semester, however, each reading group must submit a brief account of the group's activities over the course of the semester.
3. Commentaries: Over the semester, you will write two commentaries on passages from our reading and study, in which you will be required to identify, locate, and write a brief commentary on what the passage says, why it is important, and what it means or implies. These will be take-home assignments, open book, and if you work it out right, they can grow out of your work in class and in your reading groups. More instructions will follow.
4. A longer essay, due at the end of the semester, focusing upon your studies this semester and your critical inquiries.
5. Two collaborative research projects and presentations, focusing on the literary works we are studying.

6. Midterm and final exams. Both killers, of course.
7. Sustained, engaged participation throughout the semester. This means more than simply being here: you must finish the reading on time, turn in assignments on time, and contribute thoughtfully and often to class discussion.

Grades, Evaluation, and Attendance:

1. The following percentages make up the total of the final grade: Commentaries=20%; Final essay=20%; Collaborative projects=25%; Midterm exam=15%; Final exam=20%.
2. You are expected to complete all, not just part, of the semester's study and work.
3. If you have more than *two* unexcused absences, your final grade for the course will drop by one (1) full grade point.

A brief note on academic dishonesty: cooperation among all of you is encouraged, but submitting others' work as your own is plagiarism. And plagiarism is not tolerated. No exceptions or excuses. Plagiarism will result in an immediate failure for the course and a report filed with the Judicial Board.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, then
1) please inform me as soon as possible, and 2) contact the Coordinator of the Office of
Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

(all changes will be announced in class)

STC = Coleridge's Poetry and Prose

CP = Course Packet

Week 1

- 1/13: Introductions
- 1/15: Coleridge poetry: "Effusion XXXV" ("The Eolian Harp") [*STC* 17]; "The Nightingale" [*STC* 102]; "Frost at Midnight" [*STC* 120]; "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison, A Poem" [*STC* 136]

Week 2

- 1/20: Plato, *Ion* [*CP*]; continued work with Coleridge poetry
- 1/22: Aristotle, *Poetics* [*CP*]; continued work with Coleridge poetry

Week 3

- 1/27: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1834) [*STC* 59]; read also the editors' introduction "From *Lyrical Ballads*" [*STC* 54-57]
- 1/29: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

Week 4

- 2/3: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"
- 2/5: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

Week 5

- 2/10: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"; collaborative research project
- 2/12: Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"
 - Commentary 1 due

Week 6

- 2/17: *Frankenstein* (3-85) [editor's introduction, Shelley's introduction & preface, through Chapter VIII of the novel]
- 2/19: *Frankenstein*

Week 7

- 2/24: *Frankenstein* (86-128) (Chapters IX-XVI)
- 2/26: *Frankenstein*

Week 8

- 3/3: *Frankenstein* (128-89) (Chapters XVII-XXIV)
- 3/5: *Frankenstein*

Week 9

- 3/10 midterm exam
- 3/12: Plato, excerpts from *Republic* [CP]; Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" [CP]
 - Commentary 2 due

• **Spring Break 3/16-3/20**

Week 10

- 3/24: Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" [CP]; Wimsatt and Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy" [CP]
- 3/26: Barthes, "The Death of the Author" [CP]; Fish, "Is There a Text in This Class?" [CP]

Week 11

- 3/31: Wharton, *The House of Mirth*. Preparation for collaborative research and presentations
- 4/2: continued preparation for collaborative research and presentations

Week 12

- 4/7 & 9: Collaborative research and presentations

Week 13

- 4/14 & 16: Collaborative research and presentations

Week 14

- 4/21: Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
- 4/23: Searle, "The Conscience of the King: Oedipus, Hamlet, and the Problem of Reading" [CP]; continued work on *The Tempest*;

Week 15

- 4/28: continued discussion of *The Tempest* and Searle essay
- 4/30: continued discussion and review
 - ESSAY DUE

Final Exam: Monday, 5/4, 8:00-10:00 am