Fall 2019   2019

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ENG 5000-001: Introduction to Methods in English Studies

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Eastern Illinois University

INTRODUCTION TO

METHODS & ISSUES IN

ENGLISH STUDIES

Prof. R. Beebe
rlbeebe@eiu.edu
Wed 7-9:30 p.m.
Coleman Hall 3159 & Online
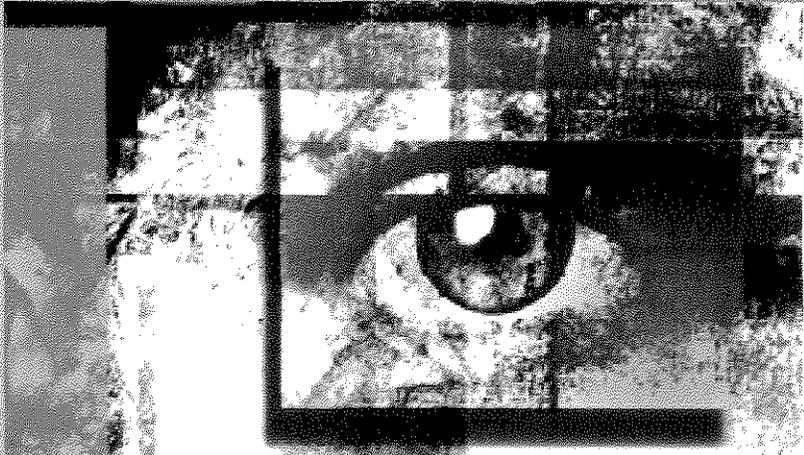
Description.

This seminar provides a foundation for the M.A. in English, serving as an introduction to the methods and issues of advanced-level research and scholarship in English studies. Through our reading and discussions, we will examine the field of English Studies, discuss assumptions and challenges in the field, and develop a strong understanding of what professionals do. This will involve becoming aware of discourse practices, methods of research, and the writing genres that we use.

TEXTS

R. Sloan, *Mr. Penumbra* (2012)

B. Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior* (2012)

Other Selected Readings (available on D2L)

OFFICE HOURS COLEMAN HALL 3841:

M & F 10-12; T 9-10; W 10-11; 12-1

REQUIREMENTS

• Project 1	5%
• Project 2	10%
• Project 3	10%
• Project 4	15%
• Project 5	25%
• Final Exam	10%
• Discussion/Forum & Writing Groups	20%
• Résumé/Professional Statement	5%

For Online Students: Late afternoon or evening online conference sessions can be set up by appt.

Course Goals.

- understand expectations of graduate-level work;
- explore critical and theoretical issues in English studies;
- get extensive practice in completing graduate-level research;
- become familiar with professional conversations in English studies, including controversies, current trends, and career preparation

"**W**hy do science? Why do art? . . . The things that seem like the least important for our survival are the very things that make us human."

Savas Dimopoulos, theoretical physicist

writing projects & conferences . . .
See **Overview of Main Project**s for an in-depth description of each of the major projects and due dates.

expectations . . .
Just about everything about this course—and what we will do—is designed to help introduce you to the expectations of graduate-level study and to the writing and thinking of professionals in English studies.

It's important, therefore, that you engage carefully and aggressively with the material and course assignments—being prepared, keeping up with deadlines, raising questions.

Not everything we discuss or what you may be asked to write about will necessarily relate directly to your field of interest. However, the readings, topics, and tasks have everything to do with the larger field of English studies and are meant to help you better understand the professional nature of the field—to give you a comprehensive view and maybe help you discover an area you may want to pursue in more depth.

You must also abide by all University and professional codes of conduct, including (but not limited to) academic honesty and respect for diverse viewpoints. This is especially important for the frequent online discussions we will have. Be honest and clear. But respectful.

Here's EIU policy on on acceptable etiquette for online courses, which I endorse:

Eastern Illinois University (EIU) is committed to open, frank, and insightful dialogue in all of its courses. Diversity has many manifestations, including diversity of thought, opinion, and values. We encourage all learners to be respectful of that diversity and to refrain from inappropriate commentary. Should such inappropriate comments occur, the instructor will intervene, removing inappropriate content. The instructor may also recommend university disciplinary action. Learners as well as faculty should be guided by common sense and basic etiquette. The following are good guidelines to follow:

- Never post, transmit, promote, or distribute content that is known to be illegal.
- Never post harassing, threatening, or embarrassing comments. If you disagree with someone, respond to the subject, not the person. Conflicts of ideas are encouraged, while conflicts of feelings are discouraged.
- Never post content that is harmful, abusive; racially or culturally insensitive, or religiously offensive, vulgar; sexually explicit, or otherwise potentially offensive.

Remember you are communicating with real people.
Students and instructors in your course have feelings, lives, jobs, families and a myriad of other issues that you may know little about. Once you have finished writing something, and before you send it, re-read it looking at your words from someone else's perspective. How would they see it? Could it be misinterpreted? Could you rephrase to make it clearer or more on topic?

If someone asks a question, answer it if you are sure of the correct answer or if you have insight that could be helpful.

Write clearly & professionally.
In any course-related communication (emails, chats, discussions), use standard proper English with correct grammar. Using slang, errors in mechanics, and shortcuts maybe difficult for others to understand. Avoid ALL CAPS, bolding and underlining. It could be misinterpreted. Avoid offensive language. Also make sure to sign your name to any post.

Be kind and ethical.
Do not belittle other students or the instructor. You may disagree with what someone says, but focus on the issue, not the person. Behave online as you would in person. Be forgiving of the mistakes of others.

Help others.
If someone asks a question, answer it if you are sure of the correct answer or if you have insight that could be helpful.