Course Policy

Goals: The purpose of this course is to help you become better readers and writers by focusing on writing about literature. My assumption is that you've had some experience writing about literature, but none in college, and the best thing I can do for you is give you plenty of opportunities to try. For that reason, I will give you lots of in-class writings, short out-of-class writings, and essay-type questions. I will very often give you the chance to re-write, but I will also grade some of your in-class writing, which you will not be able to revise, because developing in-class writing skills will be important to you.

Attendance and Lateness: I will not count off for missed classes, but you will not be let off the hook for any missed exams (of course!!) or presentations. If you miss one of these, you need to have a doctor's excuse. Otherwise, missed classes will only count against your classroom participation. I will always be nice to you and respectful, no matter how many absences, excused or unexcused, you have. Do not mistake my demeanor for the intention to overlook absences. I will not hesitate to fail you for classroom participation, or to give you a D, if you are not here. If you have more than three unexcused absences, you should start to worry. Also, if latenesses become a problem, I will begin to count latenesses as absences.

Late papers: I will read drafts of papers, and I will counsel you about papers over the phone, but I will not accept late papers except under the most dire circumstances. Computer problems can be worked out in advance if you plan ahead. Give yourself a due date two or three days before the due date I give you. That way, you can work on the printing of the paper ahead of time, and if you have problems, you will still have time to solve them.

Assignments:
* Formal writings: You will have four formal papers, for which you will also be expected to produce drafts. (Showing up with completed drafts will count as part of classroom participation.) Two of those writings will be about works of literature we read together in class, and two will be about a novel you will choose and read independently.
* Informal and/or in-class writings: These will receive checks, check pluses or check minuses, depending on their detail, thoughtfulness, and accuracy. These will make up your classroom participation grade. If you have lots of check pluses, come to class, turn in rough drafts on time, and speak up, you will have an “A” for classroom participation. If you are lacking in an area, you will earn a “B,” etc.
* Essay exams: You will have two short essay exams. Essays will also be graded on their detail, thoughtfulness, and accuracy, as well as their organization and mechanics.
* Workshops: I will periodically ask you to workshop each others’ papers. I will expect a thorough job of these workshops and will sometimes grade the product.
* Presentations: You will be asked to present your third paper to the class. You will not have to do any extra research or reading for this presentation, but I will expect you to be prepared, to come to class with detailed note cards or outline.
Grades:
10% first paper
15% second and third papers
20% final paper, including presentation
15% final exam
25% classroom participation, including workshop grades

You are strongly encouraged to attend relevant readings and presentations. For each event you attend, you will get a V+ for classroom participation.

Problems: If you have any problems regarding scheduling, grades, papers, etc., please call me at home, come to office hours, or make an appointment with me. I’d be happy to talk to you about any of your concerns.

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities can receive help. Contact the coordinator of the Office of Disability Services at 6583.

Syllabus:

* indicates days class meets in computer classroom.

*T J 9
*R J 11
introduction; in-class writings
Percy, "The Secretary Chant"; Walker, "A Woman is not a Potted Plant"; Li Ho, "A Beautiful Woman Combs her Hair"; Richard Wilbur, "A Late Aubade"; Cathy Song, "The White Porch"; Kizer, "Food for Love"

T J 16
Dickinson, "Presentiment"; Plath, "Mirror"; Pastan, "Marks"
Shakespeare, from Macbeth (Act V, Scene 5); Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask"; Lawrence, "Snake"

R J 18

*T J 23
*R J 25
class choice; catch-up
workshop first drafts paper 1

T J 30
research on the web; Lysistrata
final draft first paper

R F 1

*T F 6
*R F 8
Lysistrata
Lysistrata

T F 13

R F 15
workshop first drafts paper 2

*T F 20
*Doll's House
*R F 22
*Doll's House

T F 27
*Doll's House
final draft paper 2
Doll's House; conferences

*T M 6
*R M 8
conferences

BREAK

T M 20
R M 22
video

*R T M 27
*R R M 29
workshop first draft paper 3
presentations

T A 3
R A 5
final draft paper 3 due
presentations

*T T A 10
*R R A 12
discuss research paper
O'Connor, "Everything that Rises"

T A 17
R A 19
first draft paper 4
Booth, "A Rhetorical Reading . . ."

*T T A 24
*R R A 26
DiRenzo, "A Dialogic Reading . . ."
final draft paper 4
business