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ENG 1002G-013-034-052: Composition and Literature

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EN 1002G Composition and Literature
Instructor: Lucinda Berry  laberry@eiu.edu  Coleman 3820
581-6309
Office Hours: 11:00 - 12:15 & 2:00 - 3:15 on Tuesday & Thursday

Course Description
This course offers practice in analytical academic writing using poetry, short fiction and drama as the subject matter. Various terms and theories associated with each genre are examined.

You are expected to read carefully and think deeply about what you have read. Read the work more than once; I will expect you to remember significant details, not just the basic plot.

In order to successfully complete the writing assignments, you will have to get beyond summarizing plots and commenting on personal likes and dislikes. You will be expected to write well-reasoned, logically organized essays using sound rhetorical means to support an arguable thesis.

Course Policies and Grade Determination
In percentage terms, your grade will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poetry essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiction essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drama essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz Average</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
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Class participation/

100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-70% = C, below 70 = NC!

Specific requirements for the three major essays will be explained in class. Grading standards will be those established by the English Department at EIU. In general, I will be assessing your writing for:

- overall development in support of your thesis
- clarity of expression
- effective organization and use of transitions
- use of standard conventions for spelling and grammar

Deadlines will be given for each of these essays. Late work will be marked down one full letter grade if it is received within a week of the original due date. If it is more than a week late, you will receive a maximum of half the points the assignment is worth.

If you have a documented excused absence, make-up work must be completed within 10 calendar days of your return to class. All assignments must be completed to receive credit for the course.
You must keep a notebook in which you write an analytical response to the topics and questions listed on the syllabus. This should be typed. The notebook should also include notes you take on class discussions. These will be handwritten. Figure out how to meld these components together. This notebook will later serve as your study guide for the final exam.

I will periodically ask students to read their responses to assigned work. Therefore, you should bring your 1002 notebook to every class. (Points will be deducted if you are called on and don’t have this assignment.) I may also decide to collect these notebooks to read over your entries, so do not use it for assignments in other classes. A small notebook should be used; one of those folders with a couple of pockets would be ideal. No three ring binders or 5-subject spiral-bounds!!

Quizzes requiring a short answer or short essay response will be given at the beginning of the class period. Don’t be late, or you’ll miss them. There are no make-ups for the quizzes. When determining your average, I will throw out the lowest two scores.

The final exam for this course is on: It will consist of a series of short essay questions.

Policy on Plagiarism
Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines plagiarism as "the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's own original work." In this course, plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment. In cases of blatant and intentional plagiarism, you will receive an F for the course, and you will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs; not a pleasant experience.

Policy on Disabilities
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 581-6583 as soon as possible.

Textbooks
Roberts, Edgar V. Writing About Literature. Upper Saddle River, NJ:
Course Schedule (Subject to change at any time)

Jan 10  Introduction to course/discussion of what poetry is
Jan 12  Writing About Literature 1-4, 13-14, shaded box on 20.

In Poetry: “Introduction to Poetry” 45, “In a Poetry Workshop” 473-4, “Ars Poetica” (see page 3)
Answer the questions after the poems, and write two or three paragraphs comparing/contrasting how each poem defines poetry.

Archibald MacLeish (1892 - 1982)

Ars Poetica 1926

A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit.

Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown ---

A poem should be wordless
As the flight of birds.

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,
Memory by memory the mind ---

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs.

A poem should be equal to:
Not true.

For all the history of grief
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea ---

A poem should not mean
But be.

Jan 17  Poetry: 23-5 and 28-44 You should carefully read all of the poems and explanatory material on these pages, but for your writing assignment, choose the poem you like best and explain why. Examine the poem in terms of specific criteria. Use the questions on 62-3 as a starting point. Try to use appropriate terminology: consult the glossary in your text.

Jan 19  Terminology for discussion sound in poetry 191-9 Answer questions about “Blackberry Eating” Write a couple of paragraphs discussing whether “Going to Extremes” and “The Cataract of Lodore” and “Dirty Old Man” 208 are good poetry or doggerel. Look up words you don’t know!

Jan 24  Poetry: “Poem”107-8 “Lighting Bugs” 145 Write a couple of paragraphs responding to the imagery in these poems. Figures of speech 133-7, 138 (starting with Other Figures) - 142 “Mirror” 146 Answer the questions following this poem.


Jan 31  “Dulce et Decorum Est” 120 (2,3,4), “Calvary Crossing A Ford” 110 (1,3,4), “BattlePiece” 109 (1,2,3) Answer the questions noted in ( ).

Feb 2  Writing About Literature 139-48, “Patterns” and “Anthem for Doomed Youth” 235-8 (in Writing...) “AD’ 162-3, “Buttons” 173 (1,2,3), “Naming of Parts” 178-9 (1-4) Answer the questions after each poem noted in ( ).

Feb 7  “The Pitcher” 214 (1,2,3), “Execution” 146-7 (1,2,3), “First Practice” 277-8 (1, 3, 4)

Feb 9  Catch up day

Feb 14  DUE: Essay on Poetry (4 pages minimum) Discuss one of the following pairs of poems, considering technical aspects and theme and demonstrating your grasp of how one should analyze poetry.
1. “Mirror” 146 & “I Am Mirror” 543-4 (personification)
2. “Bored” 88 & “Those Winter Sundays” 25 (shift in persona)
3. “Naming of Parts” 178 & “Footprints” (blend of politics/nature)
4. “Rites of Passage” 282 & “Do They Have a Reason?” 558-9 (point of view/persona and expectations for male behavior)
5. “The Boss” 560 & “The Secretary Chant” 24 (tone & theme)
6. “Poet’s Corner” 571 & /or “First Practice” 277, “Execution” 146 (view of/attitude toward coaches)
7. “Fast Break” 238 & “Slam, Dunk and Hook” 506 (form)
8. “Buttons” 173 7/or “AD” 162 & “Preparation of War” 546
9. “Acquainted with the Night” 157 & “The Street” 548 (speaker’s emotional state)
10. “In the Suburbs” 102 & “Liberty” 151 (modern angst)

Bring The Short Story and Its Writer to class
Feb 16 Switch over to The Story and Its Writer! “Happy Endings”
20-23 “Reading Blind” 843-6 For discussion: How does Atwood elicit your curiosity in the story? Is she right that plot is the most important element in fiction? Given the criteria for judging whether a story is good, how would you rate “Happy Endings”?

Feb 21 “Boys” 578-82 The two selections you’ve been assigned this week are not traditional short stories. Write a couple of paragraphs explaining what you like/dislike about these variations on the form.
For discussion: How does entering the house function as a motif for the story? Is it important that the boys are twins? What role do women play in the story? Is this a typical American story? Is this a funny story?

Feb 23 “The Widow’s Son” 471-9 This story is another “experimental form, but in many ways, it is also very traditional. Write a few paragraphs explaining how it is like a fable and what the moral is. For discussion: Are both endings equally plausible? What is your attitude toward the son? Toward the mother? Does it change over the course of either version of the story? How does its having two endings improve the literary merit of this story?

Feb 28 Writing About Literature 56-64 “The Rocking Horse Winner” 481-92 Write a brief analysis of one of the characters in the story
For discussion: Why do the voices become even louder when some money becomes available? How accurate is the mother’s definition of luck? What are the implications of Paul’s confusing luck and lucre? Is Paul right when he claims to be lucky? In what sense was Paul a “poor devil’ as Oscar says at the end?
Mar 2  "Tiny, Smiling Daddy" 289-98 Write a couple of paragraphs about the main conflict in the story and explain which side you take on it and why. For discussion: What is the writer trying to tell us about Stew when she tells us "the phone rang five times before he got up to answer it"? How would you describe the relationship between Marsh and Stew? Is it important to the story? Would this story work in the same way if it had a first person instead of a third person narrator?

Mar 7  "The Rich Brother" 806-19 For discussion: What details help provide the characterization of the two brothers? (It might help to keep a list as you read through the story.) What kind of gesture is Pete's giving Donald $100? How does childhood behavior contribute to the conflict? What does Pete mean when he says "he hadn't even tried" in relationship to the passenger's story? What importance does the passenger have in the story?

Mar 9  "The Red Convertible" 260-7 Write a couple of paragraphs explaining what this story shows about brotherhood. For discussion: Look closely at the first paragraph. Consider the language use here and what is significant about the details. Why does Lyman tell us about their wandering and meeting Susy? What associations does the red convertible carry? How do Lyman and Henry communicate throughout the story? Why is Lyman upset about the picture of himself and Henry?

Spring Break (yet it will still be winter in the Midwest!!! Alas for those of us who will not be visiting a warmer climate. Anyway, have fun!

Mar 21  "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven" 9-14 Write a couple of paragraphs about the significance of the narrator's ethnic/racial background. For discussion: What is the point of the title? Why does the narrator purposely frighten the clerk? Do you think Alexie is being funny or trying to manipulate White Americans' guilt? Or both? Be able to point to specific example in the text.

Mar 23  "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" 618-631 For discussion: Is Connie a typical teenage girl? What are her two sides? What's going on with Arnold's "look"? What fairy tale elements are in the story? What religious elements are in the story?

Mar 28 Presentations on "Where Are You Going..." DUE: Essay on short fiction (minimum of 4 pages) on one of the following topics:
1. The repercussions of dependency in family relationships (use examples from at least two of the stories)
2. Wolff's use of the Biblical story of Cain and Abel
3. Erdrich’s and Alxie’s incorporation of Native American issues into fiction
4- Analysis based on psychological, historical, gender or mythological strategy of any of the stories studied. See 586-596 in your *Poetry* text for further explanation.

Mar 30 For the rest of the semester, we will be using *Stages of Drama*, the heaviest text for this course! The Importance of Being Earnest Intro and Act I 613-624 Be sure you understand the concepts of melodrama and satire

Apr 31 Finish reading the play

Questions to consider about the play:
1. To what social class do the main characters belong? How can you tell?
2. How does Lane help characterize Algernon?
3. Why does Jack live a double life? How does he manage it?
4. How does Algernon accomplish the same thing as Jack?
5. What does all this deception illustrate about their attitude toward their social class and the obligations related to their position?
6. Do any of the women characters exhibit this “duality”?
7. Look at the discussions between Algernon and Jack and between Lady Bracknell and Jack in Act I. Based on what is said, how would you define marriage during the Victorian Age?
8. Describe Gwendolen. Is she an obedient daughter, or an independent young woman?