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ENG 1002C-010: Composition and Literature

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COURSE GUIDELINES

Texts: Charters, The Story and Its Writer
      Meyer, Poetry, An Introduction
      Jacobus, The Bedford Introduction to Drama
      Griffiths, Writing Essays About Literature
      Fulwiler & Hayakawe, The Blair Handbook
      Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

While this course is designed to make you better readers, writers, and thinkers, my underlying goal is that you will grow to enjoy and appreciate literature this semester. To that end we will read extensively from each of the three principle literary genres (poetry, fiction, and drama), works written by men and women from culturally diverse backgrounds. And because this is also a composition course, we'll write quite a bit (at least 5,000 words, probably much more than that) about this literature. Expect to spend approximately two hours reading, analyzing, and writing about each day’s assignment before coming to class.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GENERAL INFORMATION:

ATTENDANCE: If you miss class, for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to find out what we did that day; illnesses or emergencies do not exempt you from meeting the same obligations as everyone else in this class. Your syllabus is merely tentative, so check with me to see if changes were made in your absence. Absences must be excused before you can make up any work missed — you must either sign a release at the health service so that I can verify your visit or you must present me with a doctor’s note (no photocopies!) if you were ill (no exceptions). Other reasons for missing class must be discussed with me to be cleared, and I will do so only for serious — and verifiable — circumstances: a death in your immediate family (again, I’ll need confirmation), and so forth. EXCUSES WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR MATTERS OF PERSONAL CONVENIENCE — job interviews or travel arrangements, appointments with your advisor, oversleeping, etc. If you are to miss class because of participation in an OFFICIAL University function, work can be made up ONLY IF COMPLETED AND TURNED IN BEFORE YOU LEAVE. It is your responsibility to notify me of such absences in advance, allowing yourself ample time to find out about and complete your work. If an illness or emergency means you will miss class for an extended period of time, contact me immediately so that I can advise you on how best to keep up with your classwork. Please do not just show up after having missed several class sessions thinking that I can miraculously catch you up. Finally, UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL HURT YOUR SEMESTER GRADE!! (Refer to “Late Work” and “Participation” sections for more details.)

LATE WORK: Work turned in late will be graded down one letter grade for each day it’s late (unless due to excused absence.) Since an assignment is late if it’s turned in after I collect them at the start of class, you must show up on time and you must plan ahead for disaster, because “I ran out of ribbon, ” “I couldn’t get my computer to print it out,” “The computer ate my disk,” “I forgot my folder in my room,” etc., are NOT acceptable excuses for turning in your work late. NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED THAT ARE MORE THAN ONE WEEK LATE; a grade of “zero” will be recorded. Make-up exams will be arranged as needed on an individual basis, but only for those with excused absences. AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE ON TEST DAY WILL MEAN A ZERO ON THE EXAM. In short, turn in all of your work on time to avoid penalty.

STUDENT S WITH DISABILITIES: Contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as early in the term as possible if you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations. Please let me know, too, and realize that I can be of greater assistance to you if I am made aware of your disability early in the semester.

GRADING: English department standards (see handout) will be used to determine grades on all written work. These are rather stringent guidelines, evaluating not only the quality of your ideas but also your writing style, method of organization, ability to avoid grammatical mistakes, etc. You will be graded on a variety of activities—essays, exams, a project, participation in class discussion, and possibly other activities, such as quizzes, but the quality of your writing will be the biggest determinant of your grade in this class. In calculating your semester grade, I use a 90-80-70 scale. I anticipate assigning activities totaling 1,000 points for the semester, thus 900 for an A, 800 for a B, and 700 for a C. If I make any changes to this total (for example, adding reading quizzes if class discussion is weak), you will be forewarned. This class is graded on an A, B, C, and NC (no credit) basis, so YOU MUST EARN 700 POINTS (OR 70%) TO PASS THIS CLASS.
REQUIREMENTS AND THEIR POINT TOTALS:

- **ESSAYS, 500 POINTS**
  - Essay #1, poetry, 500 - 750 words long, 100 points—Mandatory conferences
  - Essay #2, fiction, 750 - 1,250 words long, 200 points
  - Essay #3, drama, 1,000 - 1,500 words long, 200 points

- **EXAMS, 300 POINTS**—all are primarily essay in nature; be prepared to write!!
  - Exam #1, poetry, 100 points
  - Exam #2, fiction, 100 points
  - Exam #3, drama, 100 points (given during finals week, but NOT a comprehensive exam)

- **PROJECT AND PARTICIPATION, 200 POINTS**
  - Research Project, 100 points — More on this later, but the following is a brief explanation:
    - You will conduct research on the author or literary work of your choice. You will select and narrow your own topic, and you will be evaluated not only on the quality of your ideas and writing, but also on the effective use of MLA parenthetical documentation. The project is designed to allow you to pursue authors, topics and issues that interest you but which are not covered by our syllabus or class discussions.
  - Participation, 100 points. I find constant lectures to be boring, but if we're to have a class based on discussion rather than lecture, your participation is crucial. You must show up and you must speak out in our discussions—BOTH factors will be used heavily in determining your participation grade. If you rarely speak out in our class discussions, expect to earn no higher than a C- on participation, even if you have perfect attendance. And if you have excessive absences from class, expect to earn no higher than a D, even if you frequently speak out in our discussions when you're here. Other factors that go along with a solid participation grade include having a positive attitude, arriving prepared and on time, paying attention in class, treating your classmates with respect, and so forth. **IF I FIND CLASS DISCUSSION TO BE PARTICULARLY WEAK I WILL ASSUME THAT IS IN PART BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT READING THE MATERIAL FULLY. TO REMEDY THE PROBLEM, I WILL GIVE UNANNOUNCED READING QUIZZES (SOMETHING I HOPE I WILL NOT HAVE TO DO). BUT IF THIS DOES HAPPEN, THE SEMESTER POINT TOTAL WILL BE ALTERED, THOUGH I WILL STILL GRADE ON A 90-80-70 SCALE.**

CONFERENCES: I will schedule mandatory conferences for the first essay during which time we will discuss your rough draft of this assignment and any other questions you may have, but I encourage you to come by any time that you have a question or problem—that’s what I’m here for! Don’t hesitate—typically I can be of greater help the sooner I know of any difficulties you’re having in class; waiting until the day before an assignment is due or until the last week of the semester isn’t allowing yourself time to work and improve. If my office hours don’t fit your schedule, we can arrange a different, mutually convenient time for a conference.

VOICE MAIL: While I don’t give out my unlisted home phone number, I do encourage you to call me at my office phone, even at times other than my posted office hours. If I’m not in, my phone is equipped with voice mail, so be sure to leave a message INCLUDING YOUR PHONE NUMBER, and I’ll get back to you shortly—I typically pick up my messages several times a day.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT’S POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work” (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.
TENTATIVE SYLLABUS, FALL 1998
ENG 1002-C, VEACH

(P = Poetry book; F = Fiction/ Short Stories book; D = Drama book; H = Handout)

AUGUST

M 24 Intro to course and policies; writing sample; Poetry terminology (handout); “Those Winter Sundays” (P 12-13)
W 26 Tips for approaching poetry (P 26-28); Distinguishing good from bad: “Traveling Through the Dark” (P 118) and “Thoughts on Capital Punishment” (H). Also: before class, thumb through the poetry textbook and select a poem you believe to be a strong one. Write a 1 - 2 page analysis of the poem, discussing the qualities that make it such a good poem.

M 31 Speaker: “Home Burial” (300-303), “Patterns” (H), “The Mother” (364)

SEPTEMBER

W  2 Imagery: “The Fish” (P 19), “Dulce Et Decorum Est” (P 76), & “My Grandmother’s Love Letters” (H)

M  7 NO CLASS; LABOR DAY

W  9 Diction: “The Elder Sister” & “Ex-Basketball Player” (both H); Tone: “Still I Rise” (H) and “My Arkansas” (P 345)

M 14 Tone: “Race’ Politics,” “Rape” (both H) and “Daddy” (P 410); Read section on writing about poetry (P 556+)—Essay # 1 assigned

W 16 Theme: “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” (P 446), “A Blessing,” and “The Gift” (both H); Study sheet for Exam # 1 distributed in class

M 21 An Author’s Work—Anne Sexton: “Her Kind” (P 168); “To a Friend . . . ,” “The Starry Night,” “The Truth the Dead Know,” “The Lost Ingredient,” “The Twelve Dancing Princesses,” and “All My Pretty Ones” (All H)

W 23 EXAM # 1 ON POETRY—bring your own paper and a pen or pencil

M 28 No Class—Conferences on Essay # 1 in my office (Coleman Hall 339-C); Be sure you’ve signed up!

W 30

OCTOBER

M  5 ESSAY # 1 DUE!!! Elements of fiction lecture. Style: “The Story of an Hour” (F 320-21), “Hills Like White Elephants” (F 615-18)

W  7 Point-of-View: “A Rose for Emily” (F 457 - 463)

M 12 Setting: “Sonny’s Blues” (F 74-97); Essay #2 Assigned

W 14 Tone: “The Things They Carried” (F 1022-35)

M 19 Symbol: “The Shawl” (F 1098-1101); “The Red Convertible” (F 448-55); Review sheet for Exam # 2 distributed

W 21 Theme: “Lost in the Funhouse” (F 105-122); Humor: “The Kugelmass Episode” (F 32-41)

M 28 EXAM # 2—bring your own paper and pen or pencil

W 28 Intro to drama—Hamlet (D 249- 312)—Act I only; Wed. nite, place and time TBA, video of Hamlet shown

NOVEMBER

M  2 ESSAY #2 DUE!!! “ Acts I & II; Act III Scene 1

W  4 “ Act III
M 9 ** Act III & IV
W 11 Act V; Essay # 3 Assigned; Wed. nite, place and time TBA, video of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* shown

M 16 *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (D 939-84)
W 18 ** & RESEARCH PROJECT DUE!!!!!!

M 23 and W 25 THANKSGIVING RECESS; NO CLASSES!

M 30 *Death of a Salesman* (D 997-1041)

DECEMBER

W 2 **

M 7 ESSAY # 3 DUE!!! Video of *Death of A Salesman*
W 9 LAST CLASS DAY!!! Finish video; Review sheet for Exam # 3 on drama distributed

FINAL EXAM:

W 16 2:45 - 4:45– bring your own paper and pen or pencil