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ENG 2205-003: Introduction to Literary Studies

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Introduction to Literary Studies  Spring 2000

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Coleman 3391   581-6984 (office), 367-6253 (home)
Office Hours: 10-11, 1-2 T/R, and by appt.

Books:
Chopin, The Awakening
Fishkin, Lighting Out for the Territory
Morrison, Beloved
Twain, Huckleberry Finn

This course is intended to help you launch your formal study of literature in the program. Throughout the semester we will be talking about various approaches to literary study, techniques of reading and discussion, different kinds of writing one might do, and so forth. I would also like us to think about some of the deeper questions English majors ought to ask themselves. Why did they choose this major? What value or import does literature and art in general have for them? What importance does it have for the times in which we live? How do we defend or advocate reading in our own particular moment, either in our personal or our professional lives?

My course policies are straightforward. If you want an A, act like an A student, and we all know what that means. This is a discussion class, and participation in the things we will talk about is a key piece of everyone's final grade. Attendance is also key. I expect people to come to class regularly, up to speed on the reading, and ready to go. At the end of the term, you will be evaluated according to your overall performance in the class—were you active, were you there, were you somebody who made a difference to the class as a whole? You will also write several papers during the term and be responsible for a presentation or two. In general, in terms of evaluation I try to be fair and appreciative of the efforts that people have made. Hold up your end of the bargain, and I will hold up mine.

Schedule I

1/11  Introduction
1/13  reading autobiographies
1/18  reading autobiographies
1/20  reading autobiographies
1/25  Twain, Huckleberry Finn
1/27  Twain, Huckleberry Finn
2/1   essays about Huckleberry Finn to be assigned
2/3   Fishkin, Lighting Out for the Territory