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ENG 2205-002: Introduction to Literary Studies

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English 2205-002  Introduction to Literary Studies  
Fall semester 2000  
TTH 9:30-10:45  CH 313  
Dr. Susan Bazargan  
Office: CH323 Office Hours: T: 11-12, W 11-12, 1 -3 and by appointment  
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**Required texts:**  
Barnard, *A Short History of English Literature*  
Barnet, *An Introduction to Literature*  
Barry, *Beginning Theory*  
Holman, *A Handbook to Literature*  
Joyce, *The Dead*  
Lentricchia, *Critical Terms for Literary Study*  
Richter, *The Critical Tradition*  
Richter, *Falling into Theory* (FT)  
Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**Course Description and Requirements:**  
Besides being able to write well, every English major needs to have:  
1) basic ("level I") reading skills that would allow him/her to read and understand prose, poetry, and drama  
2) a familiarity with the history of English and American literature, the periods, movements, major figures and works  
3) a familiarity with the history of literary criticism (where did the ideas we use to talk about literature come from? how have they changed? what issues are relevant today?)  
4) skills to do research and collect material relevant to the examination of a certain topic  
5) a knowledge of the theories of reading which will allow him/her to develop "level II" reading skills.  
In this introductory course, we will try to pay attention to all five areas of study, but the main focus of our work will be 1, 3, and 5. You'll be introduced to some basic tools and strategies used by a literary scholar. You'll become familiar with the rudiments of the history of literary criticism, its main concepts and issues, and you'll be asked to explore the activity that occupies a great deal of your time and yet is taken for granted: the act of reading. You will find out why and how a text can be read in different ways, and you'll be asked to evaluate readings using different theoretical approaches. This is an exciting and challenging course. Your active participation in class discussions is expected.

Attendance policy: If you have more than two unexcused absences during the semester, your grade for the course will be lowered by one point. If you are ill or have to take care of an emergency, CALL (see phone numbers above) and let me know.
Assignments, papers and presentations:
1) Class questions: Each day when you come to class, bring with you a list of three written questions on the assigned material for that day. I will collect these “lists” at the beginning of the class period. I’m hoping these questions will substitute for quizzes. If I get a sense that you are not keeping up with the reading, I’ll start giving quizzes at the beginning of each class. Your questions will be used during class discussions.
2) Library project
3) Three short papers (see instructions)

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam for this course.

Grading policy: Class questions and active participation in discussions: 15%; Paper # 1: 10%; Paper # 2: 15%; Paper # 3 (Casebook): 20%; Library project: 10%; Midterm 15%; Final 15%

Conferences: Please stop by my office to discuss any problem or question related to the course. You can also make an appointment if my regular office hours are inconvenient for you.

The English Department policy on plagiarism states that "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 responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office." If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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Class meetings:
How We Read: A basic review


8/24: Bring Holman and Barnet. Read pages 606-610 and pages 612-613 in Barnet. Look up the following terms in Holman: imagery, tone, apostrophe, irony, allegory, persona, image, stanza, sonnet, lyric, paradox, negative capability. Discussion of the following poems: Dickinson, “Those—dying, then” and “Apparently with no surprise”; Frost, “The Road Not Taken” and “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”; Thomas, “Do not go gentle into that good night”; Shakespeare, “Sonnet 29.”
8/29: Barnet, Poems (continued) and "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers." Written response to a poem using the vocabulary and concepts we've studied. Discussion of all assignments.

8/31: Joyce, "The Dead." Look up the following terms in Holman: realism, point of view, allusion, symbol, setting, epiphany, characterization, denouement, explication de texte.

9/5: How to do research. Visit to the Library. Bring with you the list of questions!

II. How We read: Some Critical Maps
9/7: Richter, CT, "Introduction" pp. 1-8
   "The Melting Pot"; "Dulce et Decorum Est" (in Barnet)

9/12: Library Project is due.
Richter, CT, Introduction to Plato, 17-20
   "Digging"; "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (in Barnet)

9/14: Richter, CT, Introduction to Aristotle 38-42; from Poetics, 42-44.
In Holman, look up "Criticism" (pp. 112-113); "The New Criticism"; "Intentional Fallacy"; "Affective Fallacy"

9/19: Richter, FT, "How we Read" 205-217.
Barry, "Introduction" and "Theory before 'theory'--liberal humanism"

9/21: Mary Shelley, Frankenstein

9/26: Shelley, Frankenstein

III. How we read: Beyond The New Criticism.
Some Issues in Literary Studies
9/28: The Canon and Race: Guillory, "Canon" and Appiah, "Race" in Lentricchia and Paper # 1 is due


10/5: Jehlen, "Gender" in Lentricchia. Steinbeck, "The Chrysantemums" in Barnet


10/12: Midterm Exam
IV: How we Read: Some theoretical approaches

10/17: Barry, “Structuralism”

10/19: Barry, “Post-Structuralism and Deconstruction”. **Paper # 2 is due**

10/24: Barry, “Feminist Criticism”; Schweickart, “Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading” in Richter, FT

10/26: Barry, “New Historicism” pp. 172-182 and “Postcolonial Criticism”


11/7: “Feminist Criticism and ‘The Dead’” and “Deconstruction and ‘The Dead’”

11/9: “Psychoanalytic Criticism and *Frankenstein*” and “Reader-Response Criticism and *Frankenstein*”

11/14: “Marxist Criticism and *Frankenstein*” and “Cultural Criticism and *Frankenstein*”

V. A Glance at Literary History
Invited lecturers
11/16: Barnard, Chapter 1

Thanksgiving Break

11/28: Barnard, Chapter 6

11/30: **Paper # 3 (casebook) is due.** Barnard, Chapters 7, 8, 9

12/5: Barnard, Chapters 10 and 11

12/7: Barnard, Chapters 12, 13, 14.

The date of the final exam will be announced later.

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Assignments for English 2205:
I. Library project (see handout and questions)
II. Paper # 1: The Personal Essay (3 pages or longer)
   This essay will have two parts. In part one, using the questions Peter Barry asks (pp. 8-9) about your interest in becoming an English major, write a few paragraphs reviewing your study of literature. In part two of the paper, choose one of your old essays (a literary analysis of a novel, play, poem, or short story) and explore this question: How did I arrive at this interpretation? Other related questions are: What are the critical assumptions and principles that rule the way I read? What are the conventions I follow while reading? The purpose of the assignment is to make you aware of yourself as a student of literature and the choices you make as you read. Make use of some of the concepts/ideas you've learned about critical approaches in recent weeks. Attach a copy of your original paper to your analysis.
III. Paper # 2: The Research Essay (5 pages or longer)
   Focus on a special period before 1900 in English or American literature and research a specific social, political, or cultural problem, change or phenomenon during that time. (This could be an uprising, a reform movement, a notable shift in a cultural practice, an illness, a scientific discovery, a new interest in travel, commerce, etc.) Then choose a literary work from that period and write an essay in which you explore the ways in which the author has directly or indirectly dealt with this issue in his/her work. Please document your sources according to the MLA style.
IV. Paper # 3 (4-5 page Introduction + selected essays):
   Your final project is preparing a casebook on a text of your choice. Follow the examples of the two casebooks you have on “The Dead” and Frankenstein. See also Barnet for a casebook study of Heart of Darkness. In your casebook, include 4-5 related critical essays you've found in various journals. Write a 4-5 page Introduction in which you briefly discuss the essays and tell the reader why you've chosen these pieces, how they relate to one another, what their critical approaches are, and why these particular ways of reading are useful in reading/understanding your chosen text. Please document your sources according to the MLA style.

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Optional readings:
For those of you who want to do extra readings in critical theory or gain “bonus points” (this would require writing a report on the readings), the following essays in Richter’s Critical Theory which are related to the material studied in class are recommended:
English 2205
Library Research Project

1. Find two journal articles in two different journals dealing with Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Document these sources using the MLA style.

2. Find and read one review on one of your favorite novels. Document the source and annotate it.

3. Write 1-2 sentences defining these terms: Restoration Drama, Romanticism, Modernism

4. Using the *OED*, find and quote definitions for the following terms: Victorian, Imperialism, Epiphany

5. Using a Shakespeare concordance, determine in which play the line “there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow” appears.

6. Using the *DNB*, find two interesting details about the life of Charles Dickens. To which literary period in English literature does Dickens belong?

7. Using the proper resource, find out why it was difficult for James Joyce to have his collection of short stories *Dubliners* published.

8. Using the proper resource, find out where the motif of “descent into hell” appears in two literary works.

9. Looking ahead: For your second paper, you need to do research in a certain time period in English or American literature. If you have already chosen a topic, find and document one critical essay you might consider for this assignment. Second option: find and document one critical essay on James Joyce’s “The Dead.”

Please type your answers on a separate sheet.