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ENG 2205-001: Introduction to Literary Studies

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English 2205-001  Introduction to Literary Studies
Fall semester 2001
TTH 11-12:45  CH 3150
Dr. Susan Bazargan
Office: CH3765  Office Hours: T: 3:30-6:30, Th: 1-2  and by appointment
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Required texts:
Barnard, A Short History of English Literature
Barnet, An Introduction to Literature
Holman, A Handbook to Literature
Joyce, The Dead
Lentricchia, Critical Terms for Literary Study
Richter, The Critical Tradition (CT)
Richter, Falling into Theory (FT)
Shelley, Frankenstein
Xeroxed material (at Copy X-Press)

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 exams:
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) Two short papers and a casebook study (see instructions)

Exams: There will be a midterm exam (covering what we have studied until the date of the midterm) and a final exam (covering what we’ve studied since the midterm).

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**

8/23: 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.”

8/28: Barnet, Poems (continued) and “Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers.” Written response to a poem using the vocabulary and concepts we’ve studied.

8/30: Joyce, “The Dead.” Look up the following terms in Holman: realism, point of view, allusion, symbol, setting, epiphany, characterization, denouement, explication de texte.

9/4: How to do research. Visit to the Library. Bring with you the list of questions!

**II. How We Read: Some Critical Maps**
9/6: Richter, CT, “Introduction” (first 8 pages)
“Melting Pot”; “Dulce et Decorum Est” (in Barnet)

9/11: Library Project is due.
Richter, CT, Introduction to Plato
“Digging”; “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (in Barnet)

9/13: Richter, CT, Introduction to Aristotle; from Poetics (first 3 pages)
In Holman, look up “Criticisms” (pp. 112-113); “The New Criticism”; “Intentional Fallacy”; “Affective Fallacy”

9/18: Richter, FT, “How we Read” 235-252

9/20: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

9/25: Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**III. How we read: Beyond The New Criticism.**

Some Issues in Literary Studies
9/27: The Canon and Race: Guillory, “Canon” and Appiah, “Race” in Lentricchia and

Paper # 1 is due

for English B” and Chopin, “Desiree’s Baby”


10/9: Woolf, from A Room of One’s Own (in Richter, CT)

10/11: Midterm Exam


IV: How We Read: Some theoretical approaches

10/18: Marxist Criticism: Read pp. 300-311 in Frankenstein

Paper # 2 is due

10/23: Cultural Criticism: Read pp. 312-340 in Frankenstein

10/25: Psychoanalytic Criticism: Read pp. 230-241 in Frankenstein

10/30: Reader Response Criticism: pp. 1407-1410 in Barnet and 125-147 in The Dead

11/1: Feminist Criticism: 1415-1422c in Barnet and 178-204 in The Dead

11/6: The New Historicism: Read pp. 206-233 in The Dead

11/8: Deconstruction. Read pp. 1406-7 in Barnet and 206-233 in The Dead


V. A Glance at Literary History (segments of the 19th and 20th centuries)


Thanksgiving Break

11/27: Poems by Shelley and Keats (hand-out)

Barnard, Chapter 13 and 14: Poems by Tennyson and Browning; Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest

Paper # 3 (Casebook) is due

11/29: Wilde (continued)
"Sailing to Byzantium"

12/6: Review and Evaluation

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, write about how you became interested in
   reading and writing. You may recall childhood memories and relevant incidents--how
   you fell in love with books. You can then explore your experiences as an adult
   reader/writer and the reasons why you decided to become an English major. 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 (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 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.
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:
Karl Marx (introduction) and “Consciousness Derived from Material Conditions”; Matthew Arnold, “The Function of Criticism and the Present Time”; Sigmund Freud,
“Creative Writers and Daydreaming”; T.S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent”; Virginia Woolf (the two essays from A Room of One’s Own); Jacques Derrida,
“Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human sciences”; Michel Foucault,
‘Race,’ and the Difference it Makes.” (For more suggestions, see me.)
English 2205
Library Research Project

1. Find two journal articles in two different journals dealing with James Joyce’s “The Dead.” 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, Post-modernism

4. Using the OED, find and quote definitions for the following terms: Victorian, Feminism, 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 William Wordsworth Dickens. To which literary period in English literature does Wordsworth 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. Find a biographical essay on a contemporary author; read the essay and write a brief summary of it. Document the essay.

10. Find three websites useful in doing research on literary material. Document these.

Please type your answers on a separate sheet.