

Critical Methods in English
50:350:220
Spring 2012
T/Th 11-12:20 ATG 109
Office hours T/Th 12:30-1:30 and by
appointment

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Course Description

This course presents the English major with the foundational skills to succeed in the discipline. The student will be expected to become proficient in using literary terms and familiar with critical approaches to literary study. Other important goals of the course include becoming a careful, analytical reader and developing arguments about literature in both oral and written formats. Because the course serves as an introduction, we will cover a wide variety of historical periods and genres.

Texts

- *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing*, Compact 6th Edition, eds. Kennedy/Gioia, Longman, 2010
- Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive*, Dramatists Play Series, 1997
- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Longman, 2007
- Selections on e-reserves

Requirements and Grading

- 3 short 3-page papers 30%
- 4-page explication of a poem 15%
- 5-page research paper 20%
- Final exam 20%
- Dramatic Performance 5%
- Attendance, participation, and short assignments 10%

Academic Integrity

Refraining from plagiarism or cheating in any form fosters an environment of fairness vital to your academic success and that of your peers. Because “grey areas” can appear in a variety of situations, please review the Rutgers Camden academic integrity policy: <http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-Integrity-Policy.php>. You will be held accountable to this standard. If you have any questions about citations, group work, or exam preparation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Participation

Being absent from class *more than twice* over the course of the semester will seriously affect your participation grade. Since we only meet twice a week, coming to class is vital; however, to receive an “A” for the participation portion, *you must be both present and actively engaged* with the class during discussion. I define “active engagement” as the following: answering and/or asking questions, responding to your classmates’ ideas, being an active participant in group work, and volunteering to read passages.

Late Papers or Assignments

Late papers are subject to a reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade for each calendar day past the due date. For example, if the paper is due Monday and the student turns it in on Tuesday, the paper that would have been an A will now earn an A-. On Wednesday the grade will become a B+, on Thursday a B, and so on.

Texting . . .

is not allowed at any time. If you have an emergency and need to make a phone call or send a message, please quietly leave the classroom to take care of your personal business.

Assignments

I. The Short Story

T	01.17.12	Introduction to the course
Th	01.19.12	“Paying Attention to Plot” pp. 20-21; Tim O’Brien, <i>The Things They Carried</i>
T	01.24.12	“Point of View” pp. 23-28; James Baldwin, <i>Sonny’s Blues</i>
Th	01.26.12	Charlotte Perkins Gillman, <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> ; “Critics on <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> ” pp. 304-308
T	01.31.12	“Character” pp. 74-77; James Carver, <i>Cathedral</i>
Th	02.02.12	Flannery O’Connor, <i>A Good Man is Hard to Find</i> ; J.O. Tate, “A Good Source is Not So Hard to Find” pp. 270-72; 3-page paper on point-of-view due
T	02.07.12	“Setting” pp. 113-115; Amy Tan, <i>A Pair of Tickets</i>
Th	02.09.12	“Symbol” pp. 206-08; Alice Walker, <i>Everyday Use</i>
T	02.14.12	Edgar Allen Poe, <i>The Tell-tale Heart</i> ; Poe on Writing pp. 283-84

II. Poetry

Th	02.16.12	<i>The Sound of Poetry</i> : Edgar Allen Poe, “The Raven” (e-reserves); Lord Tennyson, “Break, Break, Break” 579; Walt Whitman, “Beat! Beat! Drums!” 587; Jean Toomer, “Reapers” 507; Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool” 579; 3-page paper on setting due
T	02.21.12	<i>The Sonnet Form</i> : “Rhyme” and “Sonnet” (e-reserves); William Shakespeare, “Let me not the marriage of true minds” 598; Mary Sidney Wroth, “In This Strange Labyrinth” 826; John Donne, “Batter My Heart” 470; William Wordsworth, “Composed Upon Westminster Bridge” 825; Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “How Do I Love Thee?” 762
Th	02.23.12	<i>Figurative Language (Similes and Metaphors) and Versification</i> : “Versification” (e-reserves); John Keats “To Autumn” (e-reserves); Robert Burns, “A Red Red Rose” 537; Shakespeare, “My Mistress’

Eyes are Nothing Like the Sun” 811; Sylvia Plath, “Lady Lazarus” 655

- T 02.28.12 *Figurative Language (Personification)*: Emily Dickinson, “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” 687; John Keats, “Bright Star” 491; Anonymous “O Moon” 661; Philip Larkin, “Home Is So Sad” 766; Robert Herrick, “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time” 758;
Poetry Worksheet on Rhyme Due
- Th 03.01.12 *Images, The Poetic Voice, and Tone*: Sylvia Plath, “Daddy” 778; Robert Lowell, “Skunk Hour” 770; John Donne, “The Flea” 744; Elizabeth Bishop, “One Art” 669; Ben Jonson, “On My First Son” 763; Emily Dickinson, “My Life had stood- a Loaded Gun” 504; Blake, “London” 472; **Scansion Worksheet due**
- T 03.06.12 *Theme*: A. E. Housman, “To an Athlete Dying Young” 761; W.H. Auden, “Funeral Blues” 528; Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est” 443; Dylan Thomas, “Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night” 580
- III. Drama, Tragedy
- Th 03.08.12 “Tragedy” pp. 828-30; “The Theater of Shakespeare” pp. 907-08; William Shakespeare, *Othello* Acts 1 and 2; **3 page paper on Figurative language due**
- T 03.13.12 SPRING RECESS
- Th 03.15.12 SPRING RECESS
- T 03.20.12 *Othello* Acts 3 and 4; **Shakespeare “translation” exercise due**
- Th 03.22.12 Library Instruction Day
- T 03.27.12 *Othello* Act 5
- IV. The Novel
- Th 03.29.12 Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: Introduction xv-xxv and chapters 1-5, pp. 3-75
- T 04.03.12 *Dorian Gray*: chapters 6-12, pp. 75-152; Victorian Reactions to *DG* pp. 239-248
- Th 04.05.12 *Dorian Gray*: chapters 13-20, pp. 153-220; Wilde’s Trials pp. 262-269;
4-page explication of a poem paper due today
- V. Drama, Tragicomedy
- T 04.10.12 “Tragicomedy and the Absurd” 1111-14; Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive* pp. 4-25, up to the section that begins “On Men, Sex, and Women: Part I”
- Th 04.12.12 *How I Learned to Drive* pp. 25-61; **story vs. plot exercise due**

T	04.17.12	Research paper workshop day; “rough draft” due in class for workshop
Th	04.19.12	<i>Othello</i> Performance Day
T	04.24.12	<i>Othello</i> Performance Day
Th	04.26.12	Exam Review; 5-page research paper on <i>Dorian Gray</i> due today
FINAL EXAM		THURSDAY MAY 3, 2012 2-5PM