

Bridgewater State University

Syllabus Summer 2019

ENGL 203: Writing About Literature

May 27 – June 21, 2019

Instructor: Lee Torda, PhD

Email: ltorda@bridgew.edu

Phone: 508.531.2436

www.leetorda.com

Description

Writing About Literature will help you develop the reading, writing, and basic research skills necessary for success in English Studies. Together we will read, think about, and discuss a variety of poems, short stories, and plays; we will examine the three major literary genres (poetry, fiction, drama); discuss the critical terms applicable to these genres; and become familiar with a few of the major theoretical approaches to literature.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- read literary texts independently and develop your own critical responses to them;
- identify the most significant elements of fiction, drama and poetry using appropriate terminology;
- recognize and critique various theoretical approaches, such as feminism, new historicism, cultural criticism and psychoanalytic criticism;
- write fully developed critical essays with appropriate primary and secondary sources documented in MLA format.

Required Texts

Mays, Kelly, ed. *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. Shorter 11th edition. New York: Norton, 2013. ISBN 978-0-393-91339-2

Hamilton, Sharon. *Essential Literary Terms*. Second Edition. New York: Norton, 2017. ISBN 978-0-393-28389-1

Recommended, not required

MLA Handbook. 8th Edition. New York: MLA, 2016. ISBN 9781603292627

Requirements and Grading

Three short (3 page) essays: Essay 1: Close Reading 10% Essay 2: Secondary Source 10% Essay 3: Research 30%	50%
Oral Presentation – Literary Terms Each student will make one brief presentation to the class on a single literary term. Details attached.	10%

<p>Participation/Preparedness/Attendance</p> <p>You will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • come to class with reading and writing assignments completed and in hand • engage in large and/or small group discussions • respond thoughtfully to your peers’ and my ideas • come to class ready to engage others and be engaged yourself • meet at least twice during the semester with our PA. Failure to hold two meetings with your PA will reduce your Participation grade by a full grade (i.e., from B to C). <p>You are allowed 3 absences without penalty. Each additional absence, whatever the cause, lowers your Participation grade by 1/3. (For example, if your Participation grade is a B+ and you’ve missed four classes, it drops to a B; five, and it’s a B-). If illness or other catastrophe results in sustained absence, you risk failure and I will recommend that you withdraw from the course.</p>	15%
<p>Reading Journals</p> <p>Journals are “warm up” for the longer essays and provide you an informal space to think through, in writing, your responses to the texts we read. Because each class essentially represents a week during a regular semester, you will write about one of the literary selections (poem, story, or play) assigned each day. Journals are typed and due <i>in class</i>. For each entry, do the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Choose</i> one brief passage from one of the day’s assigned readings that catches your attention. “Brief” means longer than a sentence and shorter than a page. Do not transcribe the passage you are responding to – just tell me what page it’s on, where it begins and ends, etc. <i>Summarize</i> the main ideas, images, and/or meaning(s) of the passage – not the entire text, just the selected passage – in a short (minimum 3 sentences) paragraph. <i>Analyze</i> a significant element of the passage (in at least 7 sentences). You could address questions that you have about the text and its meaning, themes you have identified, passages or lines that you find powerful or ambiguous, or connections you have made between the text and its context. Be sure to include quotations as evidence and analyze your selected evidence. <p>Reading Journals are graded with a check (pretty good – you’re trying to get at some important ideas), check plus (I loved reading it – you’re showing careful thought) and check minus (put more thought into it next time – you’re summarizing rather than analyzing, or not putting much thought into your analysis).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to earn a B grade for the 15% of your grade determined by reading journals, you must earn a check or higher on all but three journals. • In order to earn an A grade for the 15% of your grade determined by reading journals, you must earn a check plus on all but three journals. • In order to earn a C grade for 15% of your grade determined by reading journals, you must earn a check minus on all but three journals. <p>Additionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can revise any reading journal that earns less than a check plus as many times as you want until you earn a check plus. • You must turn in a reading journal of some sort on the day the journal is due in order to earn the right to revise. 	15%
<p>Final Exam</p>	10%

Grade	Description	4-point Equivalent	100-point
A	Superior	4.0	95-100
A-	Superior	3.7	90-94
B+	Good	3.3	87-89
B	Good	3.0	83-86
B-	Good	2.7	80-82
C+	Satisfactory	2.3	77-79
C	Satisfactory	2.0	73-76
C-	Satisfactory	1.7	70-72
D	Poor	1.0	65-69
F	Failure	0.0	0-64

For the three short essays, I accept late work without penalty if you and I have discussed the delay (either in person or via email) at least one day before the work is due and set an alternative due date. However, work submitted *without my prior approval* will drop one full grade for every day that elapses from the due date to the time of submission (including weekends). No exceptions.

Essay Format and Submission

All writing completed outside of class time must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 pt. font, with 1” margins (left, right, top and bottom). Include a Works Cited page. Follow current MLA (Modern Language Association) format for in-text citations and works cited pages. Please print double-sided, if your printer has this function. You may submit essays (on the day they are due) via email.

Mutual responsibilities

I expect you to come to class on time, prepared, ready to participate, and responsible for your own learning. I expect you to treat me and your peers with courtesy and respect, and in turn you can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect. I will work hard to be fair and provide positive support, as well as create interesting, informative, and enjoyable class sessions which promote your learning.

Plagiarism and Fraud

Plagiarism is a very serious academic offense; it is equivalent to theft. Using another person’s ideas in your research is an accepted and appropriate part of scholarly writing, as long as you give credit to that person. **Any time** you refer to, quote, or in any way use another person’s publicly presented ideas – not just their language, but their ideas – in your own oral or written work, you **must** provide an in-text citation and a reference in a “Works Cited” page. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** It includes material taken from the Web, from printed texts, from video, DVD, CD, etc.

If you plagiarize, at the very least you will receive a failing grade on the essay in question. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, you may fail the course and/or face disciplinary action before the university’s Academic Review Panel. Regardless of the outcome, I report all substantiated academic integrity violations to the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. Consult the Bridgewater State University *Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog 2016-2017* for a detailed discussion of BSU’s Academic Integrity Policy .

Schedule of Assignments

Days of Instruction	Reading Due	Writing Due
5/27	Introduction & Diagnostic Exam	
Section one: reading, responding to, writing about poetry		
5/28	<i>Norton Introduction to Literature</i> , "Poetry," 670-684 <i>Norton</i> , "Speaker: Whose Voice Do We Hear?" 707-715 Critical Approach #1: New Criticism, 1906-1910	Reading Journal #1
5/29	<i>Norton</i> , "Situation and Setting," 735 - 749. <i>Norton</i> , "Theme and Tone," 765-769. <i>Norton</i> , "Word Choice and Order," 788-795. Critical Approach #2: Structuralism and Poststructuralism (1910-1912).	Reading Journal #2
5/30	Review MLA style changes	Essay 1 Draft Due: Workshop Essay 1
5/31	<i>Norton</i> , "Visual Imagery and Figures of Speech," 802-812. Symbol: <i>Norton</i> , 813-824. Scansion. <i>Norton</i> , "Sound," 825-838. Hamilton, <i>Essential Literary Terms</i> , 219-231.	Essay 1 due.
6/3 Start of Week Two	Critical Approach #3: Deconstruction (1912-13). Internal Structure: <i>Norton</i> , 857 -866 External Form: <i>Norton</i> , 875 – 887	Reading Journal #3
6/4	Sample Poetic Form: The Sonnet. Read <i>Norton</i> , 889-901. Context: <i>Norton</i> , 908-909; Emily Dickinson: 945-950	Reading Journal #4
6/5	Poetry Slam	Your Poem Workshop Essay 2
Section 2: reading, responding to, writing about prose fiction.		
6/6	<i>Norton</i> , "Plot," 82 – 84. Edith Wharton, "Roman Fever," 118. <i>Norton</i> , "Narration and Point of View," 160-164. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Cask of Amontillado," 164.	Reading Journal #5

6/7 Essay #2 due	<i>Norton</i> , "Character," 180-187. Toni Morrison, "Recitatif," 200. Critical Approach #4: Biographical Criticism (1914-1916).	Essay #2 due.
6/10 Start of Week Three	<i>Norton</i> , "Setting," 245-247. Amy Tan, "A Pair of Tickets," 263. Critical Approach #5: Psychoanalytic Criticism (1916-1917). <i>Norton</i> , "Symbol and Figurative Language," 285 – 290. Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birth-Mark," 290.	Reading Journal #6
6/11	<i>Norton</i> , "Theme," 334-338. Louise Erdrich, "Love Medicine," 361-377. Critical Approach #6: Reader-Response Criticism (1919-1920). Critical Approach #7: Marxist & Feminist Criticism (1920-1924). Jhumpa Lahiri, "Interpreter of Maladies," 398-412.	Reading Journal #7
6/12	Critical Approach #8: Gender Studies and Queer Theory; African American and Ethnic Literary Studies (1924-1926). Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find," 422-433	Argument Paragraph Due
6/13	Flannery O'Connor, "Good Country People," 433-447	Research Essay Proposal Due
6/14	Critical Excerpts, 461 William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily," 514. Sample Research Essay	Reading Journal #8 Sample Research Essay Critique Worksheet
6/17 Start of Week Four	Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener," 622.	Annotated Bibliography Due
6/18	Critical Approaches Catch-Up Day	Workshop 1, Research Essay
Section 3: Reading, responding to, writing about drama		
6/19	Elements of Drama. Read <i>Norton</i> , 1180-1190 Critical Approach #9: New Historicism (1927-1928)	Workshop 2, Research Essay
6/20	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , 1565-1597. Critical Approach #10: Cultural Studies (1928-1929) <i>Antigone</i> , critical contexts. Nussbaum, from <i>The Fragility of Goodness</i> , 1605.	Research Essay Due
6/21 Last Day of Class	Critical Approach #11: Postcolonial Criticism and Studies of World Literature (1929-1920)	Final Exam