

This syllabus has been provided as a reference tool for students considering this course. It has been modified to follow Senate regulations. Current students enrolled in any undergraduate course must obtain the most recent syllabus from their course instructor or from their course website. This is not the latest version.



## Department of English & Writing Studies

### **Understanding Literature Today** **English 1020E (002)** Fall/Winter 2013-14

**Instructor:** Dr. Allan Pero

**Date/Time:** Tuesday 12:30pm-1:30pm,  
Thursday 12:30pm-1:30pm, plus tutorial

**Location:** Somerville House 3315

#### Prerequisites

Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course.

Antirequisite(s): English 1022E, 1035E.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

#### Course Description

What is Understanding Literature Today? Why might this course be for you? This course is for you if you love the following: reading; feeling the power of words; learning how to harness that power and to make it your own; exploring books that would otherwise intimidate you; and if you love the notion that every time you pick up a great book, you hold a universe in your hands. English Literature is an ongoing search to make meaning from the human condition, to capture in imagination forms of truth and experience that other forms of human knowledge do not or cannot provide. By using core literary concepts, and critical approaches to different genres, we will come together in lectures to think about how ever-evolving ideas about the world shape the literature we read, and how literature has in turn shaped those ideas. In small group tutorials, you will not only apply, question, and test the ideas discussed in the lecture, but also develop and refine the analytical and writing skills necessary to evaluate literature critically. You will emerge from this course armed with several tools: in reading, in writing, in critical reasoning, and in conveying the value and importance of literature to understanding and enriching your life and work.

#### **Objectives:**

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- Develop further their ability to analyze texts critically, and formulate and produce essays which have an effective thesis with a clear, well-articulated intent, and a logical argument supported by adequate evidence from the text(s) under discussion;
- Explain the various theoretical and rhetorical approaches to literature, with specific attention both to their concepts, their historical, cultural and intellectual contexts, and their application to different texts;

- Develop research and writing skills which will not only augment their knowledge of the field of study, but will also be able to incorporate the results of this research into their essays and other assignments; among the basic research skills are the ability to collect relevant bibliographic material on a prescribed topic (online and in the library), and
- critically engage with the scholarly literature with an assessment of the relative merits of an argument in essays and other written/oral assignments, and articulate their own positions within a particular scholarly discussion;
- Develop further their written/oral communication skills in the clear and organized presentation of an argument/hypothesis within the prescribed word limits of the research essays and other written/oral assignments;
- (All of the above are really useful and valuable in the study of English and in other parts of the Real World).

### Course Materials

#### **Required Texts:**

*The Norton Introduction to Literature*, Portable Tenth Edition-bundled with Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: **be sure to buy the right bundle.**  
Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters* (Vintage)  
Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story* (Random House)

#### Methods of Evaluation

2 Response Papers (500 words each) 2 x 5%	10%
Essay 1 (500 words)	5%
Essay 2 (1000 words)	10%
Essay 3 (2000 words)	15%
Mid-Year Exam	10%
Tutorial grade	15%
Final exam	35%

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

#### **Timetable:**

Tues. Sept. 10: Introduction to Class; The Question of Literary Art. (No tutorial this week!)

Thurs. Sept. 12: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 1-2. Read 1891 version!)

Tues. Sept. 17: What is an essay? Why write essays?

Thurs. Sept. 19: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 3-8. Read 1891 version)

Tues. Sept. 24: What is University Writing? What do you need to know?

Thurs. Sept. 26: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 9-12. Read 1891 version)

Tues. Oct. 1: What is critical thinking? How do you develop critical thinking skills?

Thurs. Oct. 3: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 13-16. Read 1891 version)

Tues. Oct 8: Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 17-20. Read 1891 version)

Thurs. Oct. 10: Introduction to the Short Story: James Joyce, "Araby," (Themes: Shopping, Desire and Money)

Tues. Oct. 15: D.H. Lawrence, "The Rocking-Horse Winner" (Themes: Shopping, Desire and Money) (**Essay 1 DUE**)

Thurs. Oct. 17: Introduction to Poetry: W. H. Auden, "Musée des Beaux-Arts" (Ekphrasis-Poems about Art)

Tues. Oct. 22: Adrienne Rich, "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" (Ekphrasis-Poems about Art)

Thurs. Oct. 24: Margaret Atwood, "Death of a Young Son by Drowning" (Voice)

Tues. Oct. 29: Robert Browning, "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," Dorothy Parker, "A Certain Lady," "One Perfect Rose" (Voice/ Dramatic Monologue)

Thurs. Oct. 31: FALL BREAK! NO CLASS!

Tues. Nov. 5: W. H. Auden, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" (Elegy) (**Response 1 DUE**)

Thurs. Nov. 7: Death and War: Wilfred Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est"

Tues. Nov. 12: Death: Emily Dickinson, "Because I could not stop for Death-," Seamus Heaney, "Punishment"

Thurs. Nov. 14: Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (Minimalism, Point of View)

Tues. Nov. 19: William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily" (Point of View)

Thurs. Nov. 21: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" (Point of View)

Tues. Nov. 26: Ezra Pound, "In the Station of the Metro," William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow" and "This Is Just To Say" (Concision and Simplicity)

Thurs. Nov. 28: Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool," Langston Hughes, "Harlem" (Concision and Simplicity)

Tues. Dec. 3: T. S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (Character/Dramatic Monologue)

Thurs. Dec. 5: T. S. Eliot, "Prufrock," continued (**Essay 2 DUE**)

**HOLIDAY (AFTER DECEMBER MID-YEAR EXAM)! FLY! BE FREE! (Well, until January.)**

**SECOND TERM:**

Tues. Jan. 7: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Thurs. Jan. 9: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Tues. Jan. 14: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Thurs. Jan. 16: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Tutorial: Discussion of Barnes

Tues. Jan. 21: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Thurs. Jan. 23: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Tues. Jan. 28: Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*

Thurs. Jan. 30: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" (Love and Loss)

Tues. Feb. 4: Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess," Sylvia Plath, "Daddy" (Love and Loss)

Thurs. Feb. 6: Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Research Essay: Methods

Tues. Feb. 11: Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Thurs. Feb. 13: Sophocles, *Antigone* (Tragedy)

### **Feb. 17-21: READING WEEK**

Tues. Feb. 25: Sophocles, *Antigone* (**RESPONSE 2 DUE**)

Thurs. Feb. 27: Tom Stoppard, *The Real Inspector Hound* (Parody; Postmodern Drama)

Tues. Mar. 4: Tom Stoppard, *The Real Inspector Hound*

Thurs. Mar. 6: Tom Stoppard, *The Real Inspector Hound*

Tues. Mar. 11: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Thurs. Mar. 13: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Tues. Mar. 18: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Thurs. Mar. 20: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Tues. Mar. 25: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Thurs. Mar. 27: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Tues. Apr. 1: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Thurs. Apr. 3: Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*

Tues. Apr. 8: REVIEW for FINAL EXAM (**ESSAY 3 DUE**)

### **Essays:**

Essays 1 and 2 will not be research essays. In second term, Essay 3 will be written as a Research Essay. One of the primary goals of the course is to help you develop critical and writing skills. Andrew and I will be working with you to help you accrue and hone those skills.

### **NOTA BENE (Latin for "Note Well"):**

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

### Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

**Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

**Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

**Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

**Support Services**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.