

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Understanding Literature Today: The Art of Belligerence**

**English 1020E (001)**

Fall/Winter 2019-20

**DRAFT SYLLABUS**

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

**Instructor:** Dr M. J. Kidnie  
Email: [mjkidnie@uwo.ca](mailto:mjkidnie@uwo.ca)  
Office hours: M & W 2:30-3:30 and by arrangement, UC 4420

**Course Location:** [see Fall/Winter 2019-20 Western Timetable](#)

**Course Date/Time:** [see Fall/Winter 2019-20 Western Timetable](#)

**Teaching Assistants:** TBA  
Office hours: TBA

**Antirequisites:** English 1022E, English 1035E.

**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.

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

This course invites students to consider what it means to read literature today. How does literature help us understand our lives in the early twenty-first century? We will consider literature's engagement in history and politics, and our role, as readers of literature, in conversations that shape the worlds in which we live. Through readings of prose, poetry, and drama, we will explore the power of disobedience (whether in face of the state, gods, or family) and the desire to belong. We will also consider, more specifically, aesthetic questions, such as: What is literature? What formal means do writers use to engage thematic preoccupations? How do writers and literary texts speak to one another, sometimes across centuries? Just as importantly, students will learn to make persuasive arguments, honing their writing craft, oral communication, and research skills.

**Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Develop an appreciation of literature that unites historical observation and literary analysis;
- Build a critical reading of a text and write essays that have an effective thesis and a logical argument supported by evidence from the text(s);
- Engage in research and properly document their essays using the MLA guidelines;
- Converse in the language of the discipline, using literary terms and concepts, both in written and oral forms.

Course Materials (all available at the Book Store, apart from the theatre ticket, which you order online – see booking instructions below)

- English Department Fall Production, *Cenci*, dir. Jo Devereux (live staging – December)
- *The Norton Introduction to Literature: Shorter 13th Edition*, ed. Kelly J. Mays (required)
- Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (required)
- Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club* (required)
- Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Cenci* (required)
- Tara Beagan, *Honour Beat* (required)
- Diana Hacker, *Rules for Writers with 2016 MLA Update*, 9th ed. (required)

Methods of Evaluation (assignment descriptions are below)

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Sonnet exercise (5%) – September 25

Four writing assignments:

- #1 (500 words, 5%) – October 16
- #2 (750 words, 5%) – November 11
- #3 (1200 words, 15%) – January 9
- #4 (2000 words, 20%) – February 27

Podcast (10%) – April 3

Tutorial grade (10%)

Final exam (30%)

Submission of Assignments

All submission dates are listed below. In case of seeming discrepancies, the dates below will be taken as final.

Written coursework will be submitted to your TA instructor the day it is due at the beginning or end of lecture. You must also submit written coursework on the due date through our OWL website. OWL will confirm the day and time of submission. Please note that in case of dispute about when your essay was submitted, the OWL submission date will be taken as final.

Late (or early) submissions may be handed in at the Department of English dropbox, which is accessed from the hall outside UC 2401. The secretary will date-stamp your work and put it in my pigeonhole. Anything submitted to the dropbox before 8:30am will be date-stamped with the

*previous day's date.* You must also submit any late or early work through the OWL website, which will also provide you with a date-stamp. Please note that in case of uncertainty, the online OWL date-stamp will be taken as final.

### **LATE PAPER POLICY**

**Grace days.** You are each given six “grace days” in a full-year course which you can use all at once, or allocate between your various term assignments (first essay, second essay, or whatever). These “grace days” are intended to accommodate the accidents that commonly happen (writer’s block, computer problems, no toner, dog ate notes, overslept, etc. etc.). Grace days are not transferable, nor do they have any value if unused. Grace days include only “academic days” – that means that Saturdays and Sundays are free.

A wise course is to save your grace days until you really need them, particularly in second term when you will probably be under a lot more pressure than in first term. When your Grace Days are gone, they’re gone, and you’re faced with a late assignment (see next section). Students requiring further extensions based on medical or compassionate grounds must apply, with documentation, for academic accommodation to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor, TA, or department.

**Late assignments.** If you submit a paper after the due date (plus whatever grace days you have remaining), the paper will be counted as late. The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late. Note that when a paper is late, every day counts (including weekends), but that the arrangements for date-stamping essays in the Department of English essay box are accepted for late essays.

Extensions on any assignment can only be given by Prof Kidnie, and will only be considered if supported by a request for accommodation sent by students’ Academic Counsellors in their home faculty (see below, “Accommodation”).

### **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. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies for adjudication.

### **Laptops and Cell phones:**

I do not permit the use of laptops or cell phones in lectures. Students may tape-record lectures if they have difficulty taking notes by hand – feel free to talk to me about this option outside of class.

Please note that the exception to this is the week of March 9 when you should bring a laptop to BOTH lecture and tutorial, where you will get instruction and support for your podcast project.

**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 <https://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

### **Assignment Descriptions:**

Sonnet exercise – Try your hand at writing a sonnet! The topic is yours to choose. Your sonnet may be either Shakespearean or Petrarchan (i.e., English or Italian), but must follow one of those two rhyme schemes and scan as iambic pentameter. Your writing will be assessed primarily on rhyme, meter (not every line comprised of 10-11 syllables scans as five iambic feet ... ), and an ability to shape a coherent idea within the sonnet's fourteen-line structure.

Essays – Questions/prompts will be included in syllabus by the start of term.

Podcast – Find your voice! Discuss disobedience and the desire to belong as they play out in EITHER *Antigone* OR *Paradise Lost*. **Please bring a laptop to BOTH lecture and tutorial the week of 25 February, where you will get instruction and support for your podcast project.**

Your podcast will be eight-ten minutes long. You will receive podcast instruction and have a chance to work on your podcasts in tutorial in March. You should also plan to work on this podcast outside of class.

Imagine you're speaking to an interested but non-specialist audience, comprised of listeners who read novels and see theatre, but who may never have read or seen these particular works of literature. This is a group project, and each group will include three-four students. Each member of the group will contribute to the writing or recording of the podcast, and each member of the group must be audibly part of the final submission. Feel free to shape the podcast as a read presentation, dialogue, or interview/conversation. You will want to include passages from the text in order to demonstrate competent analysis (see bullet point 3 below); rehearse at least these passages in advance so that you know how to pronounce key words and read effectively.

Research and prepare your topic, considering what kinds of information you want to include. Shape this material in advance of recording so that each member of the group knows and has agreed to the direction you're taking as a group. Timing is an issue so you may wish to rehearse in advance, and trim and revise as necessary; you may choose to script the whole of the production in advance, rather than work from notes and cues. If you are using sound effects and/or music, make sure the volume is balanced.

Your podcast will be assessed on:

- production (is it a successful recording that can be shared? Are the voices audible, transitions among speakers smooth, and textual passages competently read?),
- structure (how well is the podcast script shaped? Does it have a recognizable beginning, middle, and end?),
- and analysis (how well does the group offer persuasive, engaging interpretations, and offer some close detail of the text under consideration?).

There will be a mechanism for students to assess the performance and contributions of the other students in their group, and this will be factored into each individual's final grade.

Tutorial grade – Read, prepare, engage! Test your ideas in the tutorial space with your peers and tutor. Your grade will reflect both the quantity and quality of your own contributions in tutorial over the year, in balance with your ability to listen to and engage with other students' comments. Ten-minute quizzes scattered throughout the year will be rolled into your final tutorial grade. Attendance will be taken every week in tutorial.

Final exam – 3 hour exam during the university's final examination period.

### 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)

### 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.

### Timetable

This class outline is subject to change. Students are expected to stay abreast of coursework through regular attendance at class.

#### SEPTEMBER

9 Course Introduction and Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (p. 4)

11 Shakespeare, Sonnet 116 ("Let me not to the marriage of true minds", p. 934)

Tutorial: welcome and introductions; Billy Collins, "Sonnet" (p. 941)

16 Barrett Browning, "How Do I Love Thee?" (p. 936)

18 Carol Ann Duffy, "Anne Hathaway" (coursepack)

Tutorial: sonnet practicum: the "turn", metrical lines

23 Effective Writing 1: sentence fragments

25 Burns, "A Red, Red Rose" (p. 840), Parker, "One Perfect Rose" (p. 852)

Tutorial: Writing 1: What is a thesis?

#### SONNET EXERCISE DUE September 25

30 Frost, "The Road Not Taken" (p. 856)

OCTOBER

2 Effective Writing 2: possessive case; McCrae, "In Flanders Fields" (coursepack)  
Tutorial: First Test: sentence fragments; Writing 2: paragraphs

7 Ali, "Postcard from Kashmir" (p. 791)  
9 Donne, "Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (p. 1108)  
Tutorial: Herbert, "Easter Wings" (p. 927)

14 THANKSGIVING

16 Rich, "Diving into the Wreck" (p. 858)  
Tutorial: Writing 3: textual evidence and building it into your own prose

FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT ON SYMBOLISM DUE October 16 (500 words)

21 Olds, "Sex Without Love" (p. 827)  
23 Marvell, "Coy Mistress" (764)  
Tutorial: Second Test: possessive case; Writing 4: developing an outline

28 Effective Writing 3: subject-verb agreement; unpacking poem from writing assignment  
30 Dylan Thomas, "Do not go gentle into that good night" (p. 922)  
Tutorial: discussion

READING WEEK – NOVEMBER 4-8

NOVEMBER

5 Lee, "Persimmons" (p. 771)  
7 Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" (pp. 1103-4)  
Tutorial: Third Test: subject-verb agreement

11 Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"  
13 Munro, "Boys and Girls"  
Tutorial:

SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT ON TONE DUE November 11 (750 words)

18 Egan, "Black Box"  
20 Effective Writing 4: passive voice; Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants"  
Tutorial: discussion

25 O'Brien, "The Things They Carried"  
27 Tan, "A Pair of Tickets"  
Tutorial: Fourth Test: passive voice

DECEMBER

2 Shelley, *The Cenci*  
4 Shelley, *The Cenci*  
Tutorial: discussion

JANUARY

6 Shelley, *The Cenci*  
8 Shelley, *The Cenci*  
Tutorial: Writing 6: discussion

THIRD WRITING ASSIGNMENT ON SHORT STORIES (DICTION AND THEME) DUE  
JANUARY 9 (1200 words)

13 Effective Writing 5: Clarity (ambiguous referents and/or pronouns) Sophocles, *Antigone*  
15 Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Tutorial: Writing 7: first drafts and revision

20 Sophocles, *Antigone*  
22 Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Tutorial: Fifth Test: Clarity of prose; Writing 8: introductions and conclusions

27 Beagan, *Honour Beat*  
29 Beagan, *Honour Beat*  
Tutorial: using research databases

#### FEBRUARY

3 Beagan, *Honour Beat*  
5 Beagan, *Honour Beat*  
Tutorial: writing a research essay

10 Post-performance discussion: *Honour Beat*  
12 Comparative essays: *Honour Beat* and *Antigone*  
Tutorial: discussion

#### 17-21 READING WEEK

FOURTH WRITING ASSIGNMENT: *ANTIGONE AND HONOUR BEAT*  
DUE FEB 27 (2000 words)

24 Barker, *Regeneration*  
26 Barker, *Regeneration*  
Tutorial: discussion

#### MARCH

2 Barker, *Regeneration*  
4 Barker, *Regeneration*  
Tutorial:

9 Barker, *Regeneration*  
11 Podcast support; Barker, *Regeneration* and moving to Palahniuk, *Fight Club*  
Tutorial:

16 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*  
18 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*  
Tutorial: discussion

23 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*  
25 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*  
Tutorial: discussion

30 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*

#### APRIL

1 Review  
Tutorial: discussion

PODCAST ASSIGNMENT DUE APRIL 3

6 Review