

Western University
EN 1020E (650): Understanding Literature Today
Summer 2016
Instructor: Dr. Michelle Hartley

Course Description:

This course takes you on a journey through the genres, historical periods, and critical approaches to English literature. In online lectures and online discussions, you will study major works of poetry, prose, and drama with attention to their use of literary form and the cultural contexts in which they were written. The written assignments for the course will provide you with training in literary analysis, logical and rhetorical argumentation, and strong skills in grammar and composition.

This course is recommended to students who may be considering either a Major or Minor in English Language and Literature, and who are interested in reading poetry, prose, and drama.

Prerequisite: Grade 12U English or permission of the Department.

Course Objectives:

Successful students who complete the course will be able to:

- Identify and analyze basic elements of literature, such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, diction, tone, figures of speech, syntax, and rhythm
- Recognize connections between course texts
- Write an essay about a work (or works) of literature, containing a clear and effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text(s)
- Research critical commentary on literary works
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, especially those obtained through the Internet
- Integrate outside research materials and references to the original text(s) into an essay through the use of quotations and paraphrases
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively in writing
- Document essays using MLA format

Text List

1. Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey*. Ed. Claire Grogan. Peterborough: Broadview, 2002.
2. *Elements of Literature*. 5th Canadian Edition. Ed. David Staines et al. Toronto: Oxford UP, 2014.**
The 4th edition is also fine if students can find it.
3. Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. New York: Modern Library-Random House, 2002.
4. Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi*. Toronto: Vintage, 2002.
5. 6. Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ed. Russ McDonald. New York: Pelican Shakespeare-Penguin, 2000.
7. Custom Course Pack. Available from the UWO Bookstore. Required.
8. A current writing handbook is strongly advised. I like *The Brief Penguin Handbook*.

Composition of Grade

| COMPONENT | WEIGHT | DUE DATE | LENGTH |
|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Participation | 15% | Every Unit | X 2-3 |
| Essay 1 | 15% | June 3 rd | 1000 words |
| Midterm Test | 10% | June 20-23rd | 1 hour |
| Essay 2 | 20% | July 25 th | 2000 words |
| Discussion Reflection | 5% | July 29 th | 500 words |
| Final Exam | 35% | TBA – Aug 2 to 5 th | 3 hours |

Final Grades

Students must pass both term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students who fail the final examination (regardless of their term mark) automatically fail the course.

Class Format

Each week you will be responsible for reading the assigned text(s), the associated lecture, and the discussion postings of your peers. You are expected to contribute to these discussions on a regular basis. (For more information, please see the “Discussion” section of the document labelled “Read Me First.”)

Discussion Participation

Participation in online discussion is a major component of this course. It is essential that students keep up with class discussion, because each topic is only available for a limited period (without exception). In order to receive a passing participation grade, you must contribute to at least twenty discussion topics (out of a total of twenty three). Remember: discussion contributions are more about quality than quantity. You must respond to the ideas of your classmates, which means that you need to read other students’ postings. In preparation for each discussion, you should first read the required text(s), then read the lectures, then read what other students have already posted, then post your own response. Discussion posts that fail to respond to previous posts by repeating the same points or covering the same ground with additions but without acknowledging peers will receive a failing grade. Moreover, posting to the discussion board is not a onetime thing—it’s a conversation. Expect to visit the discussion board repeatedly throughout the week. You might find that you can use the class discussion space as a springboard for new ideas—you may even come back to your discussion posts when you’re brainstorming for an essay.

Email

Please use the Messages function in OWL for all course communication. You can do this by composing an email addressed to “Instructor Role.” (See the email section of the “Read Me First” document for more on course communication.)

Essay Style

Essays must comply with MLA (Modern Languages Association) citation style and guidelines. The UWO library provides a document explaining the basics of MLA formatting:

<http://www.lib.uwo.ca/files/styleguides/MLA.pdf> You will find a link to this site in the Academic Resources folder through the Learner Resources tab.

Late Penalty

Due to the nature of an online course and assignment turnaround times, students should make every effort to hand all assignments in on time. Essays and other assignments are to be submitted via the Owl Assignments Tab by the due dates listed above (and on the Course Schedule). Assignments sent as email attachments will not be accepted unless previously arranged with the instructor. Papers handed in late without prior permission will be deducted 5% per day late, including weekends. Essays submitted more than one week after the due date has passed will not be accepted. Late essays will forfeit instructor commentary. Please note that instructors cannot grant accommodation on medical grounds: see the Academic Accommodation section below for details.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

The full policy is set out here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please refer to the department's statement on plagiarism at

<http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#plagiarism>

Essays in this course may be subject to assessment through Turnitin.com.

Important General Information for Students For English Department regulations governing term work, faculty office hours, academic relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please consult the "Undergraduate Information for Students" section on the English Department website at:

<http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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Course Schedule: Summer 2016 – we will be covering one full unit per week

(Note that *Elements of Literature* is abbreviated to EL)

Unit 1.1, May 9-11: Creation Stories: Margaret Laurence, “Where the World Began” (course pack); “Fiction, Fact, and Truth,” *Elements of Literature* (EL) 3-4; Discussion 1.1

Unit 1.2, May 12-14: Milton, *Paradise Lost*, from Book 4 (course pack); “Approaching a Poem” EL 372-73; Discussion 1.2

Unit 2.1, May 16-18: The Natural World: Frost, “Design” and “Birches” (EL), Page, “Planet Earth (course pack), “Music” EL 361-72; Discussion 2.1

Unit 2.2, May 19-21: The Natural World: Wordsworth, “Tintern Abbey” (EL), Thomas, “The Force that through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower” (EL); “Description and Meditation” EL 347-49; Discussion 2.2

Unit 3.1, May 23-25: The Reading Self: Austen, *Northanger Abbey*; “Plot and Character” EL 7-9; Discussion 3.1

Unit 3.2, May 26-28: The Reading Self: Austen, *Northanger Abbey*; Discussion 3.2

Unit 4.1, May 30-June 1: Art and Life: Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (EL), Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio” (course pack); Discussion 4.1

Unit 4.2, June 2-4: Art and Life: Avison, “Snow” (EL), Walker, “Everyday Use” (course pack); “Themes” EL 9-11; Discussion 4.2
ESSAY 1 DUE JUNE 3rd by 11:55PM

Unit 5.1, June 6-8: Dreams and Nightmares: Blake, “London” (EL), Lampman, “The City of the End of Things” (EL), T.S. Eliot, “The Hollow Men” (EL); Discussion 5.1 6

Unit 5.2, 9-11: Dreams and Nightmares: LeGuin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” (course pack); Page, “Unless the Eye Catch Fire” (course pack); Discussion 5.2

Unit 6.1, June 13-15: Love and Loss: Shakespeare, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”; “Elements of Drama” EL 707-12; Discussion 6.1

Unit 6.2, June 16-18: Love and Loss: Shakespeare, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”; Discussion 6.2

Unit 7.1, June 20-22: Love and Loss: Donne, “Holy Sonnets” (EL); Discussion 7.1
MIDTERM TEST (June 20-22 ONLINE)

Unit 7.2, June 23-25: Love and Loss: Shakespeare, "Sonnet 18," "Sonnet 73" and "Sonnet 130" (EL); Edna St. Vincent Millay, "I Being Born a Woman and Distressed" (course pack); Discussion 7.2

Unit 8.1, June 27-29: Love and Loss: Burns, "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose" (course pack); Atwood, "Variations on the Word Love" (EL); Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily" (link on OWL); Discussion 8.1

Unit 8.2, June 30-July 2: Love and Loss: Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" (EL); Yeats, "When You Are Old" (course pack); Auden, "Funeral Blues" (course pack); Discussion Vacation – Happy Canada Day!

Unit 9.1, July 4-6: Public and Private Selves: Nella Larsen, *Passing*; Discussion 9.1

Unit 9.2, July 7-9: Public and Private Selves: Nella Larsen, *Passing*; Discussion 9.2

Unit 10.1, July 11-13: Public and Private Selves: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (EL); "Point of View: Perspective and Language" EL 11-14; Discussion 10.1

Unit 10.2, July 14-16: Public and Private Selves: Munro, "Family Furnishings" (OWL); Heaney, "Digging" (course pack); Discussion 10.2

Unit 11.1, July 18-20: Storytelling: Barnes, excerpt from *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* (course pack); Discussion 11.1

Unit 11.2, July 21-23: Storytelling: Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" (EL); Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (EL); Discussion 11.2

Unit 12.1, July 25-27: Storytelling: Yann Martel, *Life of Pi*; "The Spectrum of Fiction" EL 4-5; Discussion 12.1

ESSAY 2 DUE July 25th

Unit 12.2: Storytelling, July 28-30: *Life of Pi*. Discussion 12.2.

REFLECTIONS DUE July 29th

Final Exam TBA somewhere between August 2 and 5th