ENGL 101A  
Introduction to Literary Studies

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 1pm – 2:20pm  
Location: HH 139  
Instructor: Dr. Ben Woodford  
Instructor Email: bwoodfor@uwaterloo.ca  
Instructor Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30am – 12:30pm, PAS 1285

Course Description  
This course will introduce you to the basic principles of literary studies. During the term, we will read a range of literary works from different periods and analyze them. Although most of the works will be in English, there will be a few works that we will read in translation. The works that we will read are divided into three different categories: drama, poetry, and prose fiction. As we analyze the literature, we will consider topics such as narration, plot, genre, and figurative language, and we will also consider the historical context of each literary work. Many of the works of literature that we will read explore similar themes, and you will be encouraged to compare how different works explore the same theme. We will also look at the basic elements of major literary theories.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes  
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
• Understand the features of drama, poetry, and prose fiction  
• Explain key literary terms  
• Approach literary works with confidence and have something to say about them  
• Appreciate, describe, analyze, and interpret a work’s distinctive features  
• Make a claim about a work, and persuade an audience of that claim by providing textual evidence

Required Texts

Antigone, Oedipus the King, and Electra, by Sophocles, translated by H. D. F. Kitto, edited by Edith Hall, published by Oxford University Press (as this is a translation, please use this edition so that we are all referring to the same text)

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, translated by Keith Harrison, edited by Helen Cooper, published by Oxford University Press (as this is a translation, please use this edition so that we are all referring to the same text)

Othello, by William Shakespeare, edited by Alvin Kernan, published by Signet (any edition will work)
Paradise Lost, by John Milton, edited by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg, published by Oxford University Press (any edition will work)

Lyrical Ballads 1798 and 1800, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, edited by Michael Gamer and Dahlia Porter, published by Broadview Press, (you can use another edition, but make sure that it contains all the poems that we will be reading)

Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley, edited by Marilyn Butler, published by Oxford University Press (any edition will work)

Evaluation

Participation in Discussion 10%
Participation in In-Class Writing Assignments 5%
Short Written Assignment 15%
Outline of Essay with Works Cited 5%
Essay 30%
Exam 35%

Participation in Class Discussion 10%
Much of the learning in this course will occur through the discussion, so it is important that you contribute. For each class, there is a set of assigned readings, which will be the focus of the discussion. You are expected to do all assigned readings BEFORE class, so that you are able to actively participate. Discussions will involve both the whole class and small groups. 5% of your mark will be based on whole-class discussions and 5% will be based on group discussions. With whole-class discussions, I will keep a record of how often you contribute to the discussion. With small group discussions, I will circulate and speak with each group to ensure that all members are contributing to the discussion. Please note, I will take attendance at the start of each class in order to keep track of who is present to participate in that day’s group discussion. Also note that you need not be the group’s designated speaker in order to get your group participation marks.

Participation in In-Class Writing Assignments, including Peer-Review Activity 5%
In addition to discussions, there will be in-class writing assignments on certain days. These writing assignments are meant to help you practice analyzing literature in a low-pressure situation. I will not collect these writing assignments, but we will discuss them in class. If you are in class completing these writing assignments, you will get the participation marks. You need to be present in class to complete these writing assignments. I will begin each class by taking attendance. If you miss a class, I will need to see a doctor’s note or some other form of documentation or you will not receive the participation mark for that day’s writing activity. 3% of this mark will be for participating in the peer-review activity on November 15. On this day, you must bring a completed draft of your essay to class so that you can exchange with your
classmates and provide feedback on each other’s work. I will be checking each draft to make sure that it is the appropriate length. You MUST bring a draft of your essay in order to receive the 3%.

**Short Written Assignment 15%, Due October 9**
Your first written assignment will be a short response (500 – 600 words) to one of the first two works that we study (*Oedipus the King* or *Othello*). In this essay, you will analyze a key issue in one of these works of literature. You need to incorporate an argument into your essay; do not just describe it. Include evidence from the text to support your argument. Think of this as an opportunity to express your own personal opinion about a piece of literature. The more complex and nuanced you make your argument, the stronger your essay will be. Include direct quotations from the text to support your claims.

**Topics for Short Written Assignment (pick one)**

1. Do you see Oedipus as more of a hero or a victim? Justify your answer.
2. How does Sophocles’ language contribute to the tragic feeling of *Oedipus the King*? Be sure to use specific examples from the text.
3. Of Shakespeare’s major tragedies, *Othello* has the smallest cast, which forces the audience to focus on a small group of characters. How does this small cast shape the tragedy?
4. Provide a close-reading of Iago’s speech in Act II scene iii (the one that begins “And what’s he, then, that says I play the villain” lines 307-333 [line numbers may differ in your edition]). What is the significance of this speech and how do the linguistic features of the speech contribute to this significance? You can refer to other parts of the play (to establish a pattern of speaking on the part of Iago), but the focus needs to be on speech in Act II scene iii.

**Outline of Essay with Works Cited 5%, Due Nov. 1**
In preparation for your essay, you will prepare an outline of your essay. Your outline will include a tentative thesis (you can change it later if you want), three potential points of analysis (they can still be fairly general at this point) with two quotes from each text (with an in-text citation), and a works cited page for the two texts that you are using. You can structure the outline however you want as long as all the components are present.

**Essay 30% Due Nov. 22**
Your second major written assignment will be a little longer (1200-1400 words) and it will require you to compare two of the texts that we study this term. As with the first essay, you need to incorporate an argument into your essay and include evidence from the text to support your
argument. In this case, your argument will address similarities and/or differences in the two texts. The more complex and nuanced you make your argument, the stronger your essay will be. Include direct quotations from the text to support your claims.

Topics for the Essay (pick one)

1. Compare and contrast the language and style of two works that we have studied. How does each style contribute to the work?

2. Compare and contrast how two of the works that we have studied explore the themes of guilt and shame. How does each work present guilt and shame and their impact on characters?

3. Compare and contrast the way that women are portrayed in any two of the works that we have studied. What is the role of women in each work and how are the women presented?

4. Compare and contrast how two of the works that we have studied present temptation. What type of language is used to tempt characters? How do characters respond to temptation and what (if anything) do they learn from it?

5. Compare and contrast the place of religion and/or God or the gods in two of the works that we have studied. What role does religion and/or God or the gods play in shaping the works?

6. Compare and contrast how narration functions in two of the works that we have studied. How does the type of narration used impact how we interpret each work?

**Exam 35%**
Details TBA.

**General Assignment Guidelines**

All assignments must be submitted to the dropbox on Learn in either Word or pdf format. All finished assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. Pages must have one-inch margins. Your name, class, and the date must appear at the top of the first page; all subsequent pages should have page numbers. All sources must be documented according to MLA conventions.
Late Submissions

If any assignment is submitted late without documentation of either illness or a family emergency, there will be a 5% late penalty per day, including weekends.

Classroom Policies

Cell phones must be switched off and put away during class. Students can choose to do the in-class writing activities with either pen and paper or on a laptop (I encourage you to use pen and paper, but the choice is yours). If you choose to use a laptop, please refrain from using any program other than a writing program.

The best way to contact me is through email. I will usually respond to all emails within 24 hours (it may take longer on weekends).

Class Schedule

Thursday, September 6
Introduction to the Course

Tuesday, September 11
Introduction to Drama

Drama: Greek Tragedy
Readings: Oedipus the King
Topics to be explored in Oedipus the King include: tragic framework in ancient Greece; Oedipus’ character, the tragic hero; fate versus free will; the gods and prophesy; suffering; revelation; family

Thursday, September 13
Continued discussion of Oedipus the King

Tuesday, September 18
Literary Theory: New Criticism

Drama: Shakespearean Tragedy
Readings: Othello, Act I, Act II, Act III scene i, ii (I recommend trying to read all of Othello for this class)
Topics to be explored in Othello include: Shakespeare’s concept of tragedy; the incorporation of comic elements; Othello’s identity; Iago’s motive; racism; persuasion/manipulation; love and relationships; double time; religious themes
Thursday, September 20
Continued discussion of first half of Othello
MLA Citation Guidelines, **for this class please bring copies of all the books for this course**

Tuesday, September 25
Readings: *Othello*, Act III scene iii to the end

Thursday, September 27
Continued discussion of second half of *Othello*

Tuesday, October 2
Literary Theory: Reader-Response Criticism
**Poetry: Medieval Romance**
Readings: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Part 1
Introduction to Poetry
We will analyze a few short poems in class together
Topics to be explored in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* include: medieval romance; link to classical heritage; style of verse; courtesy and seduction; symbols; religious themes; revelation; Gawain’s character

Thursday, October 4
Readings: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, part 2 and 3 (I recommend trying to read all of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* by this class)

Tuesday, October 9
Study break

Thursday, October 11
Readings: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, part 4

Tuesday, October 16
Literary Theory: Historical and New Historicism
**Poetry: Epic Poetry**
Readings: *Paradise Lost*, Book I
Topics to be explored in *Paradise Lost* include: relationship to seventeenth-century England; Milton’s verse; rhetoric; representation of God; freedom; heroic character of Satan; depiction of marriage and women; Milton’s religious beliefs

Thursday, October 18
Readings: *Paradise Lost* Book II

Tuesday, October 23
Readings: *Paradise Lost*, Book III lines 1-371 and Book IV lines 1-535

Thursday, October 25
Readings: *Paradise Lost*, Book IX
Tuesday, October 30
Readings: *Paradise Lost*, Book X

Thursday, November 1
Literary Theory: Psychological Criticism

**Poetry: Lyric poetry and the Romantic movement**
Topics to be explored in *Lyrical Ballads* include: Romanticism; ballad structure; simplified language; the supernatural; the beauty of nature and rustic people; self-reflection; unreliable narrator

Tuesday, November 6

Thursday, November 8

Tuesday, November 13
Literary Theory: Deconstruction

**Prose: The Novel**
Introduction to Prose Fiction and the Novel
Topics to be explored in *Frankenstein* include: narration and framed narrative; intertextuality; relationship between humanity, science; tragedy; relationship to Romanticism

Thursday, November 15
Continued discussion of first half of *Frankenstein*

**Peer-Review Activity in Class, please bring a draft of your essay with you to class**

Tuesday, November 20
Readings: *Frankenstein*, Vol. II, Chapter 6 to the end

Thursday, November 22
Continued discussion of second half of *Frankenstein*

Tuesday, November 27
Literary Theory: Feminist Criticism

**Prose: Short Stories**
Readings: “The Yellow Wallpaper,” by Charlotte Perkins Gillam
Introduction to short stories
Topics to be explored in “The Yellow Wallpaper” include: feminism; perspective; relationships; mental health

Thursday, November 29
Readings: “The Wall,” by Jean-Paul Sartre
See pdf file posted on Learn
Topics to be explored in “The Wall” include: existentialism; perspective; sensory experience; death; responsibility
Review for Exam

Academic Integrity and Discipline

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the Office of Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Grievances and Appeals

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.
Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

*Note for students with disabilities:* The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Mental Health Support
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

On Campus
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext 32655
- **MATES:** one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek form Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7
- **Good2Talk:** Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7:** Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME:** set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213
- Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website
- Download UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)
- Download the WatSafe app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

Territorial Acknowledgement
We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River.
For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory (PDF).