Department of English Language and Literature
University of Waterloo
Fall 2006

Course syllabus for English 101A, Introduction to Literary Studies

**Instructor:** Professor Linda Warley

**Class Time and Place:** DWE 1502 T, Th 10:00 – 11:20

**My office:** Hagey Hall 251
**My extension:** 35379
**My email:** lwarley@watarts.uwaterloo.ca

**Office hours:** T, Th 2:30 – 3:30 or Wed 10-11

**Note:** This course is managed through UW-ACE: you should get into the habit of checking there for announcements.

**Calendar Course Description:** An introduction to the study of literature, covering such areas of enquiry as literary history, genre, criticism, analysis, and theory.

**Detailed Course Description:** Welcome! In this course, we will develop methods of analyzing literary works from a range of periods and genres. This course will prepare you for upper-level study in the discipline of English and my principle aim is to get you to think and work like literary critics. Thus, one focus of the course is on acquiring a strong knowledge of critical terms and concepts, so that you can apply the language of literary criticism and, eventually, literary theory, to your study of literature. Along the way, I hope to demonstrate to you that detailed and nuanced study of individual literary works enhances our understanding and our enjoyment of them. We will also work on your English essay writing skills.

**Book List:** (all are required)


Assignments and due dates (more detailed descriptions below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 short quizzes</td>
<td>random</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>exam period</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Class schedule:

Sept. 12

Introduction and welcome to the course

14 Lecture: Is any narrative a story?
Read: anthology "Introduction to Fiction" and Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl"

19 Lecture: What kind of story is this?
Read: Edgar Allen Poe "The Fall of the House of Usher" and Abrams "Gothic"

21 Lecture: Who tells, how does she tell?—and what isn’t she telling?
Read: Katherine Mansfield "Miss Brill" and Alice Walker "Everyday Use" and Abrams "Point of View"

26 Lecture: What difference does place make?
Read: Alistair MacLeod "The Boat" and Abrams "Realism and Naturalism"

Oct. 3 Lecture: Postcolonial engishes
Read: Ama Ata Aidoo "The Message" and Abrams "Postcolonial Studies"

5 Lecture: Orality and literacy
Read: Thomas King "A Coyote Columbus Story"

10 Writing workshop
Read: Rooke pages 1-12

12 Lecture: Postmodern patterns
Read: Lorrie Moore "How to Talk to Your Mother (Notes)" and Abrams "Modernism and Postmodernism"

17 IN-CLASS MID TERM EXAM

19 Lecture: Novelistic worlds
Read: The Handmaid's Tale and Abrams "Novel"

24 The Handmaid's Tale

26 The Handmaid's Tale
31 Lecture: The cure for poetry phobia
Read: anthology “Introduction to Poetry” pages 26-46, Abrams “Lyric”
and bring a dictionary to class

Nov. 2 Lecture: What kind of poem is this?
Read: Shakespeare “Sonnet 18” and “Sonnet 130 and Abrams “Sonnet”

7 Writing workshop
Read: Rooke pages 12-24

9 Lecture: What’s lyrical about a lyric poem?
Read: William Blake “The Tyger” and Christina Rossetti “In an Artist’s
Studio” and John Ashbery “Paradoxes and Oxymorons” and Abrams
“Rhyme”

14 Lecture: How does a poem make me think or feel?
Read: Gerard Manley Hopkins “God’s Grandeur” and Pauline Johnson
“The Idlers” and Abrams “Meter”

16 Lecture: When is a flower more than a flower?
Read: Sharon Olds “The One Girl at the Boys Party” and Lorna Crozier
“Packing for the Future: Instructions” and Robert Kroetsch “Stone
Hammer Poem”
ESSAY DUE

21 Lecture: Personae in poetry
Read: T. S. Eliot “Journey of the Magi” and Adrienne Rich “Diving into
the Wreck”

23 Lecture: What’s free about free verse?
Emily Dickinson “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” and Don McKay
“Icarus” and Abrams “Free verse”

28 Lecture: Blackening English poetry
Read: Langston Hughes “Theme for English B” and Kamau Brathwaite
“Colombe” and Dionne Brand “Blues Spiritual for Mammy Prater”

30 Lecture: Reinventing form
Read: Pablo Neruda “In Praise of Ironing” and P.K. Page “Planet Earth”
and Leonard Cohen “The Future”

Dec. 5 last class and exam preparation

Course assignments:

1. Surprise quizzes

Throughout the course, there will be three in-class surprise quizzes. These will be short,
quick, and fact-based. Questions may be on any of the course material—for example,
literary works, literary terms, grammar, punctuation, MLA citation style and other writing issues. The quizzes will each be worth 5% of your course grade.

2. Mid-term exam

This in-class test will evaluate your knowledge of the primary works, the lecture material, and the literary terms learned to that point in the course. It will require that you write your answers in short essay form. It is worth 20% of your course grade.

3. Essay

You will choose one of the assigned topics (see below) and write a 2000 word essay. You are NOT required to take into consideration other critics’ opinions about the literary works. On the contrary, I am interested in seeing how you develop an independent analysis and present that analysis in a rhetorically effective way. The essay is due in class on November 16th. Hand in both a hard copy and an electronic copy. The essay is worth 25% of your course grade.

There will be some instruction in class about essay writing. On UW-ACE you will also find a downloadable document that gives general advice about writing good essays in English courses. Rooke’s explanations in The Clear Path, however, are much more comprehensive! In that book you will find valuable advice about planning, structuring and executing English essay writing assignments. You will find tips on how to analyze literary works. You will find basic information on grammar, word use and citation format. In chapter two of The Clear Path, Rooke even shows you how to take an essay from a failing grade to an “A” grade through revision. You can learn much from following that process!

4. Final exam

The exam will be scheduled during the exam period and will test material learned throughout the course.

Course Policies:

Classroom work
Attendance is mandatory, and you are expected to arrive in class well prepared, having read and thought carefully about the material to be discussed that day.

Note for students with disabilities
The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall Room 1132, 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 OPD at the beginning of each academic term.
Plagiarism and other academic offences

All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (section 1) or on the web at http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. If you need help in learning how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

The Internet has made plagiarism and other forms of cheating much more tempting; it has also made it easier to detect. I will investigate and report to the Associate Dean all cases of suspected plagiarism. Proven cases will result in academic penalty, proportional to the extent of the infraction, and could include an official written reprimand from the Associate Dean that will be placed in your file. Please consult the following web site, “Avoiding Academic Offences” for a comprehensive explanation of plagiarism and how to avoid it http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve: refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm.

Late essays and missed exams

There will be no make-up quizzes—they are surprise quizzes after all! If you miss the mid-term you must provide medical documentation to substantiate your incapacity to write the test on the scheduled day. The essay is due in class on the due date. I do not grant extensions except in emergency circumstances (being busy with other courses does not count as an emergency). If there is an emergency contact me immediately in person (i.e. by phone or by coming to my office hours—do not just send an email). If you decide to hand in your essay after the due date, the late penalty is 3% per day, including weekends.

Hard and fast rule: I do not accept any essays at all after the last day of classes.
Essay Topics and Instructions:

Choose one of the topics below and write a 2000 word analytical essay (that’s 8 double-spaced pages in 12-pt. font with 1 inch page margins). In the essay, you must develop an argument (a thesis) and present textual evidence from the literary works to substantiate and demonstrate your points. Use the literary critical terminology we are learning throughout the course and format your essay in strict observance of MLA style (see Rook 69–84). DO NOT make a separate title page—simply put your name, ID number, the course, my name, and the date on the top left corner of the first page. DO include a list of works cited, even if you have only referred to the literary work in the anthology. Remember to hand in both a hard copy and an electronic copy of your essay.

NOTE: You must choose as your examples literary works that are on the course syllabus.

1. Choose five words from any of the literary texts we’re studying that you think are important to the work overall; look those words up in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED, which is available on-line through the UW Library web site), paying attention to the etymology and history of the words; consider both their denotative and their connotative meanings. Write an essay in which you a) argue why these five words are crucial to the text and b) explain in detail how they contribute to its meaning.

2. All literary works emerge from particular cultural, political, and historical moments. Choose a literary work and then determine one or two pieces of contextual information that you think readers need to make fuller sense of the literary work (it could be anything from any discipline—science, geography, history, politics, etc.) and research that additional information. Write an essay in which you a) argue why that context is crucial and b) explain how that contextual information deepens our understanding of the literary text. Note: make sure that your essay is still an ENGLISH essay—i.e. the focus must be on analyzing and interpreting the literary work. That means, for example, that an author’s biography will not be sufficient in itself.

3. Choose a literary text; find a visual text (other than a film adaptation) that seems to resonate with the literary work in some way. Write an essay in which you a) argue how and why the visual text you have chosen relates to the literary work and b) explain how they are both similar and different (other than the obvious—i.e. one is visual and one is verbal). For example, you could choose a visual image that treats a similar theme as the literary work but has a different tone. In that case, you would analyze how tone is created in each and explain why that difference in tone matters.

4. Every text creates literary personae—characters, narrators, speakers of poems. Inhabit one persona who appears in one literary work and write an essay in which part is an imaginary journal ‘written’ by that persona and part is an analysis of what you have created. The purpose of this essay is to imitate the writing style of the original author; therefore, everything you create must be consistent in some way with the original. You
can invent—indeed, don’t just copy the original!—but remember that your main job is to identify, analyze, and mimic a particular author’s style. Write 4 pages of invention; 4 pages of analysis of your invention. In the second part of the essay, you must argue for the validity of your creation—i.e. you still need to create a thesis and use evidence from the original work to substantiate your claims.

5. Choose one aspect of literary technique—it could be point of view in prose or tropes in poetry or anything else we have studied in the course—and compare and contrast two authors’ use of that particular technique. In your analyses, consider both similarities and differences between the two texts; explain how the technique contributes to your reading experience; discuss the relation of technique to the meaning of each text; and comment on why and to what ends each author uses the technique.