ENGLISH 101A (001)

INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

HH 138
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 101A provides an introduction to the university-level study of English literature. It covers such areas of enquiry as literary history, genre, criticism, analysis and theory.

This course begins with two foundational Greeks texts, selections from Homer's *Odyssey* and Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*. The texts in English, which include works by British, American and Canadian authors, are covered in roughly chronological order. These texts represent a variety of genres: poetry (mainly epic poetry and ballads), drama (tragedy and comedy), short stories and novel. Some assignments, as well as the exam, will give you the opportunity to analyse individual works, as well as make comparisons between two or more works.

OBJECTIVES:

- To introduce you to some basic terms and concepts that will help you as you continue your studies of English literature.
- To give you practice and training in reading, interpreting and analysing individual pieces of literature with greater insight, and in making comparisons among them.
- To help you articulate your responses to literature and to write more effectively
- To increase your enjoyment of reading (I hope).

TEXTS:

The following texts are required:
- Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus, with The English Faust Book* (Hackett)
- William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (Vintage)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Dover)
- *English 101A: Courseware Package* (available in the bookstore)
The following text is recommended:
(* or any of the earlier editions)

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS:**

(Note: *CP* is the *Courseware Package*.)

**Jan. 8:** Introduction

**Jan. 10:** "I wandered lonely" (CP); Introduction to Drama;

**Jan. 15 & 17:** *Oedipus Tyrannus*

**Jan. 22 & 24:** *Doctor Faustus*

**Jan. 29 & 31:** *The Odyssey*, Books 9-12 (pages 62-128)

**Feb. 5 & 7:** *Beowulf*, Parts I-II (pages 6-12), Parts X-XV (pp. 37-57), Parts XIX-XXIV (pp. 67-92), Parts XXXI-XXXIX (pp. 113-151)


**READING WEEK: FEB. 18-22**

**Feb. 26 & 28:** *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Emphasis on Parts I - IV). (CP)

**Mar. 5 & 7:** *As I Lay Dying*

**Mar. 12 & 14:** *The Importance of Being Earnest*

**Mar. 19 & 21:** Three Narrative Poems: "The Lady of Shalott"; "The Trampwoman's Tragedy"; "The Witch of Coos" (CP)

**Mar. 26 & 28:** Two Stories by Alice Munro: "The Moons of Jupiter," "Miles City, Montana." (CP)

**Apr. 2 & 4:** Review and Catch-up
GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:

- Two response papers will account for 10% of your final grade (i.e., 2 marks each) (see below).
- One comparative essay (approximately four type-written, double-spaced pages) will be worth 25% of your final grade.
- One longer essay, or creative writing option, will be worth 30% of your final grade. Essays should be approximately five to six typewritten, double-spaced pages. See the assignment for guidelines for the creative option.
- One 2 ½ hour final exam will account for the remaining 35% of your final grade.

*In addition, I will add up to 3% for participation in class. I will deduct up to 3% if your attendance is noticeably irregular. One number grade (1%) may be subtracted for each day that a paper is late, unless an extension has been granted in advance.

RESPONSE PAPERS:

There will be two response papers, one on *As I Lay Dying* and the other on one of the short stories by Alice Munro. Everyone will do *As I Lay Dying*. For the Alice Munro stories, if your surname comes alphabetically between A and L inclusive, you will write “The Moons of Jupiter.” If your name comes between M and Z inclusive, you will write on “Miles City, Montana.”

Your response paper will focus on the process of your reading (see Courseware Package page 3). It should be set up as a short essay (approximately 2 – 3 typewritten pages, double-spaced). Some issues that you might consider are:

- Have you read the work before? If so, what do you remember, and are you looking forward to re-reading it? Have you read something by this author before. If so, what are some of your expectations when you read this one.
- How does the title or the cover orientate your reading?
- At what points in your reading did you slow down? pause? anticipate what will happen next? become absorbed in the story? feel you missed something? go back? feel confident? Was the “drive” essentially straightforward, or were there a lot of twists and turns in the road?
- Does the story remind you of any other texts that you have read, or experiences that you ave had? Keeping your own experiences in mind, are the characters or events believable, or do they seem contrived? Which characters interest you? Which bore you?
- What thoughts do you have as you finish the story? Are you puzzled? satisfied? Disappointed?
- What issues would you like to discuss in class?

Obviously two pages just allows you to scratch surfaces, so you will have to be selective. While I expect your response to be effectively written, I'm more interested in your ideas. The response paper for *As I Lay Dying* will be due right after Reading Week, on Thursday, February 28, 2013. The response paper for the Alice Munro story will be due two weeks late, on Thursday, March 14, 2013. Because the second half of the term is busy, I’d advise you to get started reading these works as soon as possible.
ESSAY TOPICS AND DUE DATES:

General Notes

1. You will need to find a suitable way of selecting and organizing the material of your essay and of focussing your ideas in a clear direction. Give special attention to your introductory paragraph, which should identify the main topic or set of issues which your essay will treat, identify the direction of your essay, and interest your reader.

2. Provide evidence for the generalizations that you make. Try to strike a strong balance between general argument and specific illustration. Use quotations to support your ideas, but don’t over-quote. Introduce quotations so that your reader knows why you are including the quotation.

3. Before you submit your paper, be sure to proofread it, carefully checking for errors in typing, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Consider your readers: Will they have any trouble following your ideas?

4. I prefer you to base your ideas on your own careful and thoughtful reading of the texts. Feel free to use ideas from class, and a good dictionary is a most useful resource, but please do not consult secondary sources about the works themselves unless you see me first. You may consult dictionaries and certain encyclopedias, and I encourage you to use ideas from other classes such as psychology, philosophy, anthropology, etc.

5. Give your essay a descriptive title that includes the title of the work(s) that you will be considering. Also include your name and course number on the first page. A separate title page is not necessary. All page references to the works go in parentheses at the end of your sentence but before the period. A Works Cited list is required, even if you have quoted from only one source. I will give you some information on how to use the MLA style to cite works in anthologies and editions of plays. The Little, Brown Compact Handbook contains excellent sections on documenting sources, as well as problems with grammar, punctuation, etc.

6. I mark essays holistically, taking into consideration content, organization, and style and correctness.

ESSAY 1:
Due: Tuesday, February 12, 2013
Length: Approximately four typewritten, double-spaced pages (1000-1250 words).

Write an essay on one of the following topics. The topics emphasize comparisons. They also emphasize arguing from a specific point of view. Your title page should include an outline.

1. Argue EITHER that Oedipus and Dr. Faustus are both responsible for their downfalls, OR that they are both victims of greater forces.

2. By what devices were Elizabethan dramatists able to limit, and even eliminate, the Greek Chorus? Your essay should refer to the role of the Chorus in Oedipus Tyrannus, and should discuss Doctor Faustus.

3. Someone once said that the Greek stage was designed mainly for the ear, the Elizabethan stage mainly for the eye. Explain what you think is meant by this comment, and then argue either for or against it. Refer to Oedipus Tyrannus and to Doctor Faustus. (If you wish, you may limit yourself to one scene from each play, showing how it may have been presented to its original audience.)
4. Select either two shorter scenes from Doctor Faustus or one longer scene, and compare it to the original prose source in The English Faust Book. What advantages and/or disadvantages does the dramatist have over the prose writer. Do you think, on the whole, that drama has a more powerful impact than prose? Why or why not? (You may think specifically of these two works, or more generally of your experiences with these forms of literature.)

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ESSAY 2:

Due: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 (earlier, if you can)
Length: Approximately five typewritten, double-spaced pages (1250-1500 words); creative options may be longer.

Do one of the following topics. Establish a clear thesis, and organize as much as possible around a comparison of the works. Again, your title page should include an outline.

1. Organizing your essay around three points, compare and contrast the epic hero with the tragic hero. You should support your ideas by referring to at least one epic hero (Odysseus, Beowulf) and at least one tragic hero (Oedipus, Dr. Faustus). Note that you may refer to all four heroes.

2. How do at least three of the following works show a change or development in attitudes towards God and the gods: The Odyssey, Oedipus Tyrannus, Beowulf, Doctor Faustus? If you wish, relate this change or development to what you perceive to be later attitudes towards God, including modern ones. Be sure to establish a thesis.

3. Many of the classic works of literature are considered moral because they show the consequences of an act (or acts) of sin. Discuss this statement with reference to at least three of the following works: Oedipus Tyrannus, Beowulf, Doctor Faustus, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Try to organize around a comparison of the works. Note that you need not agree with the definition of the term moral contained within the statement.

4. Compare and contrast the presentation and implications of supernatural and fantastic elements in at least three of the following works: The Odyssey, Beowulf, Doctor Faustus, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. If you wish, you may, in addition, refer to either “The Wife of Usher’s Well” or “The Witch of Coos.”

5. A famous 20th-century poet, W. H. Auden has written, “The sea voyage is a pain which must be accepted as a cure, the death that leads to rebirth.” Apply this statement to The Odyssey and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. If you wish, you may substitute the journey in As I Lay Dying for either one of the other works. Try to organize around a comparison of the works.

Topic 6 is on the next page.
6. This is a two-part creative assignment: In *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner omits the burial of Addie in Jefferson. (A) Retell this episode as it might have been presented in the novel. You should use a multiple first-person narrative (involving at least two voices). If you wish, you may create a voice that is not in the original novel, but you should use at least one from the novel. AND (B) Write a commentary on your work. Among other things, you may discuss what you set out to do, some of the choices you made (e.g., choice of narrators, diction, style), the extent to which you tried to imitate the original, and how successful you think you were. (I'd recommend five or six double-spaced pages for part (A), but I'll give you leeway. For part (B) I'd recommend approximately three double-spaced pages.)

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THE FACULTY OF ARTS REQUIRES THAT WE NOTIFY YOU OF THE FOLLOWING:

**Academic Integrity**: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity) for more information.

**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: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm) When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline**: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm)

**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 that he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals: [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**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 the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.