ENGLISH 102B (01)

MAJOR FORMS OF LITERATURE
POETRY AND NOVELS

CPH 3388
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 102 provides an introduction to the university-level study of four major forms of English literature. English 102A examines plays and short stories; English 102B examines poetry and novels.

For this course, I have arranged the poems according to type and theme rather than chronological sequence. An important aspect of our study will be to examine how a poem's form and language support its meaning. Our emphasis on novels will be on such basic features as character, plot development, and narration. We will also apply certain basic critical approaches to the novels, such as reader response, structuralism, cultural criticism, and feminism.

OBJECTIVES:

English 102B has several related objectives:

1. To introduce you to some basic terms and concepts that will help you as you continue your studies in English.
2. To give you practice and training in reading and interpreting individual pieces of literature with greater insight and in making comparisons among them.
3. To help you write more effectively.
4. Through the use of an online component, to help you to articulate your responses and interact with other students.
5. To increase your enjoyment of reading (I hope!).
KEY TERMS:

Types of Poetry: e.g., ballad, sonnet, visual poetry, sound poetry.

Figurative Language: figures of speech (simile, metaphor, catachresis, synaesthesia, metonymy, synecdoche, personification); symbolism (archetypal, conventional, contextual)

Prosody: types of rhyme (end, internal, perfect, imperfect, masculine, feminine); stanza forms (especially couplet, tercet, quatrains, etc.); conventional verse forms (especially ballad, Italian and English sonnets); basic rhythmic patterns (lambic, anapestic, trochaic, dactylic, spondaic); rhythmic variations (caesura, enjambment); and metre (especially dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter).

Sound Patterns and Devices: alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia

Persona, Voice, Diction: creating a persona; basic levels of language, especially monosyllabic, polysyllabic, archaic, colloquial, specialized, figurative (poetic), dialect.

Narrative elements: plot; characters; setting (time and place); point of view (especially first person, but some reference to third person); narrator (reliable, unreliable, homodiegetic, heterodiegetic); narrative distance; time and order (fabula, sjuzet, analepsis, prolepsis, paralipsis, achrony); direct and indirect speech (monologue, dialogue, interior monologue, stream of consciousness).

Reader-Response Terminology: readerly, writerly, intertextuality.

TEXTS:

The following texts are required:

Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre (Oxford).
William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying (Vintage).
Jean Rhys, Wide Sargasso Sea (Penguin).

The following text is recommended:

Jane E. Aaron and Murray McArthur, The Little Brown Compact Handbook, Third Canadian Edition* (Addison-Wesley). [This text has useful sections on grammar, punctuation, and sentence errors, as well as suggestions for writing essays and a summary of the MLA style. All royalties derived from the sale of this text will be donated to the Department of English scholarship fund.]

*Or either of the first two editions
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE: (Page numbers refer to The Harbrace Anthology)

1. Introductory Poems: “I wandered lonely” (111); “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” (214).

2. Old Ballads: “Sir Patrick Spens” (25); “Bonny Barbara Allen” (26).

3. Narrative Poems: “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (114); “La Belle Dame sans Merci” (151); “The Lady of Shalott” (156); “anyone lived in a pretty how town” (242).

4. Interlude on Poetic Terminology (Figurative Language, Prosody, Sound and Sound Devices); Interlude on Essay Writing.

5. Dramatic Poems: “I’m Nobody” (183); “Telephone Conversation” (317); “My Last Duchess” (164); Helen of Troy Does Counter Dancing” (337); “Hawk Roosting” (347).


7. Sonnets: “I, Being Born a Woman” (235); “That time of year” (36); “My mistress’ eyes” (37); “Since there’s no help” (31).

8. Poems for Reading Aloud: “Blackman Dead” (358); “Meditation on the Declension . . .” (360)

9. Visual Poems (Not for Reading Aloud): “l(a” (243); “r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r” (handout); “Apfel” (handout)’ “The Horizon of Holland” (handout).

10. Sound Poems (Not for Writing Down).


12. Parents and Children: “My Papa’s Waltz” (259); “Digging” (326); “Daddy” (311); “To a Sad Daughter” (353).

13. As I Lay Dying.

14. Poems of Death: “After a Death” (363); “Music when soft voices die” (143); “She dwelt among the untrodden ways” (109); “I heard a Fly buzz” (184); “Because I could not stop for Death” (186).

15. Poems from the Harbrace Anthology that You Want to Talk About
GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Online quizzes and exercises will account for 10% of the final grade.

One essay of four to five typewritten, double-spaced pages (1200 words) will account for 25% of the final mark. The title page of this essay should include a thesis statement and a very brief outline of the basic organization; see the sample essay on "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

A second essay, which may involve a creative topic and which therefore may be longer than the other essay, will account for 30% of the final grade.

One two-and-a-half-hour final exam will account for the remaining 35% of the final grade.

Class participation, as well as online participation (see below), will affect the grade positively (up to 5%). There may be some deduction of marks (up to 5%) if your attendance is noticeably irregular.

(Note also: One number grade (1%) may be subtracted for each day an essay is late, unless an extension has been granted in advance. No essay will be accepted after the other students' essays have been returned to them.)

ONLINE TASKS:

Everyone has computer access through the university.

Online tasks mainly involve online quizzes and exercises which account for 10% of your final grade. Be sure to note deadlines, as well as any other instructions, which will be given in class.

A series of short quizzes (5 questions each) will test your reading and comprehension of the following:

- *Jane Eyre*, volume 1 (pp. 7-151)
- *Jane Eyre*, volume 2 (pp. 153-296)
- *Jane Eyre*, volume 3 (pp. 297-452)
- *Wide Sargasso Sea*
- *As I Lay Dying*
There will also be a series of exercises (5 questions each) based on knowledge and skills discussed in class. You may use books, notes, etc. when doing these. The topics will be the following:

- Punctuation
- Quoting in Essays
- Figurative Language
- Prosody and Sound Devices
- Diction

**ONLINE ACTIVITIES:**

Check regularly for **Announcements** on the main page.

Click on **Lessons** on the main page. This will take you to **Downloads**. These are documents that you should download before class, and bring with you to class. Since most of them are available at the beginning of term, I’d advise you to print them all out and keep them in a folder that you bring to class.

**Lessons** on the main page will also take you to **Lecture Notes**, which will summarize the key terms and ideas discussed in some lectures. These will be available after the class, and I’d advise that you make and keep copies.

**Lessons** on the main page will also take you to our “**Coffee Club.**” Here you may wish to enter into some discussion of issues raised in class. I may suggest topics, and I encourage you to raise any issues. Occasionally, I will put a question and give a bonus mark to the first person to answer. Participating in the discussion here may help your final grade.

Finally, **Lessons** on the main page will take you to the **Class Poetry Board**. Here you may, if you wish, post original poems and/or respond to other students’ poems. I hope to have a class toward the end for volunteers to read their own poems.

**In Touch** on the main page will take you to **Links** to websites that may be of interest to you. These will include an online style manual with information on punctuation, grammar, hints for good essay writing, and MLA style; exercises to accompany *Little, Brown Handbook*; access to the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, the ultimate authority on the English language; and some websites that provide background, illustrations, etc. to some of the things that we are studying.

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The Faculty of Arts requires that we notify you of the following:

"Note on the avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the undergraduate calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the disciplinary policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

ASSIGNMENTS

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 paper will treat, identify the direction of your essay, and interest your reader.

2. Provide evidence for generalizations that you make. Try to strike a balance between general argument and specific illustration. Use quotations to support your ideas, but don't overquote.

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

4. I prefer that you base your ideas on your own careful and thoughtful reading of the texts. Feel free to use ideas from class discussions, but please do not consult other sources unless you see me first.

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 the 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 only quoted from the primary text. I will give you some information on how to use MLA style to quote poetry and to cite works from anthologies; for more detail, see The Little, Brown Compact Handbook.

6. I mark essays holistically, taking into consideration content, organization, and style and correctness.
ASSIGNMENT 1:

**Due:** Wednesday, February 8, 2006

**Length:** Approximately five double-spaced, typewritten pages (1200 words).

**Topic:** One of the following. The title page of your essay should include a brief thesis statement and three-point outline, as on the sample essay.

1. Tennyson has been called one of the most “musical” of the British poets. Examine “The Lady of Shalott” in terms of its “musicality.” Refer to relevant terms listed under prosody and sound devices, and discuss their implications. If you wish, you may also raise issues suggested by Loreena McKennitt's musical adaptation. To write a coherent essay, organize your ideas under three principal headings; this will help to avoid the problem of your essay sounding too much like a list of items.

2. Compare the following two passages from “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”: the end of Part II (lines 107-142) and the end of Part IV (lines 263-291). Organize around three main points of comparison, one of which should involve symbolism in some way, and another of which should involve the ballad stanza (scan at least one stanza from each passage).

3. Compare all three versions of “Bonny Barbara Allen” (the one in The Harbrace Anthology and the two from the course Downloads). Organize around three main points of comparison, one of which should be the ballad stanza. If you wish, you may assume that the version in the text is the earliest of the three, and base your comparison on why you think that the other versions developed from it.

4. Compare the poems “Bonny Barbara Allen” and “La Belle Dame sans Merci.” Limit your discussion to three key points of comparison, one of which should be the ballad stanza.

5. How is it that, despite the unusual language, readers can understand, and respond to, “anyone lived in a pretty how town”? Organize your essay around three principal reasons.
ASSIGNMENT 2:

**Due:** Monday, March 27, 2006.

**Length:** Variable, but at least five typewritten pages in total (1200 words).

**Topic:** One of the following:

1. This is a two-part assignment. **(1)** Write an original **sonnet** (either Italian or English) which draws its inspiration from **one** of the following relationships: Sir John and Barbara Allen; Sir Lancelot and the Lady of Shalott; La Belle Dame and the knight-at-arms; the Duke and his new Duchess; Jane Eyre and Helen Burns; Rochester and Celine Varens (*Jane Eyre*); Rochester and Antoinette (*Wide Sargasso Sea*). **(2)** Accompany your sonnet with an essay of **four or five pages** in which you trace the process of writing your sonnet. Include an analysis of your final version.

2. This is a three-part assignment. You are working on a novel that will be a prequel, sequel or midquel to **either** *Wide Sargasso Sea* or *As I Lay Dying*. (Among other things, you may consider giving a minor character a life, expanding on a “gap” in the original novel, or basing your novel on a character of your own who has some connection with the original.) **(1)** Reproduce approximately one page from anywhere in your novel (i.e., **no more than four double-spaced essay pages**). **(2)** Write a commentary on that “page,” explaining how it fits into the overall structure of your novel and discussing the devices (point of view, narrator, diction, style, aspects of time and order, etc.) by which you consciously tried to make the passage (and your novel) effective. **(3)** Reproduce an imaginary dialogue with the author. Raise issues from his/her novel and its connection with your novel, as well as the legitimacy of encroaching upon his/her work. (Try to create the author’s character, and, if you wish, write an account of the circumstances under which you were able to converse with the author.)

3. On one occasion, Jean Rhys described Bertha Rochester as “improbable,” and elsewhere she called her “the awful madwoman.” She added, “She seemed like such a poor ghost. I thought I’d try to write her a life.” To what extent do you feel that Rhys has succeeded in bringing Bertha (and her relationship with Rochester) to life in *Wide Sargasso Sea*? (You may also wish to discuss Rhys’s criticism of Bertha in *Jane Eyre*.)

4. Compare the way Faulkner presents Addie in her monologue in *As I Lay Dying* with the way Plath presents her father in “Daddy.” Organize around **three** points of comparison, one of which should consider the implications of point of view.

5. Compare the creation of a persona in **any two** of the following poems: “I’m Nobody,” “Telephone Conversation,” “Helen of Troy Does Counter Dancing,” “I, Being Born a Woman,” “Since there’s no help.” Organize around **three** points of comparison, one of which should focus on diction, and another consider the presence of an addressee (“you”).