English 251A: Criticism I (LEC 005)
Wednesdays 5:00-7:50 (HH 139)

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Course Description and Goals:

“An introduction to strategies of reading, interpretation, and analysis of literary and non-literary texts, focusing on narrative, poetics, discourse, and rhetoric, and the acquisition of critical vocabulary.” (University of Waterloo Course Calendar)

Usually taken in your 2A term, your first as an English major or minor, 251A is designed as an introduction to the strategies, practices, and resources available for the study of literary and non-literary texts. Along with the other core courses required for all English plans, 251A provides students in English the fundamental professional vocabulary and protocols used by researchers in our discipline. Your success as an English student depends upon the acquisition and the skillful deployment of these disciplinary practices. As the description states, we will be primarily concerned with these practices as determined by poetics, narrative, rhetoric, and discourse, the formal or technical fundamentals of reading in a disciplinary or professional manner, and we will bring these practices to bear on literary texts, both poetry and prose, as well as some non-literary texts, including a film. In addition to the required texts, we will also examine a series of short supplementary texts by selected authors; all supplementary texts are easily accessible online.

Required Texts:

Shakespeare, William. The Tempest.

Assignments and Marks:

Mid-term 1: 20%
Mid-term 2: 20%
Mid-term 3: 25%
Take Home Exam: 35%
Mid-terms: The mid-terms are in-class tests with two parts: (1) definitions of terms from the List studied during the mid-term period; (2) longer interpretive essay answer. For the definitions, you will need to be able to define the terms listed (e.g., what is metonymy?). For the interpretive questions, **mid-terms #1 and #2** will require you to analyze different short passages from texts that we may or may not have analyzed in class. **Mid-term #3** will require you to answer one of several questions about the primary texts studied (excluding texts provided on first 2 mid-terms). **Time: fifty minutes.**

**Final take home examination:** For the take home examination, you will be required to analyze a text or series of texts utilizing the vocabulary and critical tools learned over the course of the term. Answers will be submitted in essay form, with proper bibliographic information provided (MLA). Submissions via email are fine. **Time: TBA**

**Absentee policy:** An absence from a mid-term will require a doctor’s or other health care professional’s documentation in the case of illness. Any other extraordinary circumstances will also require documentation. Only under these circumstances can an alternative examination be scheduled.

**Class Schedule:**

**Sept. 16:** Introduction: English literary studies. Asking questions and using information: **read Ways of Reading** Units 1, 2

**Sept. 23:** Form, structure, grammar, genre: **read WR** Units 3, 4, Cummings, “anyone lived in a pretty how town,” Shakespeare, “Sonnet 18” (in class). Language and time and space: **read WR** Units 5, 6, Hemingway, “Fathers and Sons”

**Sept. 30:** Language and context: register: **read WR** 7, Hemingway, “The Battler,” “My Old Man.” Language and gender and society: **read WR** 8, 9, Hemingway, “The End of Something,” “An Enquiry”

**Oct. 7:** Metaphor; Irony: **read WR** 10, 11, “Soldier’s Home,” “A Way You’ll Never Be.” **Mid-term #1**

**Oct. 14:** Juxtaposition; Intertextuality and allusion: **read WR** Units 12, 13, The Tempest Acts 1,2,3

**Oct. 21:** Rhyme and sound patterning; Verse and metre; Parallelism; **read WR** 16, 17, 18, **Tempest** Acts 4, 5

**Oct. 28:** Deviation; Narrative: **read WR** 19, 20, Hemingway, “In Another Country,” Thomas Gray, “On a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes”
Mid-term #2

Nov. 4: Narrative point of view; Narration in film and prose fiction; Realism: read WR 21, 22, 23, Hemingway, “Black Ass at the Crossroads,” “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.” Video clip: TBA

Nov. 11: Film viewing: Francis Ford Coppola’s Apocalypse Now. Read: WR 24

Nov. 18: Positioning the reader or spectator: read WR Unit 15, Hemingway, “A Very Short Story,” “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife.” Mid term # 3


Dec. 2: Reading drama; Literature in Performance: read WR 25, 26; review

Note on plagiarism:

The Faculty of Arts requires that the following statement on the avoidance of academic offences, including plagiarism, be included on all Arts course outlines:

"Note on avoidance of 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; on the Web at http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html). 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 TA or course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

Note: On November 18/02, Senate passed a motion that all course outlines also contain the following reference to the student’s right to grieve: “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.html.”

For guidance on avoiding plagiarism and other academic offences, please consult the Arts Faculty Web page, “How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors” (http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html).

English 251A: Section 003, Fall 2006
List of Terms

Intentional fallacy
Affective fallacy
Form
Structure
Archaism
Accent
Dialect
Register
Heteroglossia
Polyphony
Defamiliarization
Signifier
Signified
Transitivity
Vowels
Consonants
Syllable
Alliteration
Assonance
Consonance
Reverse rhyme
Pararhyme
Rhyme
Internal rhyme
Slant rhyme
Rhyme scheme
Sound symbolism
Onomatopoeia
Lineation
Meter (Iamb, Trochee, Anapest, Dactyl)
Non-polar/Polar parallelism
Phonological parallelism
Lexical parallelism
Syntactic/sentence parallelism
Canonic parallelism
Deviation
Metaphor
Simile
Metonymy
Synecdoche

Verbal irony
Stable irony
Generative irony
Generative or indeterminate irony
Situational irony
Dramatic irony
Structural irony
Juxtaposition
Montage
Collage
Allusion
Intertextuality
Story
Narrative
Narrative pace (Scene, Summary, Ellipsis)
Aesthetic strategy
Author
Narrator
Persona
First person narrative
Third person narrative
External or Internal narrative
Unrestricted or Restricted narrative
Focalization
Focalizer
Direct speech
Indirect speech
Free direct speech
Free indirect speech
Realism
Flat or Round characters
Implied reader
Soliloquy
Dramatic monologue
Interior monologue