Purpose of Course: English 251 is a course which is designed to introduce students to the theory and methodology behind the formal study of English literature. In other words, it is the core course in approaching English studies as a discipline.

In English 251A, we will concentrate on a close reading of texts, a type of close reading which is sometimes called the "New Critical" approach or the "Formalist" approach. It is also called "Analytical Criticism" and parallels what in French studies is called "Explication de texte."

The object of the course is to help you become a better, more confident reader on your own. We will concentrate on the literary text itself, not on what critics tell us about the text or what they tell us we should think about the text. We will try to determine just what can and cannot be said about any particular text and to what extent a text can be read on its own. At the same time, we will look at some of the assumptions behind this approach.

This is not a lecture course. Students are expected to come to class regularly, to come prepared, and to be willing to discuss and even argue points.

In addition, in English 251A students are expected, by developing their understanding of critical terminology and critical concepts, to increase their critical vocabulary.

In English 251A, we will concentrate on lyrical and narrative poetry and short narrative fictional prose.

Texts


Rudy Wiebe, ed., The Story-Makers (Gage).


[Note: In Poetry, we will read all of the text section (first 150 pages), plus as many of poems in the anthology section as we have time for. In The Story-Makers, we will read approximately 15 stories. The Handbook is primarily a reference book to be used in this and other English courses.]

Requirements

4 short essays (4 to 8 pages each) on assigned topics, 2 on poetry and 2 on prose; 3 essays worth 15% each; 1 essay (the one with the highest mark) worth 20%

1 final exam in regular exam period on terminology and a sight analysis; worth 20%

class participation: 15%

Office - Room and Hours

HH 246, ext. 2124
Office Hours: MWF 10:30 to 11:20
Also, normally MWF 12:30
Other hours by chance or by appointment.