

ENGL 262: English Literature Since 1800

Term: Fall 2019
Section Number: 32850R
Meeting Time: MWF 12:00-12:50PM
Location: VKC 161

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Findeisen
Office Location: THH 402H
Student Hours: 9:00 – 10:00AM MWF
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Course Description and Objectives

English 262 is a survey of significant texts in British literature from 1800 until the present day. We will study texts written in a wide variety of modes and genres, paying close attention to the formal techniques writers represent, resist, shape, and respond to the world around them. Topics covered will include (among others): race, gender, and social class; romanticism and the “invention” of literature; the rise of the novel; the aesthetic differences between realism, modernism, and postmodernism; and some conjectures about the state contemporary art.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- [Objectives Chosen By Class]
- [Objectives Chosen By Class]
- [Objectives Chosen By Class]
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- [Objectives Chosen By Class]

Required Texts:

- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. (1818) ISBN-13: 978-0393927931
- Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. (1925) ISBN-13: 978-0156628709
- Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. (1981) ISBN-13: 978-0812976533
- Smith, Zadie. *On Beauty*. (2005) ISBN-13: 978-0143037743
- Selections from Blackboard.

Attendance and Class Participation

This course thrives on engaging dialog and friendly interaction with other people, all of which requires robust participation. Everyone will be called upon to participate in an ongoing critical conversation utilizing active learning activities and broad classroom discussion, which will factor into your participation grade. After four absences, your participation grade will begin to decline.

Assignments

Reading Responses: Because ENGL 262 is not a lecture course, we cannot achieve our goals without first completing the assigned readings. Our classmates expect everyone comes to class prepared for discussion, which means we will have completed the responses up to our own high standards and are prepared to ask questions and respond to one another. The reading responses

are short (**one, full page**) and the questions are located directly on the syllabus. They must demonstrate that we have sufficiently read the assignment and have thought about the prompt. They will often ask to engage in sophisticated analysis of the course material, which means *quoting the assigned texts is necessary*. A few students will read their responses at the beginning of class, so if you do not have a laptop, print them out and bring them with you.

Short Papers: Short papers (five to seven pages) will test our ability to grapple with and “solve” literary problems through critical interpretation. We want to utilize class concepts to analyze the ways in which texts work to create their meanings. We will be evaluated on our ability to write clearly and respond directly to the prompt, employ textual evidence, define concepts, and sustain an original argument.

Quizzes: In order to ensure that we are utilizing knowledge over the course of the semester, we use quizzes to help guide our reading and prepare for the exams. *Quizzes are not punitive* (!!) and are instead used to reinforce our recall of specific concepts central to our shared conversation. For the most, quizzes will ask you to either define or identify a concept we’ve covered in class the previous day, although I will also ask questions about past ideas/reading to ensure you are retaining essential information over time.

Exams: This course utilizes both a mid-term and a cumulative final exam. Both exams contain four areas: terms and definitions, authors and works, short answers, and analysis. Everything covered in class is fair game, so I strongly suggest **taking notes** while listening to lectures and presentations, as well as **while you’re reading**. Please pay special attention to passages we read together in class and literary terms marked on the syllabus.

Grading Policy:

Quizzes (15%)
Midterm (15%)
Final Exam (20%)

Participation (10%)
Papers (40%)

Additional Policies

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (see <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>).

Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (at <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>).

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* (see <http://equity.usc.edu>) or to the *Department of Public Safety* (see <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>). This is important for the safety whole USC community.

Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* provides 24/7 confidential support (see <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm>), and the sexual assault resource center webpage describes reporting options and other resources (see sarc@usc.edu).

Support Systems:

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students (see <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>).

The Office of Disability Services and Programs provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations (http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html).

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology (see <http://emergency.usc.edu/>).

Week 1: Introduction to Course

Monday, August 26, 2019

Our first meeting is dedicated to developing our course objectives. What do we want out of our time together? What are some of our “best practices” and what do we want to avoid? What kinds of learning experiences have inspired us in the past to produce our best work, and what experiences have intimidated us and nurtured mediocrity?

Homework: Read Van Engen, “Reclaiming Claims” (Blackboard).

Response 1: Write a one-page summary of “Reclaiming Claims” that identifies the essay’s major arguments and post it to Blackboard. Before you write, think about the following questions: Why did he write the essay? If you only had one sentence, how would you identify the biggest “takeaway”? Why does Van Engen think his argument matters? What did he think his audience believed before he wrote the essay, and what does he want them to believe now?

Wednesday, August 28, 2019

We will compare Van Engen’s “Reclaiming Claims” with our own criteria for our course objectives and reflect on how the essay enhances or changes what we want out of the class. As an in-class exercise, we will write our course objectives into the syllabus, and I will answer general questions about the course.

Homework: Read Graff, “How Periods Erase History” (Blackboard).

Response 2: Write a one-page summary of “How Periods Erase History” that identifies Graff’s major arguments and post it to Blackboard. Before you write, pay close attention to Graff’s opening paragraphs (his personal anecdote) and consider what he’s trying to communicate by telling that story. What does Graff mean when he says “literary history”? What is your understanding of literary history?

Friday, August 30, 2019

We will do some in-class exercises that help develop your intuition about how/why art forms exist in a tradition.

Homework: Watch Vox’s “Rapping, Deconstructed: The Best Rhymers of All Time” on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWveXdj6oZU>). Come to class prepared to discuss the video, and to define the following terms: **Beat; Bar; Internal Rhyme; Multi-syllable Rhyme; Cross the Bar Line; Daisy Chain; Motive.**

Read Gross and McDowell, “Prosody as Rhythmic Cognition” (Blackboard)

Week 2: Sound and Sense

Monday, September 2, 2019 (CLASS CANCELED IN RECOGNITION OF LABOR DAY)

Wednesday, September 4, 2019

Introduction to poetic scansion. We will learn the following literary terms and practice using them to read some poems: **stress, unstress, meter, foot, iamb, troche, spondee, anapest.**

Homework: Read Pope, *An Essay on Man* “Epistle I” (Blackboard). To ease your reading comprehension, note that many of the verbs occur at the end of sentences rather than the middle.

Read, Gross and McDowell “The Scansion of the English Meters” (Blackboard).

Friday, September 6, 2019

We will cover the **Heroic Couplet**. Why did writers like Pope find the heroic couplet’s metrical structure to be appropriate to the subject matter in *An Essay on Man*? Drawing on what we learned about literary history from Graff, why was the heroic couplet fashionable during the neoclassical period of 18th century?

Homework: Read, “Introduction” “We Are Seven” and “Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey” from *Lyrical Ballads* (Blackboard).

Response 3: Drawing on what we learned about literary history from Graff, write one page in which you develop a preliminary argument (hypothesis) about why the heroic couplet fell out of fashion during the romantic period of the 19th century.

Week 3: Romanticism: The Mirror and the Lamp

Monday, September 9, 2019

Using the “Introduction” to *Lyrical Ballads* as a touchstone, we will cover M.H. Abrams’s argument put forth in *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*.

Homework: Read Coleridge, “Metrical Feet” and “The Eolian Harp” (Blackboard). Make some connections between Abrams’s “lamp” and Coleridge’s eolian harp, paying close attention to how Coleridge describes nature in stanza four.

Wednesday, September 11, 2019

We will do some in-class exercises to develop our skill in close reading using “The Eolian Harp.”

Homework: Read “She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways” and “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” (Blackboard). Paraphrase the meaning of the poems, reducing them to their heart or core, and write that paraphrase in a single (simple!) sentence.

Friday, September 13, 2019

We will revise our paraphrases into “Analytic Paraphrases”

Homework: Read Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” and Brooks, “History Without Footnotes: Keats’s Sylvan Historian” (Blackboard). Write down three questions you have about the essay and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Week 4: Romanticism: The Invention of Literature

Monday, September 16, 2019

We will make sense of Brooks’s argument in “Keats’s Sylvan Historian.”

Homework: Read Wordsworth, “The World Is Too Much with Us” (Blackboard).
Response 4: Write a discussion post to blackboard in which you describe how Brooks’s arguments in the Keats essay relate to Wordsworth’s poem.

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

I will give a short lecture on the “invention” of literature as a response to the rise of industrial capitalism in the 19th century.

Homework: Read Shelley, “Ozymandias” (Blackboard).

Friday, September 20, 2019

We will analyze “Ozymandias” according to its parts of speech and consider how the poem is consistent with the invention of literature.

Homework: Read Poger, “Responding to Poetry”. Pay close attention to the examples Poger uses from student essays, as we will use those as models for our own essays. Consider the question, “How does the poem mean what I think it means?” In response to your first paper prompt, write a thesis statement and a supporting paragraph.

Week 5: Writing Literary Analysis

Monday, September 23, 2019

Using our initial paragraphs as a launching point, we will cover the ‘What Does What and How’ template for literary analysis.

Homework: Revise the sentences you wrote in class and compose five original “close reading” sentences. Bring them with you to class.

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Homework: Write a complete draft of Paper 1. Print three copies and bring them with you to class.

Friday, September 27, 2019

Homework: Write final draft of Paper 1.

Week 6: The Rise of the Novel

Monday, September 30, 2019

I will do a brief lecture summarizing Ian Watt's claims about the origins of the English novel in his foundational book, *The Rise of the Novel*.

Homework: Read Shelly, *Frankenstein* (pg).

Response 5: Write one page in which you connect some of Watts's concepts to the text.

Wednesday, October 2, 2019

We will discuss your evidence regarding *Frankenstein* and the novel form.

Homework: Read Shelly, *Frankenstein* (pg).

Friday, October 4, 2019

The Great Debate

Homework: Read Shelly, *Frankenstein* (pg)

Week 7: The Novel as Heteroglossia

Monday, October 7, 2019

Discuss the conclusion of *Frankenstein*.

Homework: Read Poovy, "My Hideous Progeny": The Lady and the Monster" in *Frankenstein*. Pay close attention to what the essay says about morality, didacticism, and romanticism. I highly suggest you outline the essay and summarize its rhetorical moves / main arguments.

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

Homework: Read Levin, “*Frankenstein* and the Tradition of Realism” in *Frankenstein*. Pay close attention to Levin’s argument – what is he saying about Frankenstein’s relationship to realism? What does he assume the reader believes before the essay begins, and what change does his essay want to make? I highly suggest you outline the essay and summarize its rhetorical moves / main arguments.

Friday, October 11, 2019

Homework: Use your online study guide to review the material, including terms, concepts, and passages. Generate some sample questions that you think I might ask during the exam.

Week 8: Exam Review

Monday, October 14, 2019

Exam Review

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Midterm

Friday, October 18, 2019 (Class Cancelled: Fall Recess)

Homework: Read Eliot, “The Waste Land” (Blackboard). The Waste Land is perhaps the most famous poem of the 20th century.

Response 6: Write a response to blackboard in which you describe your own personal history with the poem, i.e. if you had read it before in other classes or understand allusions to the text in other sources. If this is your first time reading it, what are your impressions?

Week 9: Modernism and Fragments

Monday, October 21, 2019

To begin the second half of our semester, I will give a presentation on modernism and make some preliminary comments about its relationship to romanticism and realism that will be tested over the next few weeks.

Homework: Read, Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pg iii --).

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

We will talk about the difference between **Free Indirect Discourse** and **Stream of Consciousness** in narrative.

Homework: Read, Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pg --).

Friday, October 25, 2019

Homework: Read, Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pg --).

Week 10: Modernism and Epistemology

Monday, October 28, 2019

Homework: Read, Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pg --).

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Homework: Read, Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (pg --).

Friday, November 1, 2019

Homework: Read “Responding to Fiction” (Blackboard) and draft some notes about each of the following aspects of *Mrs. Dalloway*: symbolism, style, setting, theme, and plot.

Week 11: Argumentative Writing

Monday, November 4, 2019

We will review the paper prompt and begin to transform your initial observations into argumentative hypothesis.

Homework: Read, “The Uneven U” (Blackboard) and attempt to write your own Uneven U paragraph regarding *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Wednesday, November 6, 2019

We will develop some of your arguments in class by learning some ways to “anticipate the opposition” and “plant naysayers” in your papers.

Homework: Consider Paper Prompt 2 on Blackboard and write a working thesis with some initial textual evidence to support your claim.

Friday, November 8, 2019

In class peer review.

Homework: Write Final Draft of Paper 2.

Week 12: Postmodernism and Ontology

Monday, November 11, 2019

I will give a class lecture on literature and ontology. We will split the class into groups and delegate the responsibility for leading class discussion.

Homework: Read Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*.

Discussion Board: Respond to Group 1's reading response prompts via Blackboard.

Wednesday, November 13, 2019

Group 1 Discussion Lead.

Homework: Read Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*.

Discussion Board: Respond to Group 2's reading response prompts via Blackboard.

Friday, November 15, 2019

Group 2 Discussion Lead.

Homework: Read Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*.

Discussion Board: Respond to Group 3's reading response prompts via Blackboard.

Week 13: Postmodernism and

Monday, November 18, 2019

Group 3 Discussion Lead.

Homework: Read Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*.

Discussion Board: Respond to Group 4's reading response prompts via Blackboard.

Wednesday, November 20, 2019

Group 4 Discussion Lead.

Homework: Read Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*.

Discussion Board: Respond to Group 5's reading response prompts via Blackboard.

Friday, November 22, 2019

Group 5 Discussion Lead.

Homework: Read Wood, “Human, All Too Inhuman” (Blackboard) and Read Smith, *On Beauty* (pg)

Response 7: Does Wood’s characterization of contemporary literature feel contemporary to you? Even if you don’t read contemporary literature, do your best to respond thoughtfully and give as many concrete examples as possible.

Week 14: Contemporary Literature

Monday, November 25, 2019

We will discuss Wood’s concept of “hysterical realism” and ask ourselves whether it corresponds to what we know about contemporary literature, paying special attention to how it relates to *On Beauty*.

Homework: Read Smith “This Is How It Feels to Me” (Blackboard) and *On Beauty* (pg)

Wednesday, November 27, 2019 (Class Cancelled: Thanksgiving Holiday)

Friday, November 29, 2019 (Class Cancelled: Thanksgiving Holiday)

Week 15: Contemporary Literature

Monday, December 2, 2019

Homework: Read Smith, *On Beauty* (pg)

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Homework: Read Smith, *On Beauty* (pg)

Friday, December 6, 2019

Homework: Read Smith, *On Beauty* (pg)

Week 16: Final Exam Review

Monday, December 9, 2019

Homework: Come to class with three questions you want to ask for exam review.

Wednesday, December 11, 2019 (Exam Review)

Friday, December 13, 2019 Final Exam (11:00AM - 1:00PM)