

SEMESTER SYLLABUS

ENG 2040 (204) semester syllabus

Course information:

Title: English 2040, Great Books: Literature

Credit: Three semester hours

Course Description: Introduction to interpreting literature, using works from various periods and cultures, viewed in their social and historical contexts and read for their enduring interest.

Prerequisites:

Offering Unit: **Department of English, College of Liberal Art**

English 2040 Great Books: Literature

Fall 2012

About this Course: Great Books: Literature is part of the Wright State Core, whose mission is “to provide students with innovative and dynamic opportunities designed to engage learners in becoming active, conscientious, educated citizens of a diverse world.”

As an **Element IV Arts/Humanities Course**, English 2040 is intended to provide students with tools for analysis and appreciation of, in this case, the literary arts. This course introduces students to the critical reading of literary texts within the broad western cultural and literary tradition. It introduces students to the discipline of writing critically and thoughtfully about literature. To meet course outcomes, students may expect to

- a. Critically analyze significant creative, philosophical or religious works
- b. Understand and discuss the complex blend of imaginative vision, socio-cultural context, ethical values, and aesthetic judgment in creative, philosophical or religious works
- c. Recognize, evaluate and respond to creative, philosophical or religious works
- d. Develop appropriate and ethical applications of knowledge in the humanities or the arts

The eight texts we will read and discuss this semester facilitate the above outcomes by creatively addressing such central human concerns as (among other things) alienation and identity, war and morality, and survival and sacrifice.

English 2040 is also an integrated writing (IW) course in the Wright State Core. Students are expected to produce writing that “demonstrates their understanding of course content, is appropriate for the audience and purpose of a particular writing task, demonstrates the degree of mastery of disciplinary writing conventions appropriate to the course (including documentation conventions), and shows competency in standard edited American English. Course writing assignments may take many forms and include a mix of formal and informal writing, revised and unrevised texts, totaling approximately 2000 words. All writing will count as part of students’

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performance in the course; students will not pass this course without satisfactorily completing the writing assignments.

Required Texts: Butler, *Kindred*
Dante, *Divine Comedy: Inferno*
DeFoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*
Heller, *Catch-22*
Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*
Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*

Work: Some form of reading is due every day. Some form of **accounting for that reading** (in-class writing, discussion, exams) is due nearly every day. Some assignments will be made orally, or on the blackboard, in class. Others will be made in handouts or through Course Studio. The graded work for this course includes

- **3 exams.** These include brief objective questions on reading and lecture material, handouts, terms and historical/cultural context, as well as longer interpretive questions based on passages from the texts. Questions can cover anything discussed in class and any aspect of the entire text, even those portions not specifically referred to in class. @ 20%
- **In-class writings.** One or two per full-length text, to be completed in class. These will be collected at the end of the period and cannot be made up later. In-class writings will be marked S/U. These will also form the basis for your course essay. You must earn a Satisfactory on three quarters of these to pass this portion of the coursework. 10%
- **Internet research/annotations.** You will be asked to research and write short, documented explanations or interpretations of selected historical and cultural allusions in our texts and submit them in a portfolio at the end of the term. 10%
- **Essay+ Drafts portfolio.** This essay of approximately 1250 words will draw together and develop from in-class writings following a topic thread of your choice from the readings. The essay is due in rough draft form week 9, together with the relevant in-class writings, and in final form, together with all prior drafts and relevant in-class writings on the last day of the term. 20%

Date Reading Assignments and General Topics

8/27 Course introduction, expectations. Close reading exercises: simile, metaphor, symbol

8/29 More close reading practice. Reading Poetry. Dante and his times. The Sweet New Style

8/31 Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos I-IV

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9/3	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
9/5	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , Cantos V-XV
9/7	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , Cantos XVI-XXV

9/10	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , Cantos XXVI-XXXIII
9/12	Shakespeare and his times. The Elizabethan theatre. The New World.
9/14	<i>The Tempest</i> , Act I

9/17	Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i> , through end
9/19	Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i>
9/21	Discussion: Dante, Shakespeare and popular culture: cartoons, allusions, film clips

9/24	Exam 1
9/26	The rise of the novel. Understanding the novel as a structure. Novel as a bourgeois artifact. Daniel Defoe and his times
9/28	Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , through the end of his first year on the Island

10/1	Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , through the catechizing of Friday
10/3	Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> , through end
10/5	Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>

10/8	George Eliot and her times. The idea of the Universal and the problem for the woman novelist. Bildungsroman
10/10	Eliot, <i>The Mill on the Floss</i> , Book the First
10/12	Eliot, <i>The Mill on the Floss</i> , Book the Second and Third

10/15	Eliot, <i>The Mill on the Floss</i> , Book the Fourth and Fifth
10/17	Eliot, <i>The Mill on the Floss</i> , Book the Sixth and Seventh. Annotations, first set due
10/19	Joseph Heller and his times. Experiments with point of view and circular structure. Social criticism. Satire. <i>Catch-22</i> , through Chapter 14 “Kid Sampson”

10/22	Heller, <i>Catch-22</i> , through Chapter 26 “Arfy”

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- 10/24 Heller, *Catch-22*, through end
- 10/26 Heller, *Catch-22*. **Essay draft 1 due**
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- 10/29 Discussion: Defoe, Eliot and Heller--alienation, sacrifice, identity
- 10/31 **Exam 2**
- 11/2 Salman Rushdie and his times. The novel and language play. The post-colonial novel and its concerns. Fantasy. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, through Chapter 5 “About Guppees and Chupwalas”
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- 11/5 *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, through end
- 11/7 LeGuin, “American SF and the Other”
(<http://www.depauw.edu/SFs/backissues/7/leguin7art.htm>)
- 11/9 Octavia Butler and her times. Science fiction as a medium for ethical inquiry. The modern African-American novel and its concerns; Butler, *Kindred*, Prologue
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- 11/12 **VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY**
- 11/14 Butler, *Kindred*, The River, The Fire
- 11/16 Butler, *Kindred*, The Fall, The Fight
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- 11/19 Butler, *Kindred*, The Storm, The Rope, Epilogue
- 11/21 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- 11/23 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
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- 11/26 James Welch and his times. Historical fiction as a medium for cultural inquiry. The modern Native-American novel and its concerns
- 11/28 Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*, Chapters 1-2
- 11/30 Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*, through Chapter 11
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- 12/3 Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*, through end. **Annotations, second set due.**
- 12/5 Welch, *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*
- 12/7 Discussion: Rushdie, Butler, Welch alienation, sacrifice, identity. **Essay final draft due**
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- 12/10-12/14 Final Examination Week: our examination will be at the posted time.**

Requirements for the Course:

- Exam 1 (September 24) 20% of grade
- Exam 2 (October 31) 20% of grade

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Exam 3 (finals week, as scheduled)	20% of grade
Essay Draft 1 REQUIRED (October 26)	0% of grade*
Essay Final Revised Draft (December 7)	20% of grade
In class writings	10% of grade
Annotations	10% of grade

*Your draft 1 will not be given a grade. But your final draft will not be accepted if you have not submitted a draft for marking and comment on 10/26. Revised final drafts must account for instructor's comments and corrections.

Attendance: This MWF class meets 41 times during this semester—if you miss only four classes, you miss 10% of the course. We will do group work in class, in which students learn from one another. If you are not there, you and your potential partners will have lost something. Therefore, I will enforce the following policy on attendance:

One to two absences	No penalty
Three to seven absences	Final grade drops 1 point per day (on 100 pt scale)
Eighth absence	Above, <u>plus</u> final grade drops 4 <u>more</u> points
Ninth absence	Above, <u>plus</u> final grade drops 8 <u>more</u> points
Tenth absence	Above, <u>plus</u> final grade drops 16 <u>more</u> points
Eleven or more absences	F for course

Other Policies: Academic honesty is essential to the fair and successful conduct of class, and dishonesty will be punished. Dishonesty includes various kinds of cheating, “plagiarism” (defined as the use of the words and ideas of others as if they were your own), and copying the work of another student in a test. Penalties for academic dishonesty can be severe and I will impose them. Please refer to the on-line student handbook for full details.