

College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study
Sample Syllabus
(Submitted by Patrick Mullen)

Contact Information

Name, Email address, Office Location, Office Hours

Websites

Course Blackboard: <http://blackboard.montclair.edu>

First Year Writing: <http://www.montclair.edu/writing/firstyearwriting/>

Required Texts

Meyer, Michael. *Thinking and Writing About Literature*, 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.

Kafka, Franz. *The Transformation ('Metamorphosis') and Other Stories*. London: Penguin Books, 1992.

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. Montclair State University edition. 2009.

Purpose of Course

In College Writing II, you will continue your journey as a reader and writer that you began in College Writing I. You will write focused, analytic essays, developed through multiple drafts, peer critiques, and careful editing of style and structure. You will cite and incorporate others' work and continue to utilize Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines. We will read outstanding literary works of poetry, drama, and fiction, written by a diverse group of writers. In particular, we will consider the social, cultural, historical, and political contexts that bear upon the production – the writing, publishing, and disseminating – and reception of the literary texts. Five thematic units will incorporate reading, writing, and critique, culminating in a final essay. The revision process will teach you how to articulate arguments in a sophisticated manner, incorporate compelling source material into your writing, and document your research using the Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines.

Semester Schedule

Unit 1: January 17 – February 3

Unit 2: February 7 – February 24

Unit 3: February 28 – March 21

Unit 4: (Documented Paper) March 24 – April 7

Unit 5: April 11 – May 2

Course Requirements

Class Participation and Reading

Your enthusiastic, intelligent participation is required for a successful course. Class participation accounts for 10 per cent of the final grade, so I expect everyone to

volunteer his or her responses to our readings. Your reading load will vary a little from one thematic unit to another, but expect to read between 50 and 75 pages a week.

Attendance and Class Preparedness

You will be allowed three absences during the semester, no questions asked. Use them carefully. **AFTER THREE ABSENCES, YOUR GRADE DROPS.** For each absence beyond the allowed three, you lose a half a letter grade for the semester. That is, if you accumulate four absences and your final grade is a "C", that "C" becomes a "D". And so on. **Please do not come in late.** It is disrupting and unfair to those of us who are there on time. If you are frequently a few minutes late or significantly late, you will be recorded as absent.

Essays

Five essays, of three drafts, are required. In these essays, you are expected to draw out some aspect of the literature that interests you and then develop a relatively short, cogent response. You may not submit book reports or summaries. Focus on interpretation and analysis of the literary texts. While you will be expected to write frequently, you will find that regular writing assignments will make the writing come easier.

Course Peer Review & Critique Requirements

In College Writing II you will act as a critic to your fellow classmates in both small and large group settings. The purpose of the critic is to provide detailed observations of both the strengths and weaknesses of the essay. Make sure you have a printed copy of the comments your peer has made for you so that you can first use them in re-writing your paper, and then also turn it in along with the rest of your essay drafts each time you submit a final paper.

Portfolio

Over the semester, you will be creating a portfolio of written work. This portfolio will include the major essays and a final reflective essay. In the reflective essay you will evaluate your progress as a reader and writer, commenting upon your strengths and weaknesses. It is essential that you save everything. At the end of the semester you will be revising and re-submitting most of your work and so you will need to keep careful track of all of the work you do for this class.

Grading

In addition to a letter grade, you will receive a written report for each essay, letting you know what areas are strongest and the areas in which you need to improve. Most important is your progression over the semester. I will meet individually with each of you at least once during the semester, at mid-semester, to discuss your progress; at that time, I will give you an "up to that point" letter grade.

Your course work is weighted as follows:

Unit Papers:	70%
Portfolio (with Reflective Essay):	10%
Critiques:	10%

Class Participation:

10%

The rest of the course requirements can be found in the prefatory chapter on the Hacker handbook. Please read that chapter carefully, paying particular attention to:

- The Purpose of First-Year Writing Courses
- Guidelines and Expectations for First-Year Writing Courses at Montclair State
- Essay Criteria and Grades
- Academic Honesty and Plagiarism
- Attendance and Class Participation
- Center for Writing Excellence

Live Literature Requirement: Students are required to attend one on-campus Live Literature reading during the course of the semester and to post a brief response on Blackboard's Discussion Board.

Reading & Assignment Schedule

UNIT 1: The (Un)Happy Family

Tuesday, January 17: Introduction

Friday, January 20

Sharon Olds, "The Moment of My Father's Death"

Tuesday, January 24

Sophocles, Oedipus the King

Friday, January 27

Franz Kafka, "The Transformation" pp. 76 – 109

Due: Essay 1, Draft 1

Tuesday, January 31

Franz Kafka, "The Transformation" pp. 109 – 126

Friday, February 3

Peer Critiques

Due: Essay 1, Draft 2

UNIT 2: Tough Love

Tuesday, February 7

Jhumpa Lahiri, "Interpreter of Maladies"

Friday, February 10
Robert Hass, "Story about the Body"
Due: Essay 1, Draft 3

Tuesday, February 14
Anton Chekhov, "The Lady with the Pet Dog"

Friday, February 17
Sylvia Plath, "Daddy"
Due: Essay 2, Draft 1

Tuesday, February 21
Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"

Friday, February 24
Peer Critiques
Due: Essay 2, Draft 2

UNIT 3: The Dreamers

Tuesday, February 28
Franz Kafka, "In the Penal Colony"

Friday, March 3
Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman, pp. 1007 – 1037
Due: Essay 3, Draft 1

Tuesday, March 7
Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman, pp. 1037 – 1073

Friday, March 10
Peer Critiques
Due: Essay 3, Draft 2

Tuesday, March 14: Spring Break

Friday, March 17: Spring Break

Tuesday, March 21
Flannery O'Connor "Good Country People"

UNIT 4: Understanding Race/Class/Gender

Friday, March 24
William Faulkner, "Barn Burning"

Due: Essay 3, Draft 3

Tuesday, March 28

Tennessee Williams, The Glass Menagerie pp. 448 - 470

Friday, March 31

Tennessee Williams, The Glass Menagerie pp. 471 - 492

Due: Essay 4, Draft 1

Tuesday, April 4

Ralph Ellison, "Battle Royal"

Friday, April 7

Peer Critiques

Due: Essay 4, Draft 2

UNIT 5: Why Do We Read Literature?

Tuesday, April 11

Tim O'Brien, "How to Tell a True War Story"

Friday, April 14: No Class

Tuesday, April 18

Mary Oliver, "Black Snake"

Due: Essay 5, Draft 1

Friday, April 21

Franz Kafka, "Josefine, the Songstress"

Tuesday, April 25

Peer Critiques

Due: Essay 5, Draft 2

Friday, April 28

Steven Millhauser, "Cathay"

Tuesday, May 2: Final Class

Due: Essay 5, Draft 3

Tuesday, May 9: Final Portfolios Due (including all Final Drafts and the Reflective Essay).