

**ENWR106 College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study**  
***Approaching Literature***  
**(Created by West Moss, Gerrie Logan & Maria Giura)**

[Instructor information: name; office location and hour; email address; section number and semester identifier, classroom location, meeting days/times will need to be individualized]

*[NOTE TO FACULTY: Please review the sections of this sample syllabus that are italicized and in brackets. These are areas you may want to alter to fit your own course and teaching style.]*

ENWR College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study  
106:\_\_: [Dates/Times of class session]  
Room: [Place where class will meet]

Prof. \_\_\_\_\_

Office in \_\_\_\_\_ [building] Room \_\_\_\_\_

Office Hours:

Instructor Email: \_\_\_\_\_@[mail.montclair.edu](mailto:mail.montclair.edu)

English Department Web Site: <http://www.montclair.english.edu>

**Required Texts:**

- Schakel, Peter, and Jack Ridl. *Approaching Literature: Writing + Reading + Thinking*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.
- Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. Montclair State University custom edition. 2012.

**Course Aims**

This course has two principal purposes. As a writing course, it aims to help students improve their abilities to write well: to develop focused, thoughtful, and analytic essays. As a literature course, it aims to develop students' abilities to respond to, interpret, and analyze complex literary works and to appreciate literature as both art and representation.

More specifically, as a writing course students will continue with many of the methods that they became familiar with in College Writing I. For instance, they will write multiple drafts, give and receive peer critique, and carefully edit their formal work. They will further develop their abilities to cite and incorporate others' work, and they will learn some of the methods that college students use to write about literature. As a literature course, it will not only develop students' abilities to interpret-- make meaning of--literary texts, but it will also help students think and write about the context in which literary texts are written and read. In particular, students will consider the social, cultural, historical and political contexts that bear upon the production--the writing, publishing and disseminating--and reception of literary texts. Finally, students and instructors will ask basic questions about the role of literature: How does it function in individuals' lives? How does it function in school? And perhaps most importantly, how does it function in the culture at large?

For the full course description of ENWR106 College Writing II, including expected outcomes, see pages Montclair-21 through 24 of the prefatory chapter of *A Writer's Reference* (Hacker handbook).

**The Specifics: What Classes Will Do**

Over the course of the semester, students will read a range of different literary genres, including fiction, poetry, and drama, written by a fairly diverse group of writers. They will approach these texts in four units. Each unit will begin with reading of literary texts and end with a sequence of essay drafts,

culminating in a final essay, due at the end of each unit. During the reading portion of each unit, students will have homework and in-class activities aimed at developing their abilities of interpretation. They will receive feedback on their writing from peers and from their instructor, and will be offered opportunities to revise their work based on this feedback. The final unit will be the creation of the portfolio.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING**

*[ Faculty have some individual discretion regarding the weighting of course work; however it's expected that 75-85% of the grade consist of the portfolio and essays, broken down as follows: Portfolios should be worth 10 - 20% of grade and essays 55- 75% of the grade. The remaining 15% - 25% should be allotted for other course work such as homework, peer review and/or class participation. If a student is more than 10 minutes late to class, it will be counted as a half of an absence. ]*

#### **Class Participation, In-Class Writing, Homework and Activities (20%)**

##### **Papers (60%)**

##### **Portfolio (20%)**

#### **Class Participation, In-Class Writing, Homework, and Activities (20%)**

Homework is due, even when a student must be absent from class. Students should speak with the instructor if faced with an extraordinary circumstance. Students are expected to come to class prepared: willing to be an active discussant and listener, and willing to read from their own writing, occasionally. During class, students will be asked to write, respond to their peers' writing, and participate in small and full class discussion.

##### **Papers (60%)**

Four papers are required with a total of roughly 6,000 words over the course of the semester. In these papers students are expected to draw out some aspect of the literature that interests them and then develop a short, cogent response. For some essays students will have specific writing assignments; for others they will be expected to develop their own questions and arguments. Students may not submit book reports or plot summaries. They should focus on argument, interpretation, and analysis of the literary text(s). Paper four will be a documented essay, requiring some research and appropriate integration of secondary texts. More on this later.

##### **Portfolio (20%)**

The portfolio assignment is intended as an opportunity for students to re-revise *[two or three]* of their papers. In addition, they will be required to write a two to three page reflective essay. The portfolio will be due on the date of the final exam, and will serve in lieu of an in-class exam.

##### **Drafts**

Students will write four formal essays. Drafting and revision are critical to success in this class, and to that end, students must keep all drafts and feedback from the instructor, their classmates and from the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). *[Instructors should include the penalty, if any, for missing drafts. One example might be, "Because revision is such a central focus of this course, any missing drafts when the final paper is handed in will result in a grade no higher than a D."]*

##### **Reading**

Student reading load will vary a little depending on what is being read, but students should expect to read between 50 and 75 pages a week during the reading portion of units. If students

are not keeping up with the reading, as will be evident from class discussion and in-class writing, quick quizzes may be given.

Substantial work between drafts must also be evident. If students were given notes during a peer review, their effect on students' writing should be apparent. Spell-checking and format changes are not enough to constitute a new draft.

**Texting is not acceptable in university classrooms during class time.** If students are texting in class, instructors may mark students as absent for that class session.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected. In-class writing, discussion, and occasional lectures provide information and processes essential to understanding the texts and to writing strong essays. *[The handbook states, "Students can expect final grade penalties for missing more than one or two classes." Specific deductions taken for absences and/or "lates" should be noted in detail here. For instance, "Attendance and punctuality are critical for success in this course. Students are allowed two absences FOR ANY REASON. After that, every absence lowers the student's final grade. If students arrive after the instructor has begun, they are late. Two "lates" equal an absence."]*

*[Accommodations: While this section is optional, many instructors find it helpful to include a statement similar to the following: "Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If students require accommodations to fully participate in this class, they should visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to receive a letter for their instructors requesting accommodation. All requests must be approved by the DRC (Morehead Hall 305, x5431, <https://www.montclair.edu/health/drc/faculty.html>)]*

**Live Lit!** Students are required to attend one Live Lit! event this semester. For more information, see Live Lit link at <http://www.montclair.edu/writing/>. *[Individual instructors should specify whether they require that students provide some kind of proof of attendance at Live Lit! events, such as a response paper or signed/stamped form.]*

**Formatting:** See page 6 of the Hacker handbook, and sample student essays found therein, for proper formatting.

*Note: instructors will need to decide where on Bb they will place additional information and what information will be kept separate)*

The rest of the syllabus can be found in the prefatory chapter of the Hacker handbook or under Course Documents on Blackboard. Students are responsible for reading that chapter carefully, paying particular attention to:

- The Purpose of First Year Writing Courses and College Writing II
- Guidelines and Expectations for First-Year Writing Courses at MSU including what constitutes a First, Second and Final draft.
- Essay Criteria and Essay Grades: A – F papers
- The Center for Writing Excellence
- Academic Honesty and Plagiarism, Montclair State University Definition of Plagiarism\*

**Essay Criteria :** A detailed description of the First-Year Writing Essay Criteria can be found in the Hacker handbook, pages Montclair-8 and 9. The criteria are: central claim, development, organization, analysis, and clarity of prose.

## **The Center for Writing Excellence (CWE)**

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the services offered by the Center for Writing Excellence, located on the first floor of the Library (in the back of the reference section behind Café Diem). More information about the CWE can be found in the Hacker handbook on pages 13-14. Their Website can be found at: [www.montclair.edu/cwe/](http://www.montclair.edu/cwe/) and the phone number is 973-655-7442.

## **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: \*Definition of Plagiarism (page Montclair-12 of the Hacker handbook)**

“It is the policy of the first-year writing program that a student who is found to have plagiarized will fail the course and be referred to the Dean of Students’ office for disciplinary sanctions, which may include suspension or expulsion.” This policy will be followed in this classroom.

## Course Outline for *Approaching Literature*

### Unit One – Literature and Family Relationships

#### Suggested Readings:

Jamaica Kincaid “Girl” (397)  
Amy Tan “Two Kinds” (521)  
Alice Walker “Everyday Use” (109)  
Sandra Cisneros “The House on Mango Street” (99)  
Robert Hayden “Those Winter Sundays” (548)  
Theodore Roethke “My Papa’s Waltz” (577)  
Stanley Kunitz “Father and Son” (811)  
Charles Bukowski “my old man” (573)

#### Pedagogical Options:

“Active Reading” (8-11)  
“Writing in the Margins” (23)  
“Writing In Response to Literature” (34-46)  
“Ten Guidelines for Handling Quotations” (47)  
“Point of View and Theme” (100-108)  
“Writing About Fiction” (234)  
“Guidelines for Active Reading” (Hacker handbook p. 68)  
“Writing About Literature” (Hacker handbook p. L3 – L22)

#### In-class exercises:

1. Read Kincaid’s “Girl.” Break out students in small groups and assign each group one of the following questions: Who is the narrator of the story and why might this be significant? What does this short story say about gender or race issues? Is this a monologue or dialogue and why is this significant to the interpretation of the story? How does knowledge of the author affect your interpretation of this story?
2. Review “Writing in the Margins”(23) and “Guidelines for Active Reading”(68). Read Alice Walker’s short story, “Flowers” (21) as a group and have students annotate the text while reading.
3. Individual and group peer reviews for each stage of the drafting process.

#### Suggested topic options for unit essays or homework assignments:

1. Contrast Dee’s attitude toward her heritage with the attitudes of her mother and sister. How much truth is there in Dee’s accusation that her mother and sister do not understand their heritage? To what extent is the relationship between the narrator and parent a negative one? To what extent is the relationship between the two a positive one?
2. What are the various sources of tension between the narrators and their parents? Does ethnicity, socioeconomic background, gender and/or race play a role in that tension. If so, how?

3. Describe the culture depicted in these works as well as the role of males or females in that culture. Is either the culture or the role of females or males in it different from what you're familiar with? Explain.
4. Can it be said that any of the narrators come to terms with their parent or parents? What might coming to terms mean for that particular narrator?

## Unit Two - Love and Hate

### Suggested Readings:

Ernest Hemingway "Hills Like White Elephants" (135)  
Kate Chopin "The Story of an Hour" (196)  
Raymond Carver "What We Talk about When We Talk about Love" (337)  
James Baldwin "Sonny's Blues" (309)  
Sylvia Plath "Daddy" (840)  
Claude McKay "America" (821)  
Phillip Levine "What Work Is" (814)  
Countee Cullen "Incident" (604)

### Pedagogical Options:

"Setting and Symbol" (140-148)  
"Summarize to demonstrate your understanding" (Hacker handbook 72)  
"Analyze to demonstrate critical thinking" (74)  
"Writing about Poetry" (675)  
"Writing Social or Cultural Criticism" (682-685)

### In-class exercises:

1. Discuss setting as location, time, culture, etc... How has a change in setting influenced you? Describe the change. How and why was it meaningful? Next, consider how you can connect this experience to one you observe in a piece of literature from this unit. How does setting impact the characters or speakers? How does it influence the action of the story?
2. Do you feel that Mrs. Mallard loved her husband? Does it matter? Is it possible to confuse love with duty and if so how does this sense of duty differ in the present time period as compared to the early nineteenth century when this story was written?
3. Individual and group peer reviews for each stage of the drafting process.

### Suggested topic options for unit essays or homework assignments:

1. Consider how setting functions in the story or poem. How does setting become a character in its own right? What is the influence of setting on the action of the story? Examine the setting descriptions between the stories and how they impact the overall plot.

2. Both Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" and Carver's "What We Talk about When We Talk about Love" offer a detached perspective on relationships between men and women at the time the stories were published. Each story is narrated in a specific style and tone, whether removed or close to what a character sees, thinks or says. Write an essay on either story or a comparison of both stories, in which you show how the voice, style, and tone of the narration and the point of view help convey the text's perspective on contemporary sexual relationships.
3. In Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues," McKay's "America," and Cullen's "Incident" the characters attempt to locate their position as a member of a culture that scorns and outcasts them. Examine the emotional struggle that the characters go through as a result of this bias.

### Unit Three - Revenge and Social Justice

#### Suggested Readings:

Edgar Allen Poe "The Cask of Amontillado" (472)  
Susan Glaspell *Trifles* (935)  
Yiyun Li "Persimmons" (411)  
Toni Cade Bambara "The Lesson" (212)

#### Pedagogical Options:

"Writing in the Disciplines" (Hacker handbook 100)  
"Writing about Drama" (1008)

#### In-class exercises:

1. Is revenge ever a justifiable option for justice? Why or why not? Debate whether or not gaining justice through revenge can be used as a form of justice. Split the class into groups debating how justice is delivered in the selected reading.
2. What role does the victim's guilt play in whether or not revenge is justified? Examine several stories to support your conclusions.
3. Individual and group peer reviews for each stage of the drafting process.

#### Suggested topic options for unit essays or homework assignments:

1. How do the victims of each character's revenge differ and thereby help to shape the meaning of each story?
2. Examine the idea of justice and how it is served or not served in any of the stories. Examine the role of government in two of the stories and explain the government's role in the outcome of the story. What does this say about society? How much should the government be involved, if at all?

### Unit Four: The Documented Essay

#### Suggested Readings:

Henrik Ibsen *A Doll's House*

**Pedagogical Options:**

“Approaching Critical Theory” (1584)

“Writing a Literary Research Paper” (1468)

“Researching” (Hacker handbook 329-368)

“MLA” (Hacker handbook 369-440)

“Using Secondary Sources” (Hacker handbook L22-25)

Schedule a Literacy Information Session with reference librarians from Sprague Library.

**In-class exercises:**

1. Read Toni Morrison’s “Recitatif” (431) and the student sample essay on 1512. Use student sample to model expectations for integrating research into a literary analysis.
2. Individual and group peer review for each stage of the drafting process.

**Suggested topic options for unit essays or homework assignments:**

1. Ask students to choose one critical approach listed on page 1584. After pairing a minimum of two literary works, use the critical approach to create an argument.
2. Develop an argument about a specific social issue addressed in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* with another work of literature covered this semester.

**Unit Five – Portfolio Project****Suggested Readings:**

Donald Murray “The Maker’s Eye” (*you should download this and place on Bb. Tell students where to locate it*)

**In class exercise:**

1. Read and discuss Donald Murray’s “The Maker’s Eye.” Write a 1-2 page essay on the topic of revision. What did revision mean to you prior to this course? How have your views on revision changed/or not changed? What benefits or drawbacks exist with the drafting process and revision, specifically?
2. To help students select the essays that they wish to revise for the portfolio ask them to fill in the blanks of the following sentences, and then discuss their responses:

My favorite essay of the semester was \_\_\_\_\_ because

My least favorite essay of the semester was \_\_\_\_\_ because

My weakest essay of the semester was \_\_\_\_\_ because

My most successful essay of the semester was \_\_\_\_\_ because

*[Encourage the students to come up with thoughtful reasoning to explain why they liked or disliked a particular essay that relates to the writing process, rather than merely stating things such as "I got the highest grade on the essay that is why it is my favorite" etc. This exercise is designed to help them assess their strengths and weaknesses as writers.]*

## **Schedule Framework**

- *[While there are 14 weeks in the semester, the syllabus has been constructed to allow instructors an extra week to use for conferences or other activities at their discretion.]*
- Read and write activities listed for each day are to be completed for that day.
- Please note that this schedule is subject to minor change.

### **Week One, Class One: Introduction to Unit 1**

In-class Reading and Discussion:

### **Week Two, Class Two:**

Read:

In-class:

Write: Homework Writing 1

### **Week Two, Class One:**

Read:

In-class:

Write: Homework Writing 2

### **Week Two, Class Two: Peer Review**

In-class: Large and small group peer review.

Write: Exploratory Draft of Essay One Due (2-3 pages)

### **Week Three, Class One: Writing Workshop: Conventions, Citation and Plagiarism**

In-class: Review and practice writing conventions for writing literary interpretation papers, appropriate citation, and plagiarism. Discussion of papers and work needed for the final draft.

Write: Mid-Process Draft Due (3-4 pages)

## **Unit 2**

### **Week Three, Class Two: Introduction to Unit 2**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Final draft of Essay 1 Due (4 pages). Be sure to submit your paper along with your peers' comments, the instructor's comments, your first draft, your mid-process draft, and any notes you have taken. Papers that do not include all drafts and notes will not be accepted.

#### **Week Four, Class One**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 3

#### **Week Four, Class Two**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 4

#### **Week Five, Class One**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 5

#### **Week Five, Class Two: Writing Workshop**

In-class: Discussion and activity for working with the rough drafts.

Write: Exploratory Draft of Essay 2 Due (2-3 pages)

#### **Week Six, Class One: Peer Review**

In-class: Group review of one author and peer review.

Write: Mid-Process Draft of Essay 2 Due (3-4 pages)

#### **Week Six, Class Two: Paper Presentation**

In-class: Collect papers and read several out loud.

Write: Final Copy (with rough draft, mid-process and peer review). (5 pages)

### **Unit 3**

#### **Week Seven, Class One**

In-class:

Read:

#### **Week Seven, Class Two**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 6

#### **Week Eight, Class One**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 7

#### **Week Eight, Class Two: Writing Workshop**

In-class: Discussion and activity for working with the rough drafts.

Write: Exploratory Draft of Essay 3 Due (2-3 pages)

#### **Week Nine, Class One: Peer Review Day**

In-class: Whole class peer review of one student sample paper and small group peer review.

Write: Mid-Process Draft Due (3-4 pages)

### **Unit 4: Analyzing Drama and the Documented Essay**

#### **Week Nine, Class Two: Introduction to Analyzing Drama**

In-class:

Read:

Write: Final Copy of Essay 3 (with rough draft, mid-process, and peer review). (5 pages)

#### **Week Ten, Class One**

In-class: Discussion of homework and play

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 8

**Week Ten, Class Two**

In-class: Discussion of homework and end of play.

Read:

Write: Homework Writing 9

**Week Eleven, Class One**

In-class:

Write: Exploratory Draft of Documented Essay Due (3-4 pages)

**Week Eleven, Class Two**

In-class: Research Day

Read:

**Week Twelve, Class One: Peer Review Day**

In-class: Peer Review

Write: Mid-Process Draft of Documented Essay Due (4-5 pages)

**Week Twelve, Class Two**

In-class: review Works Cited Lists

Write: Complete draft of Works Cited List

**Unit 5: Portfolio Review**

**Week Thirteen, Class One: Portfolio Review**

Class One

Write: Final Draft of Documented Essay Due (6-7 pages)

Class Two

**Week Thirteen, Class Two: Portfolio Review**

Portfolio is due on exam day