

ENWR106 College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study
Making Arguments About Literature
(Created by Emily Isaacs & Katie Keeran; adapted by Jennifer Maloy)

*NOTE TO FACULTY: Please review the sections of this samplesyllabus that are italicized and in brackets.
These are notes to you regarding departmental policies.*

Instructor Name Office Room/Phone/Office Hours
Instructor Email
English Department Web Site: <http://www.montclair.english.edu>
Add section number, class meeting times, and location

Required Texts:

Schilb, John and John Clifford. Making Arguments about Literature: A Compact Guide and Anthology. New York: Bedford/St. Martin, 2005.
Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, 7th ed. Montclair State University custom edition. 2012.

Websites:

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

Course Overview: College Writing II builds on the basic writing strategies taught in College Writing I and extends the goal of helping students become effective writers of intellectual arguments. Students continue to practice and develop as writers, with a new focus on reading and interpreting literature--drama, poetry, and fiction. *[Note to Faculty: Course must include these three genres.]*

Expectations:

Course expectations are articulated in the prefatory chapter (the chapter that precedes the "first" chapter) of the Montclair State University edition of *A Writer's Reference*. Please read this chapter very carefully as it is an essential supplement to your syllabus. Here are a few points of elaboration.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism: Definition of Plagiarism (from p 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 adhered to in this classroom.

Attendance and Class Participation:

[Individual instructors may vary slightly on attendance and class participation policies--no more than 2 to 3 absences without penalty--however, a fully articulated policy that explains instructors' expectations and consequences for missed classes and final grades should appear here.] For example:

*Attendance is expected. In-class writing, discussion, and occasional lectures provide information and processes essential to understanding the texts and to writing strong essays. Students can expect final grade penalties for missing more than one or two classes.

*Similarly, student participation is highly valued in first-year writing classes. Speaking in class is an excellent way to "try out" ideas and to gain valuable responses from instructors. Students should plan to speak at least once every class.

Course Requirements:

[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. 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.]

Your course work will be weighted as follows (see below for exceptions):

Class participation, in-class writing, peer review, and homework, Live Lit:	20%
Four unit essays (22 final draft pages in total, detailed in each assignment)	60%
Final, revised portfolio (including a 2 page final reflective essay)	20%

Explanation of Course Requirements

Preparation, Class Participation, Classwork, and Homework:

Preparation: As a member of the class, you are expected to complete all reading, homework, writing, and in-class assignments on time and with care; you are also expected to come to class ready to participate actively in small group and class discussions as well as in peer review workshops. You are expected to arrive on time and with assignments completed, to bring the text(s) that we are working with, and, on peer review days, to have the required draft copies.

Participation: Participation includes raising questions about the texts, responding to others' questions, proposing interpretations, and making connections between our assigned texts. If you actively and productively participate in class (by regularly and thoughtfully contributing to class discussions, placing effort into group work, etc.), you will receive full credit for participation. If you are unprepared for, absent from, uninvolved in, or disruptive during class, your participation grade will be lowered accordingly. We will all find the class more interesting if everyone contributes productively to the conversation.

Classwork: Classwork will include group work as well as in-class writing assignments, such as freewrites, directed writing, worksheets, peer review, and reading quizzes, both announced and unannounced. There will be no make-ups of in-class assignments without a documented excuse. Due to its timely nature, however, peer review cannot be made up.

Homework: Both the reading and written homework assignments are an important aspect of the course. These are listed on the semester schedule. Your reading load will vary a little depending on what we're reading, but expect to read between 50 and 75 pages a week during the reading portion of our units. If students are not keeping up with the reading--as will be evident from class discussion and in-class writing--quick reading check quizzes may be introduced. The written assignments are due at the beginning of class and are a place for you to start thinking about the readings we will be discussing. Unless otherwise noted, your response should be approximately 400-500 words (or 1½ - 2 pages) long. For clarity, please follow standards for punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and paragraphing.

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

Essays: Four formal unit papers are required with a total of 6000 words for the semester (weighted 10%, 15%, 15%, 20%). One of these will be a documented essay, requiring some outside reading and appropriate integration of secondary texts within your own analysis of a literary text. Each unit essay will develop an argument that grows out of your analysis of assigned literary texts; assignments will be distributed in advance. Each essay will undergo revision and rewriting, with the assistance of peer review, instructor feedback, and your own further thinking. All essays will adhere to MLA format, including documentation. There will be penalties for short, late or missing drafts and for short or late essays.

Portfolio: The portfolio assignment will ask you to further revise two unit essays and to write a two- to three-page reflective essay. The portfolio will be due during the university's exam period and will take the place of an in-class final exam. You will be required to hand in the newly revised version and the original, graded version of the essays you select for your portfolio, so be sure to save your work.

Due Dates: Work is due at the beginning of class. Points will be deducted for late work. Unless special arrangements are made *in advance*, no work will be accepted more than one week after the original due date. *Exception:* Late unit 4 essays and portfolios will be accepted only because of a documented emergency.

Grading Criteria and Grades: See the prefatory chapter of *A Writer's Reference* for grading rubric (what is expected) as well as descriptions of A, B, C, D and F essays (Montclair-8-10)).

Classroom Policy: Our classroom is a forum for discussion and cultivation of ideas. It is expected that we will treat each other with respect. No form of sexism, racism, ageism, elitism, or other toxic behavior will be tolerated here. All cell phones must be turned to vibrate. Do not text-message or otherwise engage with your electronic devices during class.

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. www.montclair.edu/cwe. 973 (655-7442). More information about the CWE can be found in the Hacker handbook on pages Montclair-13-14.

Disability Resource Center (DRC):

[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 instructor requesting accommodation. All requests must be approved by the DRC (Morehead Hall 305, x5431, <https://www.montclair.edu/health/drc/faculty.html>)]

Semester Schedule Overview

Thematic Unit 1: Literature on Families or How We Read Literature about Families (two –three weeks)
Thematic Unit 2: Little Red Riding Hood and Interpreting from multiple perspectives (two to three weeks)
Thematic Unit 3: Justice (two to three weeks)
Thematic Unit 4: *A Raisin in The Sun*: Documented Essay (three weeks)
Unit 5: Portfolio Review (one week)

Semester Schedule -- Details

Unit 1: Literature on Families or How We Read Literature about Families

[This unit asks students to focus on how individual readers' interpretations and reactions to literature is personally invested, while also working to develop their abilities to specifically identify those moments in a literary text that provide meaning/interpretation, i.e., the skills of close reading. The point is not to authorize or de-authorize students' personal investment in reading, but rather to help students become aware of and make explicit their own processes of reading and show how these processes are influenced by their own experiences and belief systems.]

Week One, Class One: Introduction to Unit 1

In class: Theodore Roethke, "My Papa's Waltz" (324). In-class writing. Half the students will receive one set of questions and half the students will receive another. *[This writing will consist of two main questions designed to lead students to two very different readings--simplistically, abusive vs. loving father. The point of the exercise is 1) to show students how questions lead interpretations, 2) to highlight how the knowledge we bring into the poem affects interpretation, and 3) to get students to begin to identify particular lines or words to support their interpretations. After working alone to answer the worksheet, students will get in small groups and then ultimately return as a class to compare their different readings of the poem.]*

Homework: Read Lucille Clifton's "forgiving my father" (321) and Kitty Tsui's "A Chinese Banquet" (340). Choose one of the following: In a one-page response, explain the extent to which you sympathize with the speaker of "forgiving my father." Why do you sympathize with her? What do you think she is trying to say about her father and to her father. Or, In a one-page response explain whom you sympathize with in "A Chinese Banquet": the narrator or her mother? Give reasons for your response from the text, and also from your own personal thinking. **(Homework Writing 1)** *[In both these texts students' beliefs and values are implicated very obviously, and therefore will help instructors lead a class discussion aimed at revealing how our own personal values and beliefs are implicated in our responses to reading.]*

Week One, Class Two: Why Do Our Interpretations Differ?

In class: Discussion of student responses to Wolff and Tsui. Reading and discussion of Sylvia Plath's "Daddy" (710). *[This poem will further the discussion of how individual readers' interpretations and reactions to literature is personally invested. Instructors may choose to bring in a few samples of commentaries written by young women, on web sites, who have chosen to type up and post this poem as one of their favorite poems. It's a real favorite poem for young women, it seems, and instructors may find it helps students to see how others are personally invested in their readings of literature.]*

Homework: Read Amy Tan's "Two Kinds" (238) and Alice Walker's "Everyday Use" (247). In a two-page response, 1) address question 1 on page 296 [Do the cultural differences between the immigrant mother and the Americanized daughter intensify their struggle?] and 2) this question: Most readers are sympathetic to Maggie and not Dee. Why is that? Write a sympathetic response to Dee. **(Homework Writing 2)** *[The point of this assignment is to further demonstrate the personal investment we have in our readings by asking students to read texts that many of them will not have close cultural connection to (though some will). In class the instructor may wish to work to point out how the Americanized, mainstream reader may be inclined to be unsympathetic to the particular dilemmas that the children of disenfranchised parents might experience. Discussion may be aimed at pointing out that, while we should acknowledge our personal positions when we read, we can also work to see beyond our personal position, allowing literature to expand rather than just affirm our views and beliefs.]*

Week Two, Class One: Limitations of the Personal Point of View

In class: Discussion of the two stories and the limitations of reading only from a personal point of view.

Homework: Write a first draft of Essay One (2-3 pages). Choose one literary text that we have read to explore your initial, personal interpretation of the piece and then contrast this interpretation with an alternative interpretation that you developed after further thought, discussion with peers, and class discussion. Present both interpretations by drawing on the text as well as the experiences or beliefs that support them. In the end be sure to reflect on the strengths and limitations of personal interpretation.

Week Two, Class Two: Peer Review

In class: Large and small group peer review. Submit paper via Blackboard. Instructor will respond by _____.

Homework: Re-write essay for next class (3-4 pages)

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

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

Homework: Write final draft (4-5 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.

Unit 2: Little Red Riding Hood and Multiple Perspectives

[This is largely from Alice Daken who has developed this unit as part of her graduate coursework.]

Week Three, Class Two: Introduction to Unit 2

In class: Collect essay 1. Introduction to the Unit

Homework: Read Charles Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood," (305), Jakob and Wilhem Grimm's "Little Red Cap" (308), and Angela Carter's "The Company of Wolves" (312). [*Instructors may choose to ask students to read two additional Little Red stories (most likely from either Barchers's Wise Women: Folk and Fairy Tales from Around the World, Del Rey and Kessler's Once Upon A Time: A Treasury of Modern Fairy Tales, or Donoghue's Kissing the Witch: Old Tales in New Skins)*]. Write a 1-2 page response to the readings, noting the similarities and differences amongst them. **(Homework Writing 3)**

Week Four, Class One: Cautionary Tales and Reading/Writing from Multiple Perspectives (Theories)

In Class: [Discussion and Groups.] 1. What is the main story (the common story that runs through all)? Who are the characters? Are there any big differences in the texts? 2. Children's Cautionary Tales. How does Perrault's story act as a caution? Why is literature a cautionary device? 3. Why so many different versions - entering theory? 4. Freewrite.

Homework: Ritual Theorist Reading and Feminist Theorist reading (For feminist reading, one suggestion is "Ritual Theory and Practice, by Colin Low, <http://www.digital-brilliance.com/kab/rtt.htm>).

In two pages write about one of these theories and one of the versions of Little Red Riding Hood. How does the theory open up/explain the story? What do you notice in the story that speaks to the theory? What did you not notice until reading the theory/What did reading the theory make you notice even more? **(Homework Writing 4)** [*Instructors might also use the textbooks' critical theoretical articles.*]

Week Four, Class Two: Theory

In Class: [Discussion. Group Activity]. 1. Talking about theory. 2. In groups, make a chart that divides and explains the different versions and the theories. For example, how would the different theorists read Perrault's version? Are any of the versions specifically one thing or another? 3. Discussion of charts. What did different readings do to text?

Homework: Bring in one of your favorite children's tales (this could be a book/movie/oral-story/song/other). If you do not have the text itself to bring into class (for example, if it is a story that you had been told or a TV show you always watched), that is okay. Write a summary of your chosen tale. Then, write a list of what you think are important things in the tale (events, characters, dialogue, etc.). **(Homework Writing 5)**

Week Five, Class One: Analyzing Your Children's Text

In Class: [Large group, then in pairs/singularly]. 1. Short writing about text. Repeat what we did with Little Red Riding Hood to your chosen text. First, why is this text a children's text? Is it another educational or social issue? 2. Then, what does the application of different theorists do to the text? Are there any connections between your text and Little Red Riding Hood? Are there any connections in the ways that the theorists could be applied to them?

Homework: Rough Draft. Pick one theory and apply it to children's texts (one or more of the Little Reds, your in-class text). What does this theory do to the text? How does it open it up? How does it critique it? 2-3 page

draft.

Week Five, Class Two: Writing Workshop

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

Homework: Mid-Process Draft. Please email it to (email address) by _____. It should be at least 50% different than your rough draft. It must include quotes from the literary texts and theory. (3-4 pages)

Week Six, Class One: Peer Review

In Class: Group review of one author and peer review.

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

Week Six, Class Two: Paper Presentation

In class: Collect papers and read several out loud.

Unit 4: Justice

[This unit addresses the place (or lack thereof) of morality in literature. It also raises the question of whether literature is reflective of a cultural attitudes or whether it has an active role in creating cultural attitudes. This unit also introduces the idea of putting literature in context; in this case Perkins "The Yellow Wallpaper" is read in the context of American late 19th century attitudes toward women and the pathologizing of women. Students will read selections that raise questions about gender justice and racial justice and will then write an essay on either an issue of gender or race.]

Week Seven, Class One: What is the role of morality in writing and reading?

In class: Read Niemoller, "First They Came for the Jews" (351) and Cullen, "Incident" (671). Discussion: what is the role of morality for writers and for readers? What is the role of literature in engaging society in issues of justice?

Homework: Read Bambara, "The Lesson" (554). Write a two-page response about how the speakers' tone in the poems we read in class and the narrator's tone in Bambara's story affects your reading of the events these texts describe. Do Cullen's sing-songy rhythm and Bambara's use of humor lead you to take these accounts of injustice less seriously than those in Niemoller? Why, or why not? **(Homework Writing 6)**

Week Seven, Class Two: Gender and Justice

In class: Discussion of homework and introduction of texts on gender and justice.

Homework: Read Maxine Hong Kingston, "No Name Woman" (486) and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (924). [These two different stories, both written by women and both addressing particular inequities that women experience, may allow instructors to ignite a discussion about how literature is perhaps both/or reflective of cultural concerns and also active in instigating such concern.] Write a two page response on to what extent each of these readings is about injustice. Define what you mean by the term. **(Homework Writing 7)**

Week Eight, Class One: Justice and Punishment

In class: Read Sherman Alexie's "Capital Punishment" (656), Seamus Heaney's "Punishment" (688), and Carolyn Forché's "The Colonel" (681). Homework: Write a rough draft of Essay four for homework. (2-3 pages)

Week Eight, Class Two: Workshop

In Class: Discussion and activity for working with the rough drafts. Homework: Mid-Process Draft. Please email it to (email address) by _____. It should be at least 50% different than your rough draft. It must include quotes from the literary texts and theory. (3-4 pages)

Week Nine, Class One: Workshop

In Class: Group review of one author and peer review.

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

Unit 5: *A Raisin in the Sun* and the Documented Essay

Week Nine, Class Two: Introduction

In class: Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B (328), "Harlem" (375): Small group work comparing the poems.

Homework: Begin reading Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* (374-412), Write a 1-2 pg response to questions TBA on the first half of the play. **(Homework Writing 8)**

Week Ten, Class One: *Raisin*

In class: Discussion of homework and play

Homework: Finish reading *A Raisin in the Sun* (412-441) Write a 2-page response to the play, beginning with question 2 on pg. 503 and using evidence from the play to illustrate your point **(Homework Writing 9)**

Week Ten, Class Two: Identifying Issues in the Play

In class: Discussion of homework and end of play.

Homework: Identify some issues the play explores and consider which critical lens would be useful in exploring these issues. **(Homework Writing 10)**

Week Eleven, Class One: *A Raisin in the Sun* in Context

In class: Discussion of the play continued.

Homework: Choosing one of the issues that the play explores, write a 3-4 page rough draft of an essay on *A Raisin in the Sun*. Use a critical lens to help you focus your interpretation. With respect to this issue, determine in what ways this 1959 play is or is not relevant to life in the United States today. You may wish to use a critical lens to help focus your interpretation.

Week Eleven, Class Two

In class: As a class explore the website *Racial and Religious Covenants in the U.S. and Canada* <http://wbhsi.net/~wendyplotkin/DeedsWeb/> and/or additional sources in your textbook. **[Instructors may wish to share additional sources related to play or give additional instructions on research.]**

Homework: Write a mid-process draft of your essay (4-5 pages) in light of what you have just read in class. Incorporate at least three sources into your new draft. Submit a copy of your paper **by _____**. You will receive feedback **by _____**.

Week Twelve, Class One: Documenting Your Essay

In Class: Peer Review and discussion of appropriate documentation

Week Twelve, Class Two: Documenting Your Essay

In class: Review of Works Cited page

Homework: Complete final draft of essay (6-7 pages)

Unit 5: Portfolio Review

Week Thirteen, Class One: Portfolio Review

Week Thirteen, Class Two: Portfolio Review

Portfolio is due on exam day.

[While there are fourteen weeks in the semester, this syllabus outlines roughly thirteen weeks, so individual instructors have room to adjust their schedule accordingly]