

ENWR College Writing II: Writing and Literary Study

Section: _____

Instructor Name.

Office Room/Phone/Office Hours

Texts:

Miller, Quentin and Julie Nash. *Connections: Literature for Composition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008.

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*, 6th edition, Montclair State University edition.

Additionally, all students are required to use Blackboard. Students should plan to find time to get on our Blackboard site approximately twice a week – to post homework, download assignments or other documents, to submit other written work through the Journal, Blog, Assignment, or Discussion Board features.

Course Aims:

As with College Writing I, this course aims to help you to improve your ability to write focused, thoughtful and analytic essays. Incorporating feedback from your peers and me, you will write multiple drafts of your unit papers in order to develop your ability to revise and edit your own work.

Where College Writing I emphasizes nonfiction readings, College Writing II primarily focuses on works of fiction with the aim of developing your abilities to appreciate and analyze literature as both art and representation. We will read and interpret different genres (ie. the poem, short story, and play) and engage with the cultural and historical contexts in which these works were written and received. We will also read a diverse array of writers who write in different modes, from the comic to the serious, and use different kinds of language, from everyday language that is relatively accessible to more figurative, dense, or poetic language that may take some more work to understand and interpret. In the process, we will also explore how different literary theories can assist us in understanding works of literature in relation to their psychological, cultural, and political significance. The semester's reading and writing assignments are grouped into four thematic units; yet we shall see that these themes overlap in many ways, and similarly, the texts in these units can be read through many theoretical lenses. You will have the opportunity to write papers about topics that interest you, and you will also have the opportunity to design essay topics of your own.

Each unit, of two to four weeks, will begin with reading works of literature and accompanying readings from the textbook and end with a sequence of essay drafts, culminating in a final essay, due at the end of the unit. During the reading portion of each unit you will have homework and in-class activities aimed at developing your abilities of interpretation. You will receive feedback on your writing from peers and from your instructor, and you will be offered opportunities to revise your work based on this feedback. The fifth unit will be the portfolio.

Course Requirements:

Please see the Handbook for all specific information regarding: plagiarism (definition, policy, and consequences of), availability of the Center for Writing Excellence for individualized feedback on writing, and for grading criteria and descriptions of A, B, C, D and F papers.

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

You will be allowed three absences during the semester, no questions asked. Use them carefully. For each absence beyond the allowed three, you lose a grade for the semester. That is, if you accumulate three absences and your final grade is a "C," that "C" becomes a "C-". And so on. Any more than five absences will result in failing the course. See me if you are faced with an extraordinary circumstance so that we can negotiate, if necessary. You are expected to come to class prepared: willing to be an active discussant and listener, and willing to read from your own writing occasionally. During class you will be asked to write, respond to peers' writing, and participate in small and full class discussion.

Live Literature: in fulfillment of the requirements for this part of the grade, students will need to attend one of several Live Literature events held during the semester. At these events writers (some from the First Year Writing Program) will read aloud from work that they have published, or are currently in the process of preparing for publication. (Events are free to attend; a schedule will be published near the beginning of the semester, so that you can plan ahead: <http://www.montclair.edu/writing/LiveLiterature.html>) This assignment is self-directed. Students choose their own event and write a brief response to the experience in Blackboard, under the Discussion Board thread, “Live Literature Responses.”

PAPERS (60%)

Four papers are required. In these papers you are expected to draw out some aspect of the literature that interests you and then develop a relatively short, cogent response. For some essays you will have specific writing assignments; for others, you will be expected to develop your own questions and arguments. You may not submit book reports or plot summaries. Focus on interpretation and analysis of the literary text(s). While you will be expected to write frequently, you will find that writing regularly will make the writing come easier. Paper Three will be a documented essay, requiring some research and appropriate integration of secondary texts within your own work interpreting a literary text. More on this later.

PORTFOLIO (20%)

The portfolio assignment is intended as an opportunity for you to re-revise two of your papers. In addition, you 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.

Format of Written Work: All work, including homework, must be typed and appropriately and clearly identified (essay number or homework number).

Abbreviated Sample Reading and Writing Schedule

Semester Schedule: Questions Concerning the Personal and Political, the Psychological and the Social

Thematic Unit 1 (January 23 – February 10) Rules and Rebellion

Readings: Dickinson, “Much Madness is divinest Sense” (291); Kincaid, “Girl” (250); Tan, “Rules of the Game” (252); McKenzie, “Stop That Girl” (261); Camus, “The Guest” (233); Tennyson, “The Charge of the Light Brigade” (288); King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (966); Auden, “The Unknown Citizen” (300)

Thematic Unit 2 (February 13 – March 3) Work and Play

Readings: Roethke, “Dolor” (1134); Piercy, “The Secretary Chant”; Levine, “What Work Is” (1137); Heany, “Digging” (1139); Alexander, “Blues” (1141); Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Tale of Wall-street” (1061); Irving, “Rip Van Winkle” (1019); Davis, “Life in the Iron-Mills” (189); Selected Criticism on Davis and “Life in the Iron-Mills” (189-95) [*Note to Instructor: These last readings may be used to help introduce students to literary research and writing with secondary sources, before the next unit when they will do their own research.*]

Thematic Unit 3 (Documented Essay, March 3 – March 31): Alienation and Connection in Familial and Romantic Relationships

Readings: Corso, “Marriage” (304); Shakespeare, “My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun” (469); Dickinson, “Wild Nights – Wild Nights!” (249); Paz, “Two Bodies” (490); Hurston, “Sweat” (833); Updike, “Wife-Wooing” (442); Baldwin “Sonny’s Blues” (984); Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (495)

Thematic Unit 4 (April 3 – April 28): Wealth and Values

Readings: Wordsworth, “The World is Too Much With Us” (1131); Vallejo, “Our Daily Bread”(1337); Neruda, “The Beggars” (1339); Ginsberg, “C’mon Pigs of Western Civilization Eat More Grease” (1350); Jacobs, “The Monkey’s Paw”(1280); O. Henry, “The Gift of the Magi” (1289); Walker, “Everyday Use” (1006); Lawrence, “The Rocking Horse Winner” (1294); Jen, “In the American Society” (1319)

Portfolio Review: May 1 - 5

Unit 1 Schedule

Tuesday 1/20: **Course overview: Why Read? Why Write? Literature's Personal and Political Significance**

In-Class: Review Syllabus. Read Herrick, "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (154)

Homework: Read "Critical Approaches to Literature" by the editors (153-167). After reading this section, write a 1-2 pg. response to the following: After reading the various interpretations of "To the Virgins" and considering your own intellectual interests, which of these theories most appeals to you? Why? (Homework Writing 1)

Friday, 1/23:

In-Class: Review reading and discuss homework. Discuss the uses of different theoretical lenses, how they overlap, and the value of close-reading. *[Note to instructor: The theories from the first homework assignment will serve as a backdrop for the course's reading and writing assignments. For each unit paper, students may be provided with a choice of paper topics, each of which may be influenced by a particular type of theory (ie. gender-based, historical, cultural, psychological, etc).]*

Unit 1: Rules and Rebellion *[Note to instructor: This unit addresses issues of authority and conformity versus resistance and nonconformity in families and society. Possible essay topics may ask students to explore the issues in these texts as related to gender, war, patriotism, and racial or other social injustices.]*

In-class: Read Dickinson, Dickinson, "Much Madness is divinest Sense" (291) and Kincaid, "Girl" (250)

Homework: Read "Reading and Writing About Fiction" by the editors (47-53), Tan, "Rules of the Game" (252), and McKenzie, "Stop that Girl" (261). Using specific evidence from the stories to support your claims and develop your analysis, write a 1-2 pg. response to question 9 on page 261.

Tuesday, 1/27:

In-Class: Discuss elements of fictions and the homework

Homework: Read Camus, "The Guest" (233), "Reading and Writing about Poetry" (71-82), and Tennyson, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (288). Write a 1-2 pg. response to question 8 on page 291.

Friday, 1/30:

In-Class: Discussion of homework

Homework: Read King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (966) and Auden, "The Unknown Citizen" (300). Based on King's letter, write a 1-2 pg. response about what King might have to say about both the individual and the society described in the "Unknown Citizen"? (adapted from question 9 on page 302).

Tuesday, 2/3:

In-Class: Discussion of homework and essay topics

Homework: Write first draft of Essay 1, and bring two copies to class for peer review.

Friday, 2/6:

In-Class: Peer review as a class and in pairs.

Homework: Mid-Process draft

Tuesday, 2/10:

In-Class: Writing Workshop

Homework: Final draft (Final drafts must be submitted with all three drafts and any peer reviews.)

Friday, 2/13:

In-Class: Collect papers and begin Unit 2