

Spring 1-15-2005

ENG 1092G-097: Composition and Literature

Ruth Hoberman
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2005



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hoberman, Ruth, "ENG 1092G-097: Composition and Literature" (2005). *Spring 2005*. 56.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2005/56

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2005 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2005 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

English 1092G
 Ruth Hoberman
 Phone: 581-6981
 E-mail cfrh@eiu.edu
Office Hours: MWF 8-9; MF 10-11

Spring 2005
 Coleman 3755

Texts: Austen, *Northanger Abbey*
 Barnet, *Introduction to Literature*
 Hughes, *The Big Sea*
 Morrison, *Sula*
 Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing*
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/index.html>

Goals: 1092 is a writing course designed to improve skills in critical thinking and analytical expression based on the reading of literary texts. At the end of the course, you should be able to write even better than you did at the end of 1092/1001. The course is also designed to introduce three major genres of literature—poetry, drama, and fiction—and to enhance your enjoyment of them. And finally, I'm hoping you'll find the reading and writing useful on a personal level, since talking about literature often involves discussing our own values and identity. A couple of comments on reading, writing, and education:

If the book we are reading does not wake us, as with a fist hammering on our skull, why then do we read? So that it shall make us happy? Good God, we should also be happy if we had no books, and such books as make us happy we could, if need be, write ourselves. But what we must have are those books which come upon us like ill fortune, and distress us deeply, like the death of one we love better than ourselves; like suicide. A book must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us. --Kafka

. . . at once it struck me what quality went to form a Man of Achievement, especially in Literature, and which Shakespeare possessed so enormously -- I mean Negative Capability, that is, *when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason* . . .
 --Keats

WHEN I heard the learn'd astronomer,
 When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
 When I was shown the charts, the diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
 When I sitting heard the learned astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture room,
 How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
 Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
 Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.
 --Walt Whitman

Policies: English Department statement on plagiarism:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) --has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. . Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Late/missing work: Hand in papers on time. If you're having problems, let me know; often even a brief conversation will make the paper easier to write. **Papers a week or more late will not be accepted at all. Papers that have not been workshopped will be penalized 5 points.** Any paper handed in on time may be rewritten IF it is handed in again within one week of its being returned. I will grade that paper separately and average the original and rewrite when I figure grades. In-class writing assignments may not be made up except in cases of serious illness/personal emergency.

Attendance: Come to class prepared. You'll have more fun if you've done the reading, and I will notice if you haven't. Note that a portion of the grade is based on class participation and reading responses--both of which require keeping up with the reading and being in class. Excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for participation. Missing a peer editing session will result in a 5-point penalty on your paper grade. If, due to illness or personal emergency, you must miss class, let me know so I can make sure you're not penalized.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

This class is writing-centered. You may use an essay from this class in your electronic writing portfolio. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.eiu.edu/~assess>.

Requirements: midterm and final (20%)

Two 3-4 pp. essays (25%)

One 6-8 pp. essay (25%)

Brief in-class and at-home writing assignments and WebCT postings: 20%

Group presentation, class participation and involvement 10%

Grades: Paper grades will be based on "Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department." I plan to use number rather than letter grades; this will convert into your final grade as follows: 91-100=A; 81-90=B; 70-80=C. 65-69=D. Because I grade on a 100-point scale, missing assignments affect the grade tremendously. Please note that you must have a C average in order to receive credit for this course.

Responses: Each week, you'll be required to write at least one response to a reading assignment on the Web CT bulletin board. Your response *must be posted at least 90 minutes before the class for which the assignment is due*. Plan on writing a thoughtful 1-2 paragraph response in the course of which you: 1. respond to the comments of at least one other student (unless you're the first to post); 2. make some observation about what you've read and develop your idea; and 3. quote at some point from the reading, providing the page number in parentheses after your quotation. You might focus on a question from the list at the end of the syllabus, follow up on an issue raised by a previous posting, or make and develop an observation of your own. I will not grade individual responses, but will evaluate them at the end of the semester on the basis of thoughtfulness, precision, punctuality, and completeness.

If you fail to gain access to Web-CT for reasons beyond your control (this may happen especially during the first week or two): Bring a typed 1-page response to the appropriate class period. Same rules apply except that you won't be able to comment on each other's ideas. I will read and give credit for only those responses given to me in class. I will comment on these and return; make sure you save them as you'll be asked to hand them all in at once at the end of the semester for evaluation.

Group presentation: In groups of 3-4, I'd like you to select, from those represented in the anthology, a contemporary poet or fiction-writer who particularly interests you. Your task will be to research that writer's work and, as a group, lead a class on either a story from the anthology, or a group of 3-4 poems you select (and get to me ahead of time so that I can duplicate them for the class). Prepare 5-10 minutes of background information, then lead the class in a discussion of the work. Use whatever methods you'd like to make it interesting (let me know ahead of time if you need anything duplicated or if you need a vcr or cd player); feel free to assign group work, give quizzes, etc. For your final paper, use what you have learned to make some point about the author's work.

Computer Lab policies: On weeks marked with a C, we will meet in 3120. Neither food nor drink is allowed in the lab. Please come to classes in the lab with your own thumb drive or ensure in some other way that your work will be accessible (post it to WebCT or email it to yourself). The lab computers have NO disk drives. Make sure that you save work done in the lab to multiple sites and/or print out; save in RTF (rich text format) to ensure accessibility. Use lab time productively; spending lab time in chat rooms or web browsing is not allowed, unless it is essential to your current writing project.

Tentative Syllabus

Mon Jan 10: Intro to course

I. The individual, culture, and the state

for Wed Jan 12: Hughes, *The Big Sea*, 3-51. Post to WebCT W or F

Fri. Jan 14: *Big Sea*, 51-98. Post to WebCT if you didn't for W.

Mon. Jan 17: no class.

Wed Jan 19: C Hughes poems in *Barnet*: "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (897), "The Weary Blues" (898), "Evenin' Air Blues" (655); Handy, "St. Louis Blues" (675)

Fri Jan 21: C Hughes, "Theme for English B," "Mother to Son" (897), "Ballad of the Landlord" (900), "Harlem" (635), "Dream Boogie" (740).

Post to WebCT W/F [see notes on reading poetry at end of syllabus; I suggest you focus on a single poem.]

Mon Jan 24: Whitman, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" (764), Sexton, "The Starry Night" (857) Auden, "Musee des Beaux Arts" (859)

Wed Jan 26: Cummings, "next to of course god" (699), Alexie, "On the Amtrak from Boston to New York City" (841), Erdrich, "Dear John Wayne" (701)

Fri Jan 28: McKay, "America" (837) Shelley, "Ozymandias" (736), Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (707). *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon Jan 31: C Bring *Barnet* and draft of essay #1 to class.

Wed Feb 2: Bring essay #1 to conferences.

Fri Feb 4: conferences

Mon Feb 7: Hand in final version essay #1. in *Barnet*, *Antigone*

Wed 9: *Antigone*

Fri 11: *Antigone*. *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

II. Gender and Sexuality

Mon 14: C Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing*

Wed 16: C Shakespeare. Post to WebCT M/W

Fri 18: no class

Mon 21: Shakespeare

Wed 23: Shakespeare

Fri 25: Shakespeare. *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon 28: C Shakespeare

Wed March 2: C Bring draft of essay #2 to exchange. Olds, "Rites of Passage" (794), Piercy, "Barbie Doll" (700), Pastan, "Jump Cabling" (662), Plath, "Metaphors" (706)

Fri March 4: C Peer editing

Mon March 7: Hand in final version essay #2. Tsui "A Chinese Banquet" (798), Shakespeare, "That Time of Year" (757)

Wed March 9: Review

Fri March 11: midterm

Spring break

Mon March 21: C Morrison, *Sula*

Wed 23: C Morrison

Fri 25: C Morrison. *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon March 28: Morrison

Wed March 30: Morrison

Fri Ap 1: Oates, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" (425). *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon Ap 4: C group discussions

Wed Ap 6: C group #1

Fri Ap 8: C group #2. *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon Ap 10: group #3

Wed Ap 12: group #4

Fri Ap 14: group #5. *Post to WebCT M/W/F*

Mon Ap 17: Bring draft of #3 to exchange.

Wed Ap 19: peer editing

Fri Ap 21: conferences

Mon Ap 24: conferences

Wed Ap 26: Hand in final version #3.

Fri Ap 28: Review.

There will be a noncumulative final exam during exam week.

Response questions: focus on a SINGLE question or choose your own issue:

What is the main character like (physically, mentally, gestures, speech, values)?

What parallels or contrasts do you see between two characters?

Focus on a minor character and discuss why he/she's there

How is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings?

Focus on a single conflict (within a character? Between characters? Between a character and the environment?)

Is there an authorial mouthpiece? How do you know? What's she/he saying?

What is the narrator's relation to the action? Why is he/she telling the story? How is his/her values shaping what he/she notices?

Significance of title?

How does a character change during the course of the work?

Is there a crucial moment or turning point when someone makes a big mistake or does something right?

Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?

What historical events would it be helpful to know about?

Look up one allusion and explain its significance.

To what extent does the ending tie up loose ends?

Is the ending "happy?" For whom? Who gets left out?

How does the work depict gender, race, sexuality, or class?

To what extent does the work as a whole reinforce values you share or don't share?

For poems: FIRST: read in terms of punctuation, not line breaks. Read once to yourself, then read out loud. Get an overall sense of who speaker is, situation, and message. Then look up words you don't know. Take into account ALL the word's listed meanings before deciding how it works in context. Then think about:

Who is the speaker? To whom is the speaker speaking (if anyone in particular)? In what situation or context?

Any hints about what's happened immediately before the poem's opening?

What is the speaker's attitude toward the audience and topic (tone)? Any irony or sarcasm? Is there a gap between what the speaker is saying and what you sense the poet wants to get across?

Does the poem fall into parts? How do they build on or contrast with each other?

Does the poem follow a particular structure (sonnet, for example)? Does it have a regular rhyme scheme or rhythmic pattern? How has the poet used these things to reinforce the poem's meaning/impact?

Pick a single word that seems significant, look it up in the dictionary, and discuss its significance in terms of both denotation and connotations.

Do the speaker's thoughts change during the course of the poem? What seems to be the underlying theme of the poem?

Discuss a pattern of images (lots of disease references? Flowers?)

Discuss the poet's use of figurative language (metaphors, similes, personification, hyperbole, apostrophe)

Is there a particularly difficult phrase or line? What questions do you have about it, and what ideas do you have about what it means?