

# ENGLISH 301-01: INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

Fall 2008

MF 2:10 PM – 3:35 PM, Knutti 203

Dr. Timothy K. Nixon

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Office Hours: MF 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM and  
R 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 301 (Introduction to Literary Studies) introduces English majors to the discourse, practices, and protocols associated with the study of literature. The course is the gateway to all English classes above the sophomore-level surveys and must be completed before taking any upper-division classes in the major. Prerequisites: Successful completion of English 101 (Written English) and English 102, 103, or 104.

## SKILLS & OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have attained

1. A basic familiarity with some of the major theoretical and critical approaches to literature
2. A conversancy in the terminology used when analyzing literature
3. An understanding of poetry, drama, short fiction, and novel forms, as well as any other genres of interest to the instructor, and their specific attributes
4. A proficiency in conducting literary research
5. A mastery of the Modern Language Association (MLA) conventions and protocols used in literary scholarship
6. A strengthened ability to write persuasively, critically, and elegantly

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Students in English 301 will need the following resources:

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: MLA, 2003.
- Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1942.
- Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. New York: Vintage, 2004.
- Harmon, William, and Hugh Holman. *A Handbook to Literature*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2005.
- Lynn, Steven. *Texts and Contexts: Writing About Literature with Critical Theory*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman, 2007.
- Steinbeck, John. *Tortilla Flat*. New York: Penguin, 1986.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Quizzes—15%  
Oral Presentation—5%  
Mythology Exam—10%  
Annotated Bibliography—15%  
Paper Series #1—10%  
Paper Series #2—10%  
Paper Series #3—10%  
Final Exam—15%  
Preparation and Participation—10%

## GRADING SCALE

This course will employ the grading scale recommended by the Department of English and Modern Languages:

A	100 – 90
B	89 – 80
C	79 – 70
D	69 – 60
F	59 – 0

## CLASS POLICIES

Students are expected to be present, on time, and prepared for discussion whenever the class is scheduled to meet. However, things conflicting with class attendance invariably arise. If there is some extenuating circumstance that prevents the student from attending class, he or she should talk with the instructor before or after class or during his office hours about this matter. Excessive absences (i.e., more than 4 missed classes) and consistent late arrivals may result in the student failing the course.

All papers and homework must be submitted at the beginning of class on the dates listed below. Absences do not excuse students from submitting work that is due on the day they happen to be away from class. Anything due on a day a student is absent from class should be in the instructor's mailbox ten minutes prior to the start of class or given to the instructor in person before the roll is taken. Late work may not be accepted.

Plagiarism is a serious matter and contrary to the ethos of higher education. Students should make every attempt to ensure that their work is original and others' words and ideas are attributed appropriately. The minimum penalty for plagiarism is a failing grade on the assignment. Depending on the offense, plagiarizing may also result in failure of the course or expulsion from the University.

**Out of respect for colleagues and the instructor, students should turn off (or leave at home) cell phones and pagers before coming to class. Text or instant messaging during class, no matter how subtle or whether we're working on computers, is the surest way to offend the instructor!**

Students who want to discuss a grade on a paper or assignment should meet with the instructor in his office during office hours or at a mutually agreed upon appointment. The instructor will not discuss grades in the classroom.

## SPECIAL NOTE

Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability should make an appointment to see the instructor during his office hours or at another mutually agreed upon time. This meeting should occur as early in the semester as is possible so the instructor can make appropriate arrangements.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Listed below are dates associated with readings, homework, and assignments. The class will follow this schedule as closely as possible, but alterations may need to be made during the semester.

### Week 1

#### Introductions and Contexts

8/18 (M)

First Day of Classes—Introductions and Distribution of the Syllabus

8/22 (F)

**Vocabulary Quiz #1:** Belles-Lettres; Criticism; Criticism, Types of; Fiction; Genre; Genre Criticism; Plot; Prose; Theme; Theoretical Criticism; Theory. Chapters 1 and 2 in *Texts and Contexts*.

### Week 2

#### MLA Conventions and Research

8/25 (M)

Read sections 3.4, 3.6, and 3.7 from Chapter 3, as well as Chapters 5 – 7 in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

8/29 (F)

**MLA Quiz.** Dictionary skills.

### Week 3

#### MLA Conventions and Research (cont'd.)

9/1 (M)

*No Class—Labor Day Holiday!*

9/5 (F)

Chapter 9 in *Texts and Contexts*. The class for today will be held in Scarborough Library; all students should meet promptly at 2:10 PM inside the front door of the Library.

### Week 4

#### Mythology

9/8 (M)

**Vocabulary Quiz #2:** Allusion; Archetype; Classic, Classical; Classicism; Myth; Mythic Criticism; Mythopoetics; Oral Transmission; Symbol. Discussion of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*.

9/12 (F)

Discussion of Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* (cont'd.). **Oral presentations:** 1) Arachne and 2) Atalanta.

Week 5

Mythology (cont'd.)

9/15 (M)

**Oral presentations:** 3) Daedalus and Icarus, 4) Endymion, 5) Europa, 6) Ganymede, 7) Io, 8) Midas, and 9) the Muses.

9/19 (F)

**Oral presentations:** 10) Pandora, 11) Prometheus, 12) Proteus, 13) Pygmalion, 14) Sisyphus, 15) Tantalus, and 16) Teiresias.

Week 6

Mythology (cont'd.) and Poetry

9/22 (M)

**Mythology Exam.**

9/26 (F)

**Vocabulary Quiz #3:** Anaphora; Blank Verse; Epic; Feminine Rhyme; Free Verse; Idyll; Image; Imagery; Lyric; Masculine Rhyme; Metaphor; Meter; Metonymy; Ode; Rhyme; Scansion; Sonnet; Synecdoche. Excerpt from *How Does a Poem Mean?* by John Ciardi (handout).

Week 7

Poetry (cont'd.)

9/29 (M)

**Due: One Third of the Annotated Bibliography (i.e., Five Items).** Chapter 3 in *Texts and Contexts*. The Lyric: "To Helen" by Edgar Allan Poe and Fragments by Sappho.

10/3 (F)

The Sonnet: #73 ("That time of year thou mayst in me behold") and #116 ("Let me not to the marriage of true minds") by William Shakespeare; "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay.

Week 8

Poetry (cont'd.)

10/6 (M)

Chapter 4 in *Texts and Contexts*. The Idyll: "To a Waterfowl" by William Cullen Bryant; Free Verse: "Apostrophe to Man" by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

10/10 (F)

The Ode: "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" by William Wordsworth and "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats.

Week 9

Poetry (cont'd.)

10/13 (M)

"Tradition and the Individual Talent" by T. S. Eliot (handout). Extended Metaphor: "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" by John Donne; Imagery: "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass" by Emily Dickinson.

10/17 (F)

**Due: Paper Series #1—New Criticism and Reader-Response.** Other Poetic Forms: "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop and "Po' Boy Blues" by Langston Hughes.

Week 10

The Novel

10/20 (M)

**Vocabulary Quiz #4:** Antagonist; Antihero; Anticlimax; Arthurian Legend; Medieval Romance; Narrative; Narrator; Novel; Novelette; Novella; Parody; Point of View; Protagonist; Romance; Satire. Excerpt from *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson (handout).

10/24 (F)

Discussion of John Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat*.

Week 11

The Novel (cont'd.)

10/27 (M)

Discussion of John Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* (cont'd.). Chapter 5 in *Texts and Contexts*.

10/31 (F)

**Due: Two Thirds of the Annotated Bibliography (i.e., Ten Items).** Discussion of John Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* (cont'd.). Chapters 6 and 7 in *Texts and Contexts*.

Week 12

The Novel (cont'd.)

11/3 (M)

"Resisting the Novel" by Lennard Davis (handout). Discussion of John Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* (cont'd.).

11/7 (F)

**Due: Paper Series #2—Historical or Postcolonial and Psychological.** "History and the Novel" by Irving Howe (handout).

Week 13

11/10 (M)

**Vocabulary Quiz #5:** Act; Catastrophe; Comedy; Drama; Dramatic Structure; Freytag's Pyramid; Scenes; Tragedy. Discussion of Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*.

11/14 (F)

Discussion of Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* (cont'd.). Chapter 8 in *Texts and Contexts*.

Week 14

11/17 (M)

Statements about drama by Aphra Behn (handout). Discussion of differing views on drama.

11/21 (F)

**Due: Paper Series #3—Biographical and Feminist.**

Week 15

11/24 (M)      *No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday!*

11/28 (F)      *No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday!*

Week 16

12/1 (M)      Excerpt from *What Is Literature?* by Jean-Paul Sartre and “The Death of the Author” by Roland Barthes (handouts).

12/5 (F)      **Due: The Annotated Bibliography.** Course wrap-up.

**The final exam for this class will be from 9:00 AM until 11:00 AM on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>!**