

Department of English & Writing Studies

Understanding Literature: The Art of Belligerence – DRAFT syllabus
English 1020E (001)
Fall/Winter 2018-19

Instructor: Dr. M. J. Kidnie
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Course Date/Time: Mon & Wed 1:30-2:30 pm
(lecture) + one-hour tutorial TBA

Course Location: Physics & Astronomy 106

Antirequisites: English 1022E, 1035E.

Prerequisites: Grade 12U English or permission of the Department. For part time students who have been admitted without the OSSD, this permission will be granted as a matter of course

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course invites students to consider what it means to read literature today. How does literature help us understand our lives in the early twenty-first century? We will consider literature's engagement in history and politics, and our role, as readers of literature, in conversations that shape the worlds in which we live. Through readings of prose, poetry, and drama, we will explore the power of disobedience (whether in face of the state, gods, or family) and the desire to belong. We will also consider, more specifically, aesthetic questions, such as: What is literature? What formal means do writers use to engage thematic preoccupations? How do writers and literary texts speak to one another, sometimes across centuries? Just as importantly, students will learn to make persuasive arguments, honing their writing craft, oral communication, and research skills.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Develop an appreciation of literature that unites historical observation and literary analysis;
- Build a critical reading of a text and write essays that have an effective thesis and a logical argument supported by evidence from the text(s);
- Engage in research and properly document their essays using the MLA guidelines;
- Converse in the language of the discipline, using literary terms and concepts, both in written and oral forms.

Course Materials

(all available at the Book Store, apart from the theatre ticket, which you order online)

- Stratford Festival, Coriolanus (live staging – 18 October, 8pm)
- The Norton Introduction to Literature: Shorter 12th Edition, ed. Kelly J. Mays (required)
- Pat Barker, Regeneration
- Chuck Palahniuk, Fight Club
- Shakespeare, Coriolanus, ed. Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, New Folger (required)
- Coursepack (required)

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Sonnet exercise (10%) – Due October 3

Essay 1 (10%) – Due October 31

In-class test (10%) – November 19

Essay 2 (15%) – February 25

Podcast (10%) – March 25

Tutorial grade (10%)

Final exam (35%)

Please note: The Department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Additional Information

LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES

I do not permit the use of laptops or cell phones in the classrooms (lecture and tutorial).

Students may tape-record lectures if they have difficulty taking notes by hand – feel free to talk to me about this option outside of class.

Please note that the exception to this is the week of 25 February, when you should bring a laptop to BOTH lecture and tutorial, where you will get instruction and support for your podcast project.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Sonnet exercise – Try your hand at writing a sonnet! The topic is yours to choose. Your sonnet may be either Shakespearean or Petrarchan (i.e., English or Italian), but must follow one of those two rhyme schemes and scan as iambic pentameter. Your writing will be assessed primarily on rhyme, meter (not every line comprised of ten-eleven syllables scans as five iambic feet ...), and an ability to shape a coherent idea within the sonnet's fourteen-line structure.

Essay 1 – Short essay (1000 words) on Coriolanus. Students will be invited to write on a topic relating to the production we see at the Stratford Festival, or on a topic relating to the play's use of dialogue. No secondary reading required or allowed. Topics will be distributed in class and posted on OWL.

In-class test – 50-minute poetry test. Coriolanus will not be included among the test questions.

Essay 2 – Longer essay (2000 words). Students will select one among a range of prompts and write on two or more texts covered on the course (poetry, prose, and/or drama). Essay questions will be distributed in class and posted on OWL.

Podcast – Find your voice! Discuss disobedience and the desire to belong as they play out in EITHER Antigone OR Fight Club. **Please bring a laptop to BOTH lecture and tutorial the week of 25 February, where you will get instruction and support for your podcast project.**

Your podcast will be eight-ten minutes long. You will receive podcast instruction and have a chance to work on your podcasts in tutorial in March. You should also plan to work on this podcast outside of class.

Imagine you're speaking to an interested but non-specialist audience, comprised of listeners who read novels and see theatre, but who may never have read or seen these particular works of literature. This is a group project, and each group will include three-four students. Each member of the group will contribute to the writing or recording of the podcast, and each member of the group must be audibly part of the final submission. Feel free to shape the podcast as a read presentation, dialogue, or interview/conversation. You will want to include passages from the text in order to demonstrate competent analysis (see bullet point 3 below); rehearse at least these passages in advance so that you know how to pronounce key words and read effectively.

Research and prepare your topic, considering what kinds of information you want to include. Shape this material in advance of recording so that each member of the group knows and has agreed to the direction you're taking as a group. Timing is an issue so you may wish to rehearse in advance, and trim and revise as necessary; you may choose to script the whole of the production in advance, rather than work from notes and cues. If you are using sound effects and/or music, make sure the volume is balanced.

Your podcast will be assessed on:

- production (is it a successful recording that can be shared? Are the voices audible, transitions among speakers smooth, and textual passages competently read?),
- structure (how well is the podcast script shaped? Does it have a recognizable beginning, middle, and end?),
- and analysis (how well does the group offer persuasive, engaging interpretations, and offer some close detail of the text under consideration?).

Tutorial grade – Read, prepare, engage! Test your ideas in the tutorial space with your peers and tutor. Your grade will reflect both the quantity and quality of your own contributions in tutorial over the year, in balance with your ability to listen to and engage with other students' comments. Attendance will be taken every week in tutorial.

Final exam – 3 hour exam during the university's final examination period.

STRATFORD FESTIVAL BOOK INSTRUCTIONS
[TBA]

Timetable

This class outline is subject to change. Students are expected to stay abreast of coursework through regular attendance at class.

SEPTEMBER

- 10 Course Introduction and Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (p. 4)
 - 12 Shakespeare, Sonnet 116 (“Let me not to the marriage of true minds”, p. 934); Barrett Browning, “How Do I Love Thee?” (p. 936)
- Tutorial: welcome and introductions
- 17 Conventions and influence (sonnet review): Carol Ann Duffy, “Anne Hathaway” (coursepack), Billy Collins, “Sonnet” (p. 941)
 - 19 Persona/Perspective: Olds, “Sex Without Love” (p. 827), Tennyson, “Ulysses” (p. 1132)
 - 24 Metre/Rhyme: Marvell, “Coy Mistress” (764), Cope, “The Orange” (coursepack)
 - 26 Figures of Speech: Donne, “Valediction: Forbidding Mourning” (p. 1108), Burns, “A Red, Red Rose” (p. 840)

OCTOBER

- 1 Setting/Situation: Ali, “Postcard from Kashmir” (p. 791), Auden, “Musée des Beaux Arts” (p. 1102) (word order, line breaks, theme)
- 3 Symbol: Frost, “The Road Not Taken” (p. 856), Parker, “One Perfect Rose” (p. 852)

8 READING WEEK

- 15 Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*
- 17 Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*

October 18 – Stratford Theatre trip: *Coriolanus*

Instructions for booking your ticket and transportation are below.

- 22 Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*
- 24 Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*
- 29 Allusion/Revision: Duffy, “Mrs Icarus”, “Mrs Lazarus” (coursepack)
- 31 Theme/Symbol/Setting: Lee, “Persimmons” (p. 771), Rich, “Diving into the Wreck” (p. 858)

NOVEMBER

- 5 Forms I: McCrae, “In Flanders Fields” (coursepack), Thomas, “Do not go gentle into that good night” (p. 922)
 - 7 Forms II: Bishop, “Sestina” (p. 923)
- Tutorial: Cummings, “[l/a]” (p. 926), Herbert, “Easter Wings” (p. 927)
- 12 Dramatic Monologue: Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” (pp. 1103-4)
 - 14 Narrative Poetry: Edwin Arlington Robinson, “Richard Cory” (p. 703); Robert Service, “The Cremation of Sam McGee” (coursepack)
- Tutorial: poetry review
- 19 In-class test (poetry analysis)
 - 21 Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”
 - 26 Munro, “Boys and Girls”

28 Egan, “Black Box”

DECEMBER

- 3 O’Brien, “The Things They Carried”
- 5 Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants”

JANUARY

- 7 Tan, “A Pair of Tickets”
- 9 Ricci, “Going to the Moon”

- 14 Ricci class visit
- 16 Barker, *Regeneration*

- 21 Barker, *Regeneration*
- 23 Barker, *Regeneration*

- 28 Barker, *Regeneration*
- 30 Wrapping up Barker, introducing *Paradise Lost*

FEBRUARY

- 4 *Paradise Lost*, Book 2 (coursepack)
- 6 *Paradise Lost*, Book 2

- 11 *Paradise Lost*, Book 2
- 13 *Paradise Lost*, Book 2

18-22 READING WEEK

- 25 Podcast instruction with Tegan Moore – PLEASE BRING YOUR LAPTOP!
- 27 Sophocles, *Antigone*
Tutorial: Podcast support

MARCH

- 4 Sophocles, *Antigone*
- 6 Sophocles, *Antigone*

- 11 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*
- 13 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*
Tutorial: Podcast support

- 18 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*
- 20 Palahniuk, *Fight Club*

- 25 August Wilson, *Fences*
- 27 Theatre Trip to Grand Theatre, *Fences* (M.J. in England)

APRIL

- 1 August Wilson, *Fences*
- 3 August Wilson, *Fences*

- 8 Review

LATE PAPER POLICY

Grace days. You are each given six “grace days” in a full-year course which you can use all at once, or allocate them between your various term assignments (first essay, second essay, or whatever). These “grace days” are intended to accommodate the accidents that commonly happen (got writer’s block, had computer problems, couldn’t get books, ran out of toner, dog ate notes, kid sister drew all over essay, overslept, etc. etc.). Grace days are not transferable, nor do they have any value if unused. Grace days include only “academic days” – that means that Saturdays and Sundays are free.

A wise course is to save your grace days until you really need them, particularly in second term when you will probably be under a lot more pressure than in first term. When your Grace Days are gone, they’re gone, and you’re faced with a late assignment (see next section). Students requiring further extensions based on medical or compassionate grounds must apply, with documentation, for academic accommodation to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Late assignments. If you submit a paper after the due date (plus whatever grace days you have remaining), the paper will be counted as late. The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late. Note that when a paper is late, every day counts (including weekends), but that the arrangements for date-stamping essays in the Department of English essay box are accepted for late essays.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies for adjudication.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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