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\*In case of inclement weather,  
call the voice mail # above one hour  
before class time to see if class will be held.

## **Introduction to Literary Study I: How to Read and Write about Literature – Spring 2010**

### **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the field of literary study. Throughout the semester, we will consider why one studies literature, why one writes about it, and what role it plays in the larger world. Like any serious field of study, in order that those engaged in it can communicate with each other most effectively, literary study has its own conventions and practices, and much of our time will be spent learning these various conventions, including close reading, vocabulary, and critical and analytical reading and writing. We will consider the literary text in much the same way as a biologist might consider a frog, both as something to be dissected in order to learn about it but also as a thing which functions in its own way in the world. And you will practice articulating what you have learned about your “frogs” both in oral and written form.

### **Course Design**

While the course has been split into three units – poetry, fiction, and drama –, we will treat all of the forms of literature as differences in degree rather than in kind. In other words, these forms have as much in common as they do in variance, and we will use their points of commonality as our anchor in studying their differences. In addition to genre, the texts have been chosen to reflect various periods and poetics, once again to highlight both the commonality and variance of literary creation.

### **Required Materials**

#### **Texts**

\*All texts are available at the **Off Campus Bookstore**, located at 1017 Smith Street, Providence (861-6270).

- Kirszner, Laura and Stephen Mandell. *Literature: Reading, Reaction, Writing*. Compact 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Heinle & Heinle: Boston, 2011. (Note this is a new edition, reflecting MLA documentation changes.)
- *MLA Handbook*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Note: This new edition reflects the major changes in MLA documentation; do **not** use an earlier edition.)

#### **Etc.**

- A folder or single-subject notebook for literary journal. (Please make these as light as possible as I have to carry all of them!)

## Grading

- 30% First Paper (Poetry) & Revised Paper (averaged)
- 15% Second Paper (Fiction)
- 20% Final Exam (Short answer comprehensive & Drama essay)
- 10% Literary Journal
- 10% Presentation
- 10% Attendance and Participation, including quizzes, workshops, small- and large-group discussions, and in-class writing
- 5% MLA Documentation Challenge

Failure to complete **any one of the above papers or exams by the required deadline** (except in extreme circumstances discussed directly with me), the literary journal, or the final exam will result in a failure of the class.

## Late Papers

**LATE PAPERS ARE NOT ACCEPTED!** A deadline is, after all, a deadline. However, in order to acknowledge that life is sometimes beyond our control (cars do break down, babysitters do show up late, loved ones do get sick), I have provided one late paper coupon which allows the bearer to turn in **one paper late one class period late**.

After one class period I will not accept any late papers, and you have only one opportunity to turn in a paper late. **USE YOUR COUPON WISELY.** If you have used your coupon and cannot attend class on a day a paper is due, turn the paper in early or make arrangements for someone else to deliver your paper to class or to my mailbox in Craig-Lee by class time.

## Attendance

One of the benefits of reading literature in a class is that you get to discuss it, to garner insights from me and from other students, to articulate and share your own experience of and thoughts about the texts. In short, in this course learning takes place as much in the classroom as it does by reading the texts and completing the assignments outside of class. *Therefore attendance is mandatory.* After **FOUR** missed classes (two weeks), your grade will be negatively affected. After **FIVE** missed classes, you will be eligible to earn no higher than a B in the class. After **SIX** missed classes, you will be eligible to earn no higher than a C. After **SEVEN** missed classes, you are eligible to earn no higher than a D. After **EIGHT** missed classes, you cannot pass the class.

**NOTE:** This does not mean that you *will* earn these grades. This simply means **you can earn no higher than these grades even if you have perfect scores on all other work.**

You may view the English department's official statement on attendance at the following website: <http://www.ric.edu/English/courseList.php>

## Participation

The successful literature class depends on participation--it is a collaborative learning space, and therefore you **MUST** participate, for in joining this class you have entered into a pact with your

fellow students that you will share what you know in thoughtful and productive ways and that they will share with you. You will be sharing your work with each other through discussion and workshops. **Participation in these aspects of the class is mandatory and if you do not participate, your grade will be negatively affected.** Finally, all assigned work must be completed by class time on the days they are due. Thus if you repeatedly come to class unprepared or rarely participate in a meaningful way, your final grade will suffer.

### **WebCT**

This course has a WebCT (note, **not Blackboard**) component, where you can at any time, from any computer, reference the syllabus, schedule, and various other helpful sites. I will do my best to post assignments as soon as I give them to you in hard copy. I will often post links to sites I believe will help you in understanding readings and preparing papers. WebCT is for your convenience, so refer to it often.

### **Manuscript Form**

All assignments to be handed in must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and stapled, in MLA style. Include your name, the course, the semester, and the title of the assignment (Poetry Revision, Fiction Paper, etc.) in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Number pages. Use MLA format for all citations and notes. **I WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY PAPERS OVER EMAIL** unless I specifically ask for them.

**KEEP COPIES OF ALL WORK BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER IT HAS BEEN HANDED BACK TO YOU.**

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, or the deliberate representation of the writing and/or work of another as your own, is a serious breach of college policy and is unacceptable to the academic community. When you draw upon the ideas or language of other people, you need to clearly indicate your sources. Whenever you quote, summarize, or paraphrase another source, you must acknowledge your indebtedness to that source and give it credit through the clear use of footnotes or some other academically accepted means (which we will go over in class). **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL plagiarism IN ANY FORM BE TOLERATED.** If you have any questions about whether or not you may be plagiarizing, ask me.