
ENGLISH 3301
INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

FALL 2016

DR. MARK WOMACK

drmarkwomack@gmail.com

Office Hours: MW 1:00–2:30
Office: Roy Cullen 235B

Required Texts

- Robert Alter. *The Pleasures of Reading: In an Ideological Age*. Norton, 1996.
- John Donne. *John Donne's Poetry* (Norton Critical Edition). Edited by Donald R. Dickson, Norton, 2007.
- William Shakespeare. *Macbeth* 3rd Edition. Edited by Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason, Arden, 2015.
- Bram Stoker. *Dracula* (Norton Critical Edition). Edited by Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal, Norton, 1996.

Recommended Text

- *MLA Handbook*. 8th edition. Modern Language Association, 2016.

Course Description

This course will require you to read deeply, write constantly, and think rigorously. We will read a novel, a selection of lyric verse, and a play. As we read, we will pay close attention to the particulars of each work, learning some relevant literary terms and considering the characteristics of each genre as we go. The main goal of the class is to train you in practical criticism, the fundamental skills of close reading and literary analysis. We will focus on how authors employ their craft in the medium of language to construct experiences for their readers. Our goal is to learn how to analyze literature carefully and precisely — to read with an eye and ear trained to note detail, nuance, and complexity.

Attendance

You should attend all of every class. Be in class on time with your reading done and your text in hand. I don't take roll, but I don't take kindly to students who skip class or arrive late either. It is your responsibility to find out, from your classmates, what you missed when you are not in class.

Assignments

You will write ten Reading Journals on texts discussed in class, graded Excellent, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. You will also write three Major Essays: a Critical Analysis, an Explication, and a Research Paper. I never assign extra credit or make-up work. I discuss grades only in private, and only forty-eight hours (at least) after I have returned an assignment.

Class Information

Time: MW 2:30–4:00
Room: Fred J. Heyne 43
Section: #29338

Prerequisite

ENGL 1304 or equivalent

Catalog Description

Development of skills in critical reading of and critical writing about literary texts.

Reading Journals

Over the course of the semester, you will write at least *ten* brief reading journals (about 300 words each) analyzing some aspect or particular of the day's reading. Your journals should provoke class discussion by offering a specific idea about the text. Journals should be well written, supported by details from the text, and about the text in question; other than that, you can write about whatever you think is worth writing about. Bear in mind, however, that the more specific you are the more likely you are to say something worth discussing. So write about something small (a peculiar word choice, an unusual metaphor, a striking allusion, or some other small particular) and offer some interesting and truthful insight into it.

Although short, your journals should not be shoddy. They should be lucidly and efficiently written, thoughtful, and intelligent. Consider what is interesting about the readings, what you want to talk about in class, and what others would want to discuss.

Post your Reading Journals in the Journal component of Blackboard. *Please DO NOT submit your journals as attached files.* You must submit your journals at least 24 hours before class discussion of the text (so by 2:30PM on Sunday or Tuesday).

Always come to class ready to discuss any posted Journals on the day's reading. You can respond to Journals during class discussion or reply to them directly in Blackboard.

Cell Phones

You may not use cell phones in class. Keep your cell phone turned off and out of sight from the moment the class starts until the moment it ends. Every time I see or hear your cell phone during class, I will deduct ten points from your Final Average. (Notify me before class begins if there is an emergency situation that absolutely requires you to leave your cell phone on.)

Laptops and Tablets

You may use your laptop or tablet computer only for taking notes, accessing the class website, or other specifically class-related work. If you use it for tweeting, emailing, gaming, shopping, or any other such activity during class, you lose ten points from your Final Average and forfeit your right to bring the device to class for the rest of the semester.

Blackboard

You will submit your Major Essays and Reading Journals online through Blackboard: uh.edu/blackboard/

Class Website

You can find all course materials — including the syllabus, assignment sheets, handouts, and so forth — on the class website: drmarkwomack.com/engl-3301.

GRADING CRITERIA FOR MAJOR ESSAYS

I consider four areas when assessing grades for your major essays: your thesis statement, your argument, your use of evidence (including quotations and proper documentation of sources), and your prose style.

The better each of those areas is, the higher your grade will be.

A

- Original and interesting thesis
- Persuasive argument
- Lots of convincing evidence
- Lucid prose style

B

- Workable thesis
- Well-structured argument
- Solid supporting evidence
- Decent prose style

C

- Obvious and boring thesis
- Coherent argument
- Some supporting evidence
- Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

D

At least **one** of the following:

- No discernible thesis
- Incoherent argument
- Little or no supporting evidence
- Chronic grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors

F

Two or more of the following:

- No discernible thesis
 - Incoherent argument
 - Little or no supporting evidence
 - Chronic grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors
- Or** Fails to meet basic requirements for the assignment

Course Grade

Reading Journals	15%
Critical Analysis	25%
Explication	25%
Research Paper	35%

Numerical Values for Letter Grades

A+	100-97
A	96-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

Week One

Monday 8/22

Wednesday 8/24

Introduction
Review of instructions, policies, and syllabus

The Pleasures of Reading, [PR] Introduction: “The Disappearance of Reading”

Week Two

Monday 8/29

Wednesday 8/31

Dracula, chapters I–IV
Pleasures of Reading chapter 1 “Difference of Literature”

Dracula, chapters V–VIII
Pleasures of Reading chapter 3 “Style”

Week Three

Monday 9/5

Wednesday 9/7

LABOR DAY

Dracula, chapters IX–XII
Pleasures of Reading chapter 4 “Allusion”

Week Four

Monday 9/12

Wednesday 9/14

Dracula, chapters XIII–XVI
Pleasures of Reading chapter 5 “Structure”

Dracula, chapters XVII–XX
Pleasures of Reading chapter 6 “Perspective”

Week Five

Monday 9/19

Wednesday 9/21

Friday 9/23

Dracula, chapters XXI–XXIV
Contexts (331–39)

Dracula, chapters XXV–XXVII
Reviews and Reactions (363–70)

Essay 1 – Draft Deadline

Week Six

Monday 9/26

Wednesday 9/28

John Donne: "The Flea"
Robert Herrick: "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time"
Andrew Marvell: "To His Coy Mistress"

Donne: "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning"
John Dryden: [Donne Affects the Metaphysics] (193)
Samuel Johnson: [The Metaphysical Poets] (193-96)

Week Seven

Monday 10/3

Wednesday 10/5

Friday 10/7

Donne: "The Good-Morrow" &
Elegy 8 "To His Mistress Going to Bed"
"Introduction to Meter"

Donne: "The Canonization" &
"The Relic"
"Introduction to Rhyme and Stanza"

Essay 1 DUE

Week Eight

Monday 10/10

Wednesday 10/12

Donne: "Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward" &
Stephen Booth's Annotations

Donne: *Holy Sonnets*, 1-10

Week Nine

Monday 10/17

Wednesday 10/19

Friday 10/21

Donne: *Holy Sonnets*, 11-19 &
"A Hymn to God the Father"

Macbeth 1.1-1.3

Essay 2 – Draft Deadline

Week Ten

Monday 10/24

Wednesday 10/26

Friday 10/28

Macbeth 1.4-1.7

Macbeth 2.1-2.2

Last day to drop a course or
withdraw with a "W."

Week Eleven

Monday 10/31	Wednesday 11/2	Friday 11/4
Macbeth 2.3–2.4	<i>Macbeth</i> 3.1–3.3	Essay 2 DUE

Week Twelve

Monday 11/7	Wednesday 11/9
<i>Macbeth</i> 3.4–3.6	<i>Macbeth</i> 4.1

Week Thirteen

Monday 11/14	Wednesday 11/16	Friday 11/18
<i>Macbeth</i> 4.2–4.3	<i>Macbeth</i> Act 5.1–5.4	Essay 3 – Draft Deadline

Week Fourteen

Monday 11/21	Wednesday 11/23	Friday 11/25
<i>Macbeth</i> 5.5–5.9	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	

Week Fifteen

Monday 11/28	Wednesday 11/30	Friday 12/2
Writing Workshop	Writing Workshop	Essay 3 DUE

Withdrawal Policy

I strongly encourage every student to complete the course, but I recognize that occasionally a student may need to withdraw, especially for non-academic reasons. Please bear in mind that it is your responsibility to fill out and turn in the necessary forms in order to withdraw formally from the course.

According to university policy, if you wish to withdraw from the course you must do so by the “Last Day to Drop a Course” on the official academic calendar.

If you have not withdrawn by then you will receive a grade for the course. Current university policy dictates that students who fail to submit their required work and do not qualify for an Incomplete will receive a failing grade for the course.

Policy on Incomplete Grades

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are passing a course or still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control, have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor to make arrangements to complete the course requirements.

An Incomplete is granted only if (a) the student has sufficient non-academic reason for not completing the coursework within the term allotted; (b) the student has already completed a substantial portion of the coursework; and (c) the student requests a grade of Incomplete before the date of the Final Examination. Students who receive an Incomplete grade must complete all the course requirements by a deadline set by the instructor. If the student fails to submit the work on time, the grade will be changed to reflect the work completed in the course. Bear in mind that a grade of “I” automatically changes to “F” at the end of a calendar year if the student has not fulfilled all course requirements by then.

Last Day to Drop a Course

October 28

Date of the Final Exam

December 12

Your instructor, Mark Womack, reserves the right to revise or amend the policies listed here with sufficient verbal and written notice.
