Syllabus for English 200: Introduction to Literature

Section 001
Semester: Spring 2015
Location: Ferguson 181
Time: MWF 10:00 – 10:50

Instructor: Billy Longino
email: longino.billy@gmail.com
Office: LAN 328
Office Hours: M/W/F 9:00 – 10:00; Tues 1:30 – 3:30; or by appointment

Course Description

English 200: Introduction to Literature is an introductory level literature course designed with the goal to aid students, who may not be familiar or versed in the various genres of literature, in acquiring the skills necessary to engage, understand, critically analyze, and (hopefully!) enjoy the literary genres of the short story, poetry, the novel, drama, and the graphic novel. As they read a range of works belonging to these genres, students will explore the basic concepts of literary technique, narrative, poetic, and dramatic structures and innovations, and begin to engage with the more advanced cognitive aspects of literature. In addition to these theoretical skills, students will also read below the surface of the texts in this class for their historical, ethical, psychological, social, and philosophical value, developing insight in how literature gives us a window into both the experiences of others and wider appreciation for the human condition.

In addition, through assignments in class (quizzes, exams, essays, and discussions) students will learn how to intelligently respond to the sometimes complicated concepts found in works of literature. The goal here is for students to be able to take skills of critical thought beyond engagement with literature only into their wider interactions with an increasingly complicated world, which of course will continue to be reflected in the human output of literary works.

General Education Core Curriculum

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L through LiveText, the assessment management system selected by SFA to collect student work for core assessment. LiveText accounts will be provided to all students enrolled in core courses through the university technology fee. You will be required to register your LiveText account, and you will be notified how to register your account through your SFA e-mail account. If you forward your SFA e-mail to another account and do not receive an e-mail concerning LiveText registration, please be sure to check your junk mail folder.
and your spam filter for these e-mails. If you have questions about LiveText call Ext. 1267 or e-mail SFALiveText@sfasu.edu.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
<th>Date Due in LiveText</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Capstone Essay</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
<td>Capstone Essay</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>Capstone Essay</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Capstone Essay</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English Program Learning Outcomes**

As ENG 200 is a core course, English Program Learning Outcomes do not apply; English majors or minors, seeking to fulfill sophomore-level literature requirements, should enroll in ENG 211, 212, 221, 222, 229, 230, or 233H.

**Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 200**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for key works in world literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication);
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of periodization, theme, genre, motif, and so on, in literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. Periodization, for example, is not merely an historical consideration, as defined by events, persons, or dates; furthermore, literature encompasses a spectrum of thematic, genre, and literary considerations. Thus, students will demonstrate an understanding that historical, cultural, spiritual, and ethical issues, among others, shape human experiences and impact motivations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication as well as Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility);  
3. Students will read literature with increased critical acumen, as evidenced in daily discussions of readings and in responsive essays (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication); and  
4. Students will be able to respond to literature with facility, both orally and on paper, on important thematic considerations having to do with literary and historical milieu, culture, human responsibility, morality, ethics, and the manner and causes by which humans interact with one another (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility).

*Required Texts*

_**Breakfast at Tiffany’s**_ by Truman Capote (1958)  
_**True Grit**_ by Charles Portis (1968)  
_**Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories**_ by Theodore Seuss Geisel (1958)  
_**Othello** (The Oxford Shakespeare) by William Shakespeare (c. 1604)  
_**Superman: Red Son**_ by Mark Millar, Dave Johnson, and Kilian Plunkett  
_**The Walking Dead, vol. 1: Days Gone By**_ by Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore  

Other readings will be provided by the instructor in print form and .pdf copies uploaded on the class D2L page with each assigned reading that is not one of the above.

*You will be required to bring the text assigned in class each day it is being discussed. Not having a copy of the text will result in an absence for that day. If you are having difficulty finding one of these texts, let me know and we can see what options there are available to find the text for you.*

**Course Requirements**

This course is a fast-moving survey that requires you to read steadily and continuously throughout the semester. Each meeting you will be tested on whether you have read the assigned material, either through daily quizzes, challenge questions, exams, or informed in-class discussion. If it is clear that you did not do the reading for that day, you will receive an absence for that day. I do not have much sympathy for students who do not complete the work assigned to them.
In addition to the daily readings, students will have four exams over the course of the semester, one for each unit in the course: Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Graphic Novel, and write a capstone essay at the end of the semester, selecting one work which “spoke to them” personally, and be graded based on their use of critical thinking skills; grammar, vocabulary, and written style; and the effect of social background on the personal choices of characters in the literary work, comparing and contrasting these choices with the modern world.

**Grade Breakdown**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism:</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction Exam:</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry Exam:</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama Exam:</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Novel Exam:</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone Essay:</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each exam will be graded on a 100 point scale and added together to form your final grade according to the points.

You can maintain knowledge of your progress in the class by regularly visiting the course D2L page.

**Professionalism**

Over the course of the semester, I will document student participation in class by the use of professionalism points. At the beginning of the semester, each student will have 20 Professionalism Points. Professionalism Points will be used as a measure of students’ continued participation in classroom discussions, completion of readings and other assignments, and attentive engagement in class meetings.

Students can lose participation points for the following offenses:

- Being late to class without a “reasonable” excuse.
- Use of cellphone or other electronic device outside of appropriate times.
- Not completing a reading.
- Not bringing a textbook to class when said textbook is being used.
- Not completing a grammar worksheet assignment for the week.
- Persistent refusal to participate in classroom discussions.

**Grading Standard**

A: 91-100: Students earning the grade of an A on any assignment will have completed work that obviously demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of an A is reserved for that work which expertly displays one’s
ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors.

B: 80-89: Students earning the grade of a B on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a B is reserved for that work which adeptly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. However, the level of thought, while still above average, may fluctuate in terms of analytic abilities and expression.

C: 70-79: Students earning the grade of a C on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates an average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a C is reserved for that work which displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand (more so through summary and response rather than analysis), recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas (however, the complications recognized will focus more on surface level issues rather than the greater whole), and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. As can be seen from this description, the level of thought will be acceptable and display that a student has read the assignment, but his/her analytic abilities and level of expression will not be nearly as complicated nor developed. Instead, C work will display a student’s hold to traditional methods of expression (simpler construction of sentence and paragraph development) and a struggle to develop complex, critical thinking skills.

D: 60-69: Students earning the grade of a D on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a below average understanding of course material and a lack of completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a D is reserved for that work which displays one’s struggle or refusal to engage the ideas at hand, simply summarizes the work under study with no actual recognition of or dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and the translation of ideas into writing is completed in such a convoluted manner that the audience will have difficulty following the conversation.

F: 0-59: Students earning the grade of a F on any assignment will either not have completed the assignment, will have completed the assignment but not followed the guidelines, or will have completed the assignment and demonstrated a complete misunderstanding of the course material. In this case, it will be obvious that the student has either not completed the required reading and/or given him/herself enough time to develop the work. The grade of a F is reserved for that work which does not engage the issues at hand, offers a base (not complete) summary of the work at hand with no critical engagement, and the translation of ideas into writing is either incomplete or the audience will be unable to follow the conversation. It is important to remember that a student can receive 0 out of 100 points. In the case that a student only
partially completes an assignment or completes a work (in terms of page length, but not purpose) s/he may receive 0 points.

**Attendance:** The attendance policy for this course is the official SFASU policy as stated at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/class_attendance_excused_abs.asp; i.e., regular and punctual attendance is expected for all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which a student is registered. Valid excuses are limited to health, religious observation, family emergencies, and participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events. Students are responsible for providing written documentation for EVERY absence, from which a decision will be made regarding the absence’s excusability. Without written documentation, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused. Students with acceptable excuses may be permitted to make up work for absences to a maximum of three weeks of a semester when the nature of the work missed permits. However, no absences beyond the six that may be excused will be excused, and no student shall be allowed to pass the course whose unexcused absences exceed three (3)—this is not a correspondence course! Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, or in the case of a late add, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Note also that you must turn in both essays and take both exams to pass the course.

**Note regarding make-up and late work:** Make-up tests and quizzes (which will be given only in the case of excused absences) must be taken during my office hours on your own initiative within one week of the absence, and they will be more challenging than the original versions. Late essays will lose one letter grade per business day of lateness. I will not accept the submission of material via e-mail without prior approval.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.

**General Class Policies**

The following are general policies of mine not covered by university policies, and are specific to my classroom:

- No computers, tablets, or cellphones are allowed during class (unless there is a documented reason for you using one). You should put all cellphones on silent before coming into class. If you forget and the cellphone rings, then just turn it off, and do not make a big deal out of it. No texting. I find this very, very
irritating, and if you are found habitually texting in class (more than once), then you will receive an absence for that day. That being said there will be occasional uses for technology in the classroom, depending on the assignments.

- Be respectful. Some of the topics we cover in class may be controversial in some way. If you disagree with another student, you are free to express their viewpoint, but I will not tolerate disrespect in my classroom. I encourage lively engagement with topics covered in class, and invite conversation over these topics, but maintaining an atmosphere of respect is crucial for achieving our goals in the classroom.

- Email Policy: At some points over the course of the semester, you will find that you may need to email me (this being my preferred form of contact outside of office hours and class). All emails should be written in a professional manner. Subject headings must be precise and inform me of the topic of the email. I will not read emails which do not have a subject heading. Emails must be readable and grammatically correct. Avoid using any sort of “netspeak,” “textspeak,” or colloquial abbreviations. This latter point is to emphasize the need for a professional manner in communications in college and future careers. Emails should also address me by name at the beginning and give me your name at the end. It is a courtesy.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1):** Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp).

**Additional note on plagiarism:** Documented proof of cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Withheld Grades Policy (A-54)**

The following is taken from SFASU’s *Policy Manual* (2012), “Semester Grades Policy” (A-54):

> At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will
automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities:** To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Semester Course Schedule**

While I do not expect there to be a problem, I do reserve the right to change the course calendar in the future, if circumstances arise that create some conflict, but I will let you know ahead of time if there is an issue.

**Unit One: Fiction**

Wed Jan 21 – Introduction to Course, hand out Fiction Terms pamphlet.

Fri Jan 23 – Introduction to Fiction. “Incarnations of Burned Children” by David Foster Wallace, “Fat” by Raymond Carver, and “Sticks” by George Saunders.


Wed Jan 28 – “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien

Fri Jan 30 – “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Mon Feb 2 – “Sea Oak” by George Saunders

Wed Feb 4 – “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Conner

Fri Feb 6 – “Brokeback Mountain” by Annie Proulx

Mon Feb 9 – *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* by Truman Capote.

Wed Feb 11 – *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* by Truman Capote.

Fri Feb 13 – “Chivalry” by Neil Gaiman

Mon Feb 16 – “Johnny Mnemonic” by William Gibson

Wed Feb 18 – “Staying Behind” by Ken Liu

Fri Feb 20 – “The Too-Clever Fox” by Leigh Bardugo

Mon Feb 23 – “The Tower of Babylon” by Ted Chiang

Wed Feb 25 – “The Lottery in Babylon” and “The Library of Babel” by Jorge Luis Borges

Fri Feb 27 – “Bears Discover Fire” by Terry Bisson

Mon March 2 – *True Grit* by Charles Portis

Wed March 4 – *True Grit* by Charles Portis

Fri March 6 – *True Grit* by Charles Portis

Mon March 9 – “The Call of Cthulhu” by H.P. Lovecraft

Wed March 11 – “Tower of the Elephant” by Robert E. Howard

Fri March 13 – Fiction Exam, hand out Poetry Terms pamphlet.
March 14 – 23 Spring Break

Unit Two: Poetry
Fri March 27 – “Suzanne,” and “Beneath My Hands” by Leonard Cohen,
April 2 – 6 Easter Break
Wed Apr 8 – “Howl” by Allen Ginsberg, Yertle the Turtle by Dr. Seuss.
Fri Apr 10 – Poetry Exam, hand out Drama Terms pamphlet.

Unit Three: Drama
Mon Apr 13 – Introduction to Drama, Othello by William Shakespeare
Wed Apr 15 – Othello by William Shakespeare
Fri Apr 17 – Othello by William Shakespeare
Mon Apr 20 – Doubt
Wed Apr 22 – Doubt
Fri Apr 24 – Drama Exam, hand out Graphic Novel Terms pamphlet.

Unit Four: Comics & Graphic Novels
Mon Apr 27 – Introduction to Comics & Graphic Novels. “The Case of the Chemical Syndicate” by Bob Kane and Bill Finger and “Son for Hire, Sword for Hire” from Lone Wolf & Cub by Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima.
Wed Apr 29 – Red Son by Mark Millar, Dave Johnson, and Killian Plunkett.
Fri May 1 – Red Son by Mark Millar, Dave Johnson, and Killian Plunkett.
Mon May 4 – The Walking Dead by Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore.
Wed May 6 – The Walking Dead by Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore.
Fri May 8 – Exam Review Day and Capstone Essays Due.

Finals Week – Final Exam, time TBA