ENGLISH 200: Introduction to Literature (Spring 2018)

Professor: Dr. Sara Henning
200-03: MWF 9:00 – 9:50 am, Ferguson 292
Office: LAN 230
Office hours: 3:00-6:00 pm M, 3:00-4:00 pm WF
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

*English 200: Introduction to Literature* is an introductory level literature course designed with the goal to aid students in acquiring the skills necessary to engage, understand, critically analyze, and enjoy multiple literary genres, including short and long-form nonfiction, the novel, and poetry. As they read a range of works belonging to these genres, students will explore the basic concepts of literary technique, narrative, and poetic 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.

Think of English 200 as a reading and writing workshop. We will focus on reading, writing, and discussing literary texts in an effort to become practiced critical readers of those texts. Writing assignments receive extensive written feedback from peers and instructor. In order to help us focus our exploration of literature, we will read through the lens of “The Autobiography of Loss.”

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.

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,
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 AND OTHER MATERIALS


- Access to OWL Purdue or a recent writer’s handbook

- E-mail, regular WWW access, and access to Microsoft Word (available through MySFA free of charge)
COURSE ACTIVITIES

Reading: This semester, we will be reading works of nonfiction, two collections of poetry, and a memoir. You are expected to come to class having read and, in some cases, having reread the texts and having prepared to contribute to small-group and whole class discussions about the works we’re reading. Expect a minimum of 1.5 hours preparation time for each hour of class time.

I expect for you to approach literature this semester using active reading strategies. Read the piece quickly the first time, only stopping to highlight, underline, or circle any interesting, confusing, or significant text. For the second reading, slow down, continuing to highlight, underline, question, comment, and dialogue with the text. Write in the margins. Note page numbers and cross-reference your notes. Practicing active reading strategies is an essential component in learning effective, successful literary analysis. Periodically, I will ask to see evidence of your active reading skills as we progress through the course (a photocopy of a few pages of novel or poem you’ve read and annotated).

Writing: This course requires that you compose a variety of writing assignments. You will write three long essays. You will also write several short response assignments via your weekly discussion questions (explications, compare/contrast, reader response, character analysis, etc.) that you are welcome to use as a springboard into your longer essays. Finally, you will complete two take home exams: a midterm and a final.

In short, we will be writing a lot—almost every day—and your peers and I will provide written feedback so that you can become better at reading and analyzing literary texts. Feedback will be given on written assignments within TWO weeks. Such skills improve with practice; thus, I require everyone to work through multiple drafts of each major essay. Specifically, your writing assignments are as follows:

Descriptions of Major Essays

Essay #1: Close-Reading (research encouraged but not required). 1200-1500 words (4 to 6 pages) (not including your Works Cited).

Essay #2: Character / Thematic Analysis (research required). 1500-1800 words (5-6 pages) (not including your Works Cited).

Essay #3: Poetry Explication (research encouraged but not required). 1800-2400 words (6-8 pages). Critical analysis of poetry or poetry and a combination of works covered during the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Participation: Because class participation is essential to a course with a reading and writing workshop format, you will be graded on how well you contribute to our class discussions. This grade will reflect not only the degree of your participation, but also the quality of your contributions. Your participation grade also includes in-class writing, peer group workshops, small-group discussions, attendance, timely submission of writing assignments and homework, reading quizzes, and any other activities deemed worthy of participation points.

Weekly Discussion Questions. Assignment details will be announced prior to due dates and will include explication, reader-response, comparison of two works, critical analysis, and synthesis. You will be required to post these in the appropriately-labeled Dropbox on D2L.
Assessment & Grading

One of the goals for this course is to encourage you to develop critical reading and analytical skills as you practice thoughtful reading and writing about literary texts. A second and equally important goal is to help you continue to develop your writing skills. Your midterm and final exam will receive grades as the semester progresses.

Final Course Grades:

To pass this course, you MUST meet the following requirements: (1) complete multiple drafts of THREE essays, two of which must have a significant research component; (2) submit ONLY writing you have produced during the current semester for English 200; and (3) meet MLA requirements for all submitted work. This is the minimum for PASSING. Then your course grade will be determined as follows:

**Major Papers: 45%**
450 points. You will be graded on your final drafts of each of your revised major Essays (Close Reading [Essay #1] at 100 points, Character / Thematic Analysis [Essay #2] at 150 points, and Poetry Explication [Essay #3] at 200 points).

**Discussion Questions: 25%**
250 points (15 at ~17 points apiece)

**Peer Review Workshops: 10%**
100 points (3 at ~33 points each)

**Participation: Variable**
I will set your baseline participation grade on how well you do on your weekly discussion questions. Think of these weekly posts as priming you for class discussion. From this baseline, you can raise or lower your discussion question grade by participation in class discussion, active participation in completion of homework reading and writing, reading quizzes, and meeting deadlines consistently.

**Essay Exams: 20%**
200 points (2 at 100 points each, one at midterm and one during final exams). These exams will be take-home.

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<th>Final Course Grades (whole letter grades only):</th>
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<td>1000-900 = A; 899-800 = B; 799-700 = C; 699-600 = D; below 600 = F.</td>
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<th>Grading Scale for individual assignments (+/- system):</th>
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<td>A+ 97-100</td>
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<td>A 93-96</td>
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<td>A- 90-92</td>
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Essay grading rubric is included at the end of this syllabus.

**D2L Dropbox/Turnitin:** Students will submit all final drafts of each major writing assignment and all out-of-class brief writing assignments to D2L Dropboxboxes that are integrated with Turnitin.com.
**Attendance:** Students are only allowed six absences (approximately two weeks of instruction). I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, and thus I require no explanation for absences accrued. Any additional absences will result in automatic **failure** of the course.

Additional absences related to health, religious observation, family emergencies, and participation in certain SFASU-sponsored events will also be considered. Students must provide written documentation from which a decision will be made regarding the absence’s excusability.

Students are still responsible for all course content and assignments. Note also that you must turn in all major assignments to pass the course. I take attendance at the beginning of class; arriving more than **ten** minutes after class begins will result in your being marked absent.

**Course Citizenship:** Sleeping or reading other materials during class are not acceptable. All cell phones must be turned off prior to coming to class, and no text messaging or web surfing will be tolerated. Laptops and cell phones should not be used unless I indicate that you may use them for a particular activity. Although students with disciplinary problems tend to be few and far between at the college level, if behavioral disruptions persist within a single class meeting (or, for that matter, across multiple meetings), the student in question will be asked to leave the class with a lowered participation grade and an absence for the day.

**Assignment Submission:** All written work will be submitted electronically via D2L. Assignments are due by class time on their due date. All files must be formatted in either .doc or .docx (compatible with Microsoft Word). I will not accept Mac Pages or Google Docs, for example. I will return your drafts via D2L.

**Late Work:** I will accept major essays for a 10% per day penalty. I will not accept any daily work (discussion questions, quizzes, etc.) after the day and time it is due. You should save your work in multiple places; I highly recommend using online storage such as Dropbox or OneDrive (this one is included as a free-of-charge option in the university’s downloadable subscription of Microsoft Office 365), which are free services you may use to back up your files.

**Academic Integrity:** Adhering to academic integrity standards at all times by producing your own work and successfully attributing others’ ideas to them is a necessary aspect of university communication. 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) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assignment; 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 include, but are not limited to: (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 the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author due credit.

Any appeals on academic integrity cases must be made within thirty days after the first class day of the next long semester. Students should appeal to the instructor first then to the chair if the situation is not resolved. Further appeals can be made to the dean and provost if necessary.

Please read the complete policies at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf) and [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appeals-by-students.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appeals-by-students.pdf).

**Discrimination/Sexual Harassment:** At Stephen F. Austin State University, no faculty, staff, or student may discriminate against another on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability or disabled veteran status, and such acts will not be permitted in this class. For additional information, consult Human Resources Policy E-46.
**Course Evaluations:** Course evaluations will be available online near the end of the semester. I highly encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to give feedback about how effective this class and my teaching was, particularly because I read evaluations to help make decisions about future classes. In other words, your feedback can help my future students have a good class experience.

**The Academic Assistance and Resource Center:** The AARC offer free writing tutoring, which is available on a walk-in and appointment basis. They also offer online writing tutoring services and workshops about writing-related topics. For more information, go to [http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/](http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/), visit them on the first floor of the Steen Library, or call them at 936-468-4108.

**Withheld 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.

**Accommodations:** 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, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify your instructors and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations, and no accommodations can be made except through the ODS. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)
Daily in-class writing and reading assignments will be discussed in class and/or will be posted on the class D2L webpage. The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to the course schedule as needed throughout the semester.

Note: Reading assignments and corresponding page numbers designated by TA are from Williford and Martone’s *Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction*. Reading assignments and corresponding page numbers designated by *Wild* are from Cheryl Strayed’s memoir entitled *Wild*. Reading assignments and corresponding page numbers designated by CUG are from Ross Gay’s *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*. Reading assignments and corresponding page numbers designated by WLD are from Marie Howe’s *What the Living Do*. Supplemental reading assignments will be made available via D2L or hard copy and should be printed (if distributed on D2L) and brought to class. Reading assignments are listed as homework for the following class period. Writing assignments are listed on the day they are due.

### Week 1: Introduction to Close Reading, Introduction to the Essay

1/17  W: Class Introductions  
Homework: Sara Levine, “The Essayist Is Sorry for Your Loss” *(TA: 280-289)*

1/19  F: Class Discussion: Close Reading Skills  

**Discussion Questions #1 Due: Class Introduction (on D2L at 11:59 pm)**

### Week 2: Physical and Emotional Environments

1/22  M: Class Discussion  

1/24  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: Diane Glancy, “Sun Dance” *(TA: 201-208)*

1/26  F: Class Discussion  

**Discussion Questions #2 Due (on D2L at 11:59 pm)**

### Week 3: Family and Relationships

1/29  M: Class Discussion; **Discuss Essay #1: Close Reading**  
Homework: Michael W. Cox, “Visitor” *(TA: 141-147)*

1/31  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: Mary Clearman Blew, “The Unwanted Child” *(TA: 43-55)*

2/2  F: Class Discussion  
Homework: Dave Sedaris, “Repeat After Me” *(TA: 443-451)*

**Discussion Questions #3 Due (on D2L at 11:59 pm)**
**Week 4: Loss: A Synthesis; Introduction to Memoir**

2/5  M: Class Discussion  
Homework: Cheryl Strayed, “The Love of My Life” (500-513)

2/7  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: Work on Essay #1

2/9  F: Introduction to Cheryl Strayed’s *Wild*  
Discussion Questions #4 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)

**Week 5: Wild: Autobiography of Loss, Autobiography of Discovery**

2/12  M: Peer Review Essay #1 (in-class assignment)  
Homework: *Wild*, Prologue-27

2/14  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 28-60

2/16  F: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 60-101  
Discussion Questions #5 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)  
Essay #1 due on D2L by 11:59 pm

**Week 6: Wild, Continued**

2/19  M: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 102-135

2/21  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 136-174

2/23  F: Class Discussion; Discuss Essay #2: Character / Thematic Analysis  
Homework: *Wild* 176-205  
Discussion Questions #6 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)

**Week 7: Wild, Continued**

2/26  M: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 206-234

2/28  W: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 237-261

3/2  F: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 262-288  
Discussion Questions #7 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)
**Week 8: Wild, Continued**

3/5  M: Class Discussion  
Homework: *Wild*, 289-311

3/7  W: Class Discussion: Finish *Wild*  
Homework: Work on Essay #2

Discussion Questions #8 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)

**Week 9: Spring Break Holiday**

3/12  M: Class Cancelled: Spring Break!

3/14  W: Class Cancelled: Spring Break!

3/16  F: Class Cancelled: Spring Break!

**Week 10: Midterm**

3/19  M: Review for Midterm  
Discussion Questions #9 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)

3/21  W: NO CLASS—Take Home Midterm (distributed at 5 pm on Monday, 3/19)

3/23  Peer Review: Essay 2 (in class)  
Discussion Questions #10 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)  
Midterm due at 9 am on Friday, March 23 on D2L

**Week 11: Introduction to Poetry**

3/26  M: Introduction to Poetry: TBA

3/28  W: Poetry TBA  
Essay #2 Due on D2L by 11:59 pm

3/30  F: *Easter Holiday: Classes Cancelled*  
Discussion Questions #11 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)

**Week 12: Poetry, Continued**

4/2  M: Poetry: TBA  
Discuss Essay #3: Poetry Explication

4/4  W: Poetry TBA

4/6  F: Poetry TBA  
Discussion Questions #12 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)
**Week 13: Poetry, Continued**

4/9  M: Poetry TBA

4/11 W: Poetry TBA

4/13 F: Poetry TBA
   **Discussion Questions #13 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)**

**Week 14 Poetry, Continued**

4/16 M: Poetry TBA

4/18 W: Poetry TBA

4/20 F: Poetry TBA
   **Discussion Questions #14 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)**

**Week 15: Poetry, Continued**

4/23 M: Poetry: Review

4/25 W: Poetry: Comparative Synthesis

4/27 F: Peer Review: Essay #3 (in class)
   **Discussion Questions #15 Due (on D2l at 11:59 pm)**

**Week 16: Final Exam: Course Review and Preparation**

4/30 M: Final Exam Review
   **Essay #3 Due on D2L by 11:59 pm**

5/2 W: Final Exam: Practice and Course Evaluations

5/4 R: NO CLASS—Take Home Final Exam (distributed at 8 AM)
   **Professor will be in office to answer questions**

**Week 17: Final Exam Week**

5/9 W: Final Exam Due (Uploaded on D2L) by 10 am (the ending time of our scheduled final exam period)