English 200.001: Introduction to Literature

Instructor: Dr. Steve Marsden
Department: English
Prereqs: Six hours of Freshman English
Class Hours: MTWR: 10:15-12:10 -- Note that there is a Friday meeting for final.
Classroom: Ferguson 183
Phone: 936 468-6609 (can’t return LD calls)
Office: Liberal Arts North 209
Email: marsdensj@sfasu.edu  ENG 200.001 in subject line. Please try not to mail from within D2L—it makes following up more complicated, and may not reach me as quickly.
Office Hours: TWR: 12:30-1pm, and by appointment
Webpage: d2l.sfasu.edu : please check daily

Course Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

• Recognize and understand some major works of literature, and demonstrate your recognition and understanding.
• Show your understanding of different genres of literature
• Understand and put into practice principles of analysis and interpretation
• Place major works in the context of historical production
• Write clear correct responses to literary material using standard format and documentation.
• Write clearly, concisely, and precisely

Texas EEO Outcomes

This course will fulfill the following outcomes identified by the State of Texas. According to state documents, courses of this sort are evaluated on their ability to teach students:

• To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
• To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
• To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
• To articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
• To develop an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the humanities and arts.
• To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will introduce you to several genres of literature, including poetry, the short story, the novel and (briefly) the film. You will learn, together, how to become better
readers of literature, understanding how the process of reading and interpretation works. You will, through the employment of attentive reading and re-reading, and the application of critical thinking skills, learn to read beyond the surfaces of literary texts; to appreciate and understand them in ways more complex than “what happens in it” or “what it means.” We will begin to explore the complex sets of interactions that go into the composition and the consumption of a literary work.

You will also gain the necessary understanding of literary techniques and terminology, and hone the necessary skills of communication to talk and write intelligently and coherently about what you read. If all goes well, we will all become better readers, better writers, and better thinkers.

**Course Policies**

**Phones**
Please keep phones silent and away unless there is a developing emergency or you are looking up something for the course (which is fine). I may mock you lightly for your ungovernable addiction or ask what you’re looking up if I see you interacting with your phone. On exam days, please make sure everything is off and away: interacting with your phone during an exam will be seen as possible academic dishonesty.

**Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and So On**
Feel free to drink coffee or eat anything that's not loud, messy, and/or smelly. Please clean up after yourself, however. If you sleep in class, you will be woken up. At least feigning attention and interest is very important: please don't read the newspaper, listen to headphones, or send or receive messages during class. Try to be here and participate.

**Reading, Participation, and Note Taking**
This course is reading intensive, and some of the works we will be studying will be quite difficult. Budget your time and read ahead when necessary. Take notes as you read and write out questions about your reading for use in class. Mark up your books. Reread when necessary. Talk about your reading outside of class. Ask questions in class. If you find anything particularly impenetrable and need help, feel free to drop by my office hours to chat about it. My job is to help you understand this stuff.

This course is taught largely as a dialogue-I ask and answer questions. The students who get the most out of the class are those who participate well in class discussion. If you can answer, do.

**Contact by Email**
Correspondence relating to this course **must use your sfasu email account**. The subject line **must be ENG 200**. I am not certain to respond to emails with any other subject line, especially if they resemble spam. I never accept assignments by email unless I’ve specifically asked for them that way, and emails with attachments will not be opened.

**Plagiarism**
I take plagiarism very seriously. According to SFASU Policies and Procedures:
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.

If your work is found to contain plagiarized or insufficiently acknowledged material, I will talk to you. Possible results include un-revisable zeros for the papers involved and failure for the course. In addition, an Academic Dishonesty Form may be filed with the Dean of the plagiarizing student’s college. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or fear you may not have properly cited something, please contact me before you hand that paper in or submit it to Turnitin.

Recycling Work
All work turned in for credit in this course must be written originally for the course—I will not give credit to papers that were previously turned in to other courses, and late penalties will apply.

Attendance and Absences
Regular attendance is required for success in this course. Lectures and discussions will highlight what sorts of things will be on the tests, there will be frequent short writing assignments and frequent reading quizzes will be given at the beginning or the end of classes. Please arrive on time. No homework or in-class assignments may be made up unless your absence is excused or has been pre-arranged with me at least a full day in advance. If you miss a class for a university-excused reason, you must (by the second day you return to class) present me with a typed memo explaining the reason for your absence, and you should attach any documentation (such as a note from your doctor) to this memo.

Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for all information and work covered in class. If you missed homework or in-class assignments during an excused absence, it is your responsibility to find out what you’ve missed and arrange with me to make it up as soon as possible.

In accordance with university policy, after four absences (the equivalent of three weeks of missed class in a regular semester) for any reason whatsoever, you may automatically fail the class. Please restrict your absences.

Make-up Exams
If you have a university-authorized excused absence on the day of one of our tests, you must inform me of this fact in a typewritten memo the day you return to class. We will then schedule a make-up exam at a later date. Make-up exams may be substantially different in format than the exams given in class.

Paper Requirements
All papers completed outside of class must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman, double-spaced, using correct MLA format in both format and citation. All papers of more than one page should be stapled. Clear, correct, concise, precise Edited American
English is expected. Errors in mechanics and usage will reduce your grade substantially. Major papers must also be turned in to dropbox on D2L by class time on the due date.

Late Papers
Major papers turned in after the beginning of the class period on which they are due will be considered late, and will have one full letter grade (10 percentage points) deducted from their final grade. Another full letter grade will be deducted for each of our class meetings that passes after the due date. The easiest way to receive a very poor grade in this course is to turn things in late. Do not turn in papers under my office door or outside my office. I am not responsible for the loss of papers turned in that way, or your subsequently lower grade.

Extra Credit
Extra credit will only be assigned in class (it will not be posted on the website). Please do not ask me for individual extra credit. Any extra credit assignments I given will be applied to the homework / quiz score, and will be offered to everyone. With extra credit, the daily work score will top at 100%.

Accommodations for Disabilities
According to ODS, 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 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/.

Prerequisites and Required Materials:
Vladimir Nabokov once said that a good reader is one who has imagination, memory, a dictionary, and some artistic sense. Imagination and memory you will have to acquire for yourself, artistic sense we will work on together, and a dictionary can be gotten at any book store. These other things are also required:

• Timely completion of reading for class, a willingness to discuss your readings, and a measure of civility and respect for the class and your peers.

• A folder for this class, for notes, handouts, prompts, and returned homework and papers (which must be retained until the end of the semester). Writing instruments and such as needed. Please also retain electronic copies of all writing. I recommend a backup system such as Google Drive, Box, etc.—find your own solution, but make sure it works.

• Enough money to copy and print as needed. An active sfasu email account, which you check regularly (mail I send via the class roster tool may not be forwarded). Regular access to the internet to use sources, complete online assignments or get assignments from the class web page.
Required Books
Please have purchased, rented, borrowed, or downloaded these books and have them in your hands before we are scheduled to read from them. Waiting for a book is not an adequate excuse for not having read or not having completed assignments.


Buy this first.

Get the right edition for this one: there are some differences in coverage in older books, and you may be unable to resell a 2nd edition.


Access to film versions of *True Grit* will be necessary. Both should be on reserve at the library desk by the time the course is taught. They should also be available for very little money online through the common streaming outlets.

Additional readings will be made available online or in PDF format through D2L. Students may find it easier to deal with electronic texts by printing them out or bringing an electronic device that may view them in class. You are responsible for conducting informed conversations about all readings, no matter what the format of delivery.

Course Requirements and Grading:
Quizzes, Class Activities, and Daily Writing: 15% See schedule on D2L every day
Essay 1 (3-5 pages): 20% July 23, brief WS. Final due July 24
Mid-Term Exam 20% July 25 – last hour and 15 minutes
Essay 2 (3-5 pages) 20% August 1, brief WS. Final due August 2
Final Exam (with brief take-home essay) 25% FRIDAY, August 10

Prompts which detail each major assignment will be handed out in advance of each due date. Rubrics (the sheet used to grade each assignment) will also be handed out before each paper is due.

Grade Determination

Grading Scale:
A=100-90  B=89-80  C=79-70  D=69-60  F=59-0

Short Responses Grading
Often, I'll have you write some relatively informal response to the readings for a day. These should be about a page in length, should be typed, and will have other requirements as posted.
The intention is to get you thinking and recording what you think about the works, and to prepare you for class.

- **5 = Excellent, flawless:** Very insightful, and otherwise dazzlingly good. I think "wow! I wonder if I can get a copy to teach with next semester!" This is a rare score.
- **4.5 = Very good:** Accomplishes everything needed with style and economy, reflects a strong understanding of the subject matter, and has no very significant errors. I think "good!"
- **4 = Good:** Does the work expected, and contains only errors that might be expected of the average careful student at this point in the semester. I think "okay."
- **3.5 = Needs some work:** Ideas may be incomplete or unfocused, organization may be sloppy. May be “off” in tone or style. I think "well, okay, I guess."
- **3 = Needs a lot of work:** May be unclear in spots, or have numerous, embarrassing, or unprofessional errors. I think "well, maybe next time."
- **2 = Unacceptable:** Fails to accomplish some aspect of the assignment, or has a variety of unprofessional errors. I think "maybe he or she had a high fever or something."
- **1 = Token effort:** Wrong assignment or shows very little work. Accomplishes little of what the assignment asks. Reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the assignment or a deficit of effort or skill. I think "why did I ever get into this line of work?" A paper with a name on it and a sentence, turned in on time.
- **0 = Didn’t turn paper in:** I think "hmm, I wonder if he or she has dropped the course?"

**Vocabulary List**

For the equivalent for 3 daily work scores (up to 15 points), keep a running list of each unfamiliar word as you look them up using the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (linked through the library databases page). Due on the last day. Particularly complete lists may earn XC.

**Essays**

There will be two major papers in this course, both relatively short. The first will involve short stories, the second poetry. You will receive prompts (assignment sheets) for each of them in advance.

**Reading Quizzes**

Every day, I will ask a few questions about the readings for the day. These are questions that should be answerable by anyone who made a single careful reading and took notes.

**Exams**

Exams in this course may include short answer, multiple choice, and short essay elements. The midterm exam will last one hour and fifteen minutes of the class in which it is scheduled, and the final exam will be allotted two hours, and will contain a brief take-home essay on film.

**Reading Schedule**

An extremely tentative reading schedule follows. Expect the readings to be tuned for reading speed and student interest throughout the semester (may become fewer or different). Typically what’s below reflects an optimistic view of the pace of the course.
The daily posts on D2L will be the authoritative reading list and daily assignment schedule, and you are required to check them every day. The exam dates, however, are firm.

**Week 1: Introduction, genre (short fiction), point of view**

T Intro lecture, work on defining literature—discuss “The Story of an Hour”—if we have time, “A Clean Well-Lighted Place” and “Happy Endings”: homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration.

W Point of view — discuss focalization, importance of setting in time and place: “A Rose for Emily,” “The Storm” “The Tell-Tale Heart”

R Continue discussion of focalization “The Yellow Wallpaper,” Narrative voice and setting, “To Build a Fire” (two versions)

**Week 2: Continue short fiction**

M Societal fictions and fantasy: “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” “The Lottery”

Social Fictions and Realism: “A Party Down at the Square,” “Barn Burning”

T Discuss symbol and allegory: “The Birthmark,” “Cathedral”

W Discuss family relations and the importance of historical moment in setting: Mothers and Daughters, “Everyday Use,” “Shiloh” Talk through writing papers.


**Week 3: Conclude short fiction, introduce poetry**

M Review papers in class: July 23 “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

T Paper 1 due: July 24. Exam review. Begin poetry—terms and exemplary poems (all lectures in unit 2 will use appropriate poems to be announced from *The Seagull Reader*) Form in poems. Discuss meter, scansion, open and closed forms.

W July 25—Continue poetry introduction and terms. Understanding metaphor, symbol, imagery. Exam 1 —last 75 minutes of class.

R Poetry and purpose. Poetry and style.

**Week 4: Continue and conclude poetry. Begin novel and film.**

M Paper 1 returned. Love poems.

T Poems that answer each other and other art forms: poetry through time.

W Versions of poems. Brief paper #2 workshop in class.

R August 2—Finish poetry, begin *True Grit* (read as fast as possible, view films outside of class)

Paper #2 due.

**Week 5: Novel, film, and adaptation. Conclude course.**

M *True Grit*—characters and cinematography.

T *True Grit*—Narratology and scene description: work on close viewing.

W *True Grit*—Adaptation relationships. Assign brief take-home portion for final exam.


Vocab list due.

F August 10—Exam 2, with take-home essay.