Introduction to English Studies

Content: In addition to familiarizing students with the various disciplines within English Studies, this course provides an introduction to literary analysis and scholarship with an emphasis on genres of literature—including short stories, non-fiction essays, poetry, drama, and the novella—designed for sophomore-level English majors and minors. Through our study of literature and the ideas, history and political changes that help to inform the production of the texts we read, students will hone research and analytical writing skills. Prerequisites: ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- recognize the conventions of a range of literary genres and analyze literature
- identify and use literary terms, concepts, periods and/or critical approaches
- create an argument about a text using library resources to produce a research paper
- demonstrate knowledge of the various fields within English Studies
- demonstrate ability to lead class discussions

Longfellow, Evangeline and Other Poems
McComiskey, ed. English Studies: An Introduction to the Discipline(s)
Melville, Melville’s Short Novels
Seale, Nape
Whitman, Leaves of Grass and Other Writings

Grading: Exams=45% (midterm=20%, final=25%); Essays=35% (essay 1=15%, essay 2=20%);
Participation=10%; Presentation=5%; Performance=5%

Particulars:

- Participation: Students’ alert presence in the classroom, though required, does not guarantee a good participation grade. Students participate by responding to questions posed by myself and their classmates and by asking their own questions about our readings. Those students who have extreme difficulty speaking in front of a group should make an appointment with me early in the semester to discuss alternatives. The completion of short writing assignments, such as the film assignment (described in brief below), as well as regular on-time blogging, pop quizzes and attendance for the full class meeting will also be factored into the participation grade.

- Free-writing: Each class meeting will begin with a short free-write collected after class begins.

- Blogging: Students must post to the classroom blog no later than midnight the day before class. Each entry need be no longer than a paragraph and must conclude by posing a question that demonstrates critical thinking about the material. (In other words, avoid asking a question that can be answered by a quick Internet search.) This entry must be about the assigned reading for that day, but you may also use the post to further develop an issue that came up in a previous class discussion. I encourage students to engage their fellow bloggers.

- Presentation: Once during the semester, students working in small groups will present for about 15 minutes on the historical/cultural context for the day’s assigned reading as well as situate the text in the context they build around it. Groups are strongly advised to meet with the professor.
prior to the date of their presentation.

- **Performance:** During the unit on drama, students will perform scenes from an NIL play.
- **Film assignment:** After reading *A Raisin in the Sun*, we will watch a film adaptation of it. Before the screening, students will imagine and describe how they would block one of the scenes. After the screening, they will compare decisions they made to those of the director.
- **Essays:** Students will write two essays—one close-reading essay of five to seven pages, the other a research essay of seven to ten pages. Although the first essay will not require outside sources, both essays must include a Works Cited page and will be evaluated according to content (i.e., strength of the thesis statement, organization, etc.) as well as grammar.
- **Exams:** A midterm and final exam will test students on the course material—the literature and its context in a larger flow of ideas and historical changes—using a combination of identifications, short answer and essays.

**Policies:**

*Late work:* Extensions will be granted, no questions asked, if the request is made at least 48 hours before the paper’s due date. Papers arriving after the due date (or extension date) will be down-graded 1/3 of a grade for each elapsed calendar day. For example, an A paper would become an A- if handed in after it is due. (Structure the time allotted for writing in a way that allows for mishaps, such as glitches with technology.)

*Attendance and tardiness:* Three unexcused absences will be grounds for grade reduction; five will be grounds for failure. Late arrival to/early departure from class will negatively affect a student’s participation grade. If a student has missed part of class, it is his/her responsibility to contact a classmate for notes and announcements.

*Plagiarism:* Students are expected to follow the Academic Honor Code strictly: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/TAMUCC_student_handbook.pdf](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/TAMUCC_student_handbook.pdf)

Academic misconduct will result in an F on the assignment in question or, in serious cases, expulsion from this class.

*Notice to Students with Disabilities:* The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

*Academic Advising:* The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

*Reminder to English Majors:* As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.
Grade Appeal Process: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Writing Center: Students are encouraged to take advantage of the services offered by the Writing Center in the Center for Academic Student Achievement (Glasscock Center, Room 112).
http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php

University Counseling Center: Confidential counseling services are available by calling (361) 825-2703. http://counseling.tamucc.edu/

Wed, Aug 22: Introductions

FICTION

Short Story


Mon, Sept 3: NO CLASS, Labor Day

    Presentation on the Black Arts movement

Mon, Sept 10: O’Connor, “A Good Man Is Hard to Find”; Rulfo, “It’s Because We’re So Poor” [online]; NIL 158-60

Novella

Wed, Sept 12: Melville, Benito Cereno; selected readings from the Norton edition

Paper 1 due

Mon, Sept 17: Melville, Benito Cereno; selected readings from the Norton edition
    Presentation on New World slavery

POETRY

Wed, Sept 19: Longfellow, Evangeline and other poems; NIL 438-9, 444, 451-9, 560, 614
    Presentation on Neoclassicism

Mon, Sept 24: Whitman, Leaves of Grass and other poems; NIL 482, 505; Presentation on Romanticism
Wed, Sept 26: Dickinson, all NIL poems; NIL 551-2, 545, 575

Mon, Oct 1: Hughes, “I, Too, Sing America” [online]; Seale, *Nape*; NIL 496, 476, 632-5
  Presentation on Poet Laureates

Wed, Oct 3: **Midterm**

NONFICTION

Mon, Oct 8: Edwards, “Personal Narrative” [online]; Alvarez, “I, Too, Sing América” [online]; NIL ch. 15; Presentation on the autobiographical tradition

Wed, Oct 10: Emerson, “Nature,” “Self-Reliance,” “The Poet” [online]; NIL ch. 16
  Presentation on Transcendentalism

Mon, Oct 15: Douglass, selections from *Narrative*; Fuller, “The Great Lawsuit” [online]; NIL ch. 17


DRAMA

Mon, Oct 22: Wilson, *The Piano Lesson* Act I; NIL 744-7, 809-20; **Paper 2 Due**


Mon, Nov 5: Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* Act I; Presentation on history of Broadway

Wed, Nov 7: Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* Act II-III; Film assignment (part one)

Mon, Nov 12: **Performances**

FILM

Wed, Nov 14: Duke, *A Raisin in the Sun*; Film assignment (part two)

Mon, Nov 19: Kazan, *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Presentation on American film history

FIELDS OF ENGLISH

Wed, Nov 21: Rhetoric and Composition

Mon, Nov 26: Linguistics

Wed, Nov 28: Creative Writing

Mon, Dec 3: Review

**TBA: FINAL EXAM**