

Skip
to
content

Search

Small Text Normal Text Large Text



Sections

[Home](#) [News](#) [Members](#) [Projects](#) [About](#)

Personal
tools

You are not logged in [Log in](#)

You are here: [Home](#) » [Projects](#) » [KnowledgeBase Syllabus Archive](#) » [Syllabuses](#) » [English 235](#)

Navigation

- [Home](#)
- [Projects](#)
- [cyhist](#)
- [KnowledgeBase Syllabus Archive](#)
- [Syllabuses](#)
- [Leonardo Electronic Almanac](#)
- [About the Center for Literary Computing](#)

Log in

Name
Password
Forgot your password?

English 235

Document Actions



Elizabeth Juckett, ENGL 235, Spring 2004, The Novel

ENGLISH 235: THE NOVEL
Spring, 2004

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REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS: Although it will be easier for you to use the versions of these novels available in the bookstore, I don't mind if you use a library copy or some other edition. I have one or two loaner copies of some of these

texts; you can borrow them from me on a "first come, first served" basis.

- Lodge, David. The British Museum is Falling Down
- Behn, Aphra. Oroonoko
- Walpole, Horace. The Castle of Otranto
- Bronte, Charlotte. Jane Eyre
- Cather, Willa. MyAntonia.
- Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.
- O'Connor, Flannery. The Violent Bear It Away.
- Morrison, Toni. Song of Solomon.
- An activated MiX email account and regular access to the internet. Every Friday I'll be using MIX to send you a "Weekend Update" that will remind you about the reading assignments and/or work due the following week. That means you need either to start using your MIX e-mail or get MIX to forward your messages from me to your ~reguiar" account at, for example, Hotmail or Juno. Access MIX by going to <http://star.wvu.edu> and clicking on "WVU STAR web," then on "WVU STAR system." Then foliow the instructions on the screen.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS: This overview of the novel as a literary form will introduce you to representative English and American works from the time of the novel's first appearance until roughly the present day. All the novels we read will be "family" novels about family relationships, loyalties, identity issues, and member dynamics. We'll develop this theme as we look at the form of the novel from a variety of perspectives: after examining what makes the novel distinctive as a literary form, we'll approach it historically, as it develops through time; formally, as it manifests in a variety of types and styles; and critically, as we consider various interpretive methodologies. Because we'll be doing a great deal of reading,

I'm keeping my evaluation of your work concrete and simple: it will be based on four sets of study questions you must answer and a literary research essay.

As to the style and values of this course, my goal is to have informal, friendly, and stimulating classes in which you consistently attain the highest levels of learning and achievement. Thus I will encourage a positive egalitarian classroom atmosphere; our learning environment will support your voices and opinions, hopefully giving us a sense of classroom community. Although the daily atmosphere will be democratic, I reserve the right as your instructor to evaluate your work according to my own semi-perfectionist standards. Therefore, you will need to take the requirements of the class seriously and to prepare your work dutifully, carefully, and as perfectly as you can in order to do well in this class. If you don't find yourself doing as well as you'd like, please come to see me and discuss how we can work together to improve your performance.) Be aware, too, that you will need to heed the guidelines for attendance and participation; they will be applied strictly. In short, please don't assume that a relaxed and democratic classroom atmosphere means that I will relax my standards in evaluating your work or your commitment.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Commitment to this class, defined by your completion of reading assignments and your willingness to share your responses to them in class, as well as your daily attendance (105 points). As to attendance, any necessary absence from class will be excused as long as you provide written evidence of the reason for the absence (for example, a bill from Student Health indicating you were seen there around class time; a

repair bill from a service station proving that your car broke down and you couldn't make it to class; a letter from your advisor explaining that you and other students were participating in an important fieldtrip.) Please note: a verbal excuse from you is not sufficient to excuse an absence; neither is an e-mail message from you before or after your absence. ,

Unexcused absences will affect your grade. As the table below shows, your participation in class will offset your absences, depending on how much you share in class every day.

How Your Commitment-to-Class Grade Will Be Calculated
(Maximum = 10 points, with 1 extra credit point available for perfect attendance)

Points earned; Number of unexcused absences w/daily, insightful participation; Number of unexcused absences w/ regular helpful participation; Number of unexcused absences w/ occasional or no participation

11 pts. (+1 extra credit) With 0 absences

10 points; With 1 absence; With 0 absences; With 0 absences

9 points; With 2-3 absences; With 1-2 absences; With 1 absence

8 points; With 4 absences; With 3 absences; With 2 absences

7 points; With 5 absences; With 4 absences; With 3 absences

6 points; With 6 absences; With 5 absences; With 4 absences

5 points; With 7 absences; With 6 absences; With 5 absences

4 points; With 8 absences; With 7 absences; With 6 absences

3 points; With 9 absences; With 8 absences; With 7 absences

2 points; With 10 absences; With 9 absences; With 8 absences

1 points; With 11 absences; With 10 absences; With 9 absences

0 points; With 12+ absences; With 11+ absences; With 10+

absences

2. Completion of four sets of study questions on each novel (60 points total, from 15 points each for four assignments). As we begin each unit, I will give you the study questions for the novels we'll read during the unit. You in turn will need to answer these questions and submit your answers by the last class period we spend on the unit. Each study guide will have eight to ten questions for you to answer. Submit your short answers (about one paragraph, or three to five sentences per question) in typewritten form (double or single-spaced) on the due-date stipulated.

3. One literary research essay (30 points). During the second half of the semester, you'll be doing research on one of the novels that interests you. This research will culminate in your production of a literary research essay. To produce this paper, take the following steps: a) Identify any novel from our reading list that you want to write about. b) Read or re-read the novel, taking note of original insights you may have or patterns you've observed within the novel that interest you. c) Read the general guidelines for writing about literature that are distributed with the essay assignment. d) Carefully read through and make sure you understand the advice on "Writing a Literature Paper," a website sponsored by the University of Michigan's English department (available at <<http://www.umd.umich.edu/casilhumlengljonsmithlwriting.html>>). e) Read the Online Writing Lab guidelines for writing literary research papers at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gi_lit.html. f) Do research in the library and on the internet on your chosen novel. Feel free also to draw from the introductions, supplementary materials, and appendices

included with the texts of some of our novels, like *My Antonia*.

9) Incorporate your research into a typed double-spaced 6-page minimum research paper with an attached bibliography page. Follow the guidelines on "MLA Format" from the link on my website for documenting your sources correctly. h)

Remember: your purpose in incorporating research into your paper should be to illuminate the novel and how you view it. Work to integrate your research findings with an overall view of the story and its meaning for you, as explained in your paper and conceptualized in step b) above

REQUIREMENTS' POLICIES, AND BITS OF FRIENDLY ADVICE (arranged alphabetically):

Attendance: Come to class! This class will only be profitable to you if you make a serious, mature commitment to it. This means attending class regularly and bringing the relevant text with you. In my classes, bad grades almost invariably correlate with a poor attendance record. For rules on attendance, see "Class Requirements and Assignments, above.

Cell phone and pager courtesy: Be thoughtful. While cell phones and pagers make life safer and more convenient for students and teachers alike, they can be disruptive in the classroom. As a courtesy to me and your fellow students, please turn your cell phones and pagers off or use a silent signal while in class.

Disabilities: Let me know if you have special needs and I will accommodate them. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation to participate in this class, please let me know. You should also make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (2934700).

Editing: Edit your work carefully before you submit it Always, careful editing makes your work more readable. And although your writing and editing competencies will not affect the grades you earn on the four study guides, they will significantly influence the grades you earn on your required research essay. Evaluating that paper, I will take note of any grammar, diction (meaning "word choice" or"word usagen), punctuation, spelling, and proofreading mistakes I find and subtract points accordingly. Note: A glossary of terms and symbols I will use in assessing your grammar, diction, mechanics, punctuation, and proofreading will be given to you when I return your first study guides.

Emergencies or health crises: Call student life. If you encounter an emergency situation or serious health problem in the course of the semester—and I sincerely hope you don't—you or your family should immediately contact the Office of Student Life in E. Moore Hall (293-5611). The Dean of Student Life will then communicate with me concerning your problem and authorize me to make any necessary arrangements for you to complete this course. Note: please reserve the Dean's services for serious circumstances or emergencies; don't go there for minor problems or everyday excuses.

Grading criteria: Keep the following standards in mind as you do the required work in English 235. For your study question responses, I'll be using a 15-point scale that represents the following values:

13.5 - 15 points ~ Excellent responses. All your answers are substantive, thoughtful, and represent close and accurate readings of the assigned works.

12 - 13.35 points ~ Good responses. While one or two of your answers may not be entirely accurate, your work is solid, conscientious, and carefully done.

10.5 - 11.85 points ~ Satisfactory responses. More than two of your answers may not be accurate, but overall your effort and the thoroughness with which you have responded to the questions are suitable.

9 - 10.35 points - Less than average work. Your answers are hasty, lacking in effort, inaccurate, or sloppy. However, they are all present and accounted for.

<9 points ~ Inadequate work. Your answers are substantially inaccurate, superficial, incomplete, and/or they demonstrate inadequate engagement with the questions and the novels under consideration.

Note the criteria that will be used to judge your literary research essay, below. To calculate how many points you've earned on the essay, I'll transfer your earned grade (e.g. a 92) to a 30-point scale (where a 92 would become a 27.60):

A (90 - 100) ~ Excellent work. The essay is clearly organized, with strong evidence supporting the analysis and research claims. The paper requires no substantive and only minor stylistic revisions. Its insight and understanding are clearly superior. The research is abundant, well-documented, well-integrated, and convincing.

B (80 - 89) - Good work. The essay shows a solid understanding of the novel and the concepts required to analyze and research it. The paper may be partially incomplete, involve weak evidence (or lack thereof), or demonstrate organizational problems. The research may be somewhat

superficial or weak. Some small revisions are required to content and/or to style.

C (70 - 79) - Satisfactory work. The essay shows effort by the student, but the demonstrated understanding of the novel and/or the research completed for the essay is incomplete, includes inappropriate evidence or a lack of evidence, or shows significant difficulties with organization. Written work requires significant substantive or stylistic revisions.

D (60 - 69) - Less than average work. The written assignment shows some lack of effort and engagement with the assignment, or a misunderstanding of the terms of the assignment. The essay lacks substance (analysis, evidence, organization, research); many substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary.

F (<60) - Inadequate work. The relevant assignment for the course has not been completed; or written work shows a significant lack of effort as well as lack of engagement with the subject matter of the course. Analysis, evidence, and organization are absent from the paper, which needs to be completely reconceived in order to be acceptable.

Incompletes: Request an incomp/ete on/y in the case of an end-of-the-semester catastrophe. WVU policy does not allow professors to give incompletes to students unless those students have satisfactorily completed almost all the work of the course and are prevented from finishing the course by some kind of personal catastrophe (for example, hospitalization, death of a parent). Only under these circumstances, verified by the Dean of Student Life, will I grant you an "I." (See above, "Emergencies or Health Crises.")

Late work: Get your work in on time (but better /ate than

never). In this course, all assignments are due on the dates indicated on the syllabus and/or on the assignment sheet. If you cannot be in class that day, your work is due in my mailbox during class-time. That being said, it is better to submit a late assignment and earn partial credit than it is to submit nothing and earn no credit. Assignments turned in late (after the due-date) will be penalized on full letter grade unless you have made advance arrangements with me or show me a written excuse validating your absence from class on the due-date. Additional letter grades will be subtracted if the work becomes more than one week late, depending on how late it is. The only exception to the "better late than never" rule is the deadline of Friday, April 30 for all work to be completed for this class. As noted on the class schedule, below, that is the day all your work is due, with the possible exception of your Unit 4 study guide. If you asked for an extension on that study guide, your work is due no later than Monday, May 2, at 4:45 p.m. in my English office mailbox (231 Stansbury) or in my office (350 Stansbury).

Plagiarism: Don't take the lazy way out Talking over your ideas and getting comments on your writing from friends are NOT examples of plagiarism. Copying or paraphrasing a friend's work is. So is taking someone else's published or unpublished words and calling them your own; a synonym is academic dishonesty. This is true whether the text being "borrowed" is from the internet or in hard-copy form. When plagiarism amounts to an attempt to deceive, it has dire consequences, as spelled out in University regulations.

Questions about grades: Phone or visit, don't email. Due primarily to confidentiality concerns, I will not respond via e-

mail to requests for information about grades, either during the semester or after final course grades have been issued. If you want to discuss any grade with me, please contact me by phone or set up an office appointment.

Returned papers: Keep ALL your work. Hopefully, the work you do throughout the semester will build on itself. For example, you may be able to build on an answer to a study question on The Castle of Otranto as you write your literary research essay. Thus you should store everything you write in a folder; don't throw anything away!

Social justice: Let's maintain high standards of respect in the classroom. West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I share that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin; neither should we. Any suggestions on how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

(All the assignments on this schedule are subject to change, depending on how the semester goes.)

ALL CAPS = Assignment due OR Holiday

Week 1 (January 12-16)

Monday: Introductions, buy texts

Unit 1: The Shape and Development of the Novel

Wednesday: British Museum, chs. 1 through 3

UNIT 1 STUDY GUIDES DISTRIBUTED

Friday: British Museum, chs. 4 through 5

Week 2 (January 19 - 23)

Monday: NO SCHOOL: WE REMEMBER DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Wednesday: British Museum, to the end.

Friday: Oroonoko, 34 through 56

Week 3 (January 26 - 30)

Monday Oroonoko, 56 through 78

Wednesday: Oroonoko, to the end. STUDY GUIDE #1 DUE

Unit 2: Gothic and Victorian Novels

Friday: The Castle of Otranto, chapter 1

UNIT 2 STUDY GUIDES DISTRIBUTED

Week 4 (February 2 - 6)

Monday: The Castle of Otranto, chapters 2 through 3

Wednesday: The Castle of Otranto, chapter 4 to the end.

Friday: Jane Eyre, Vol. I, chs. 1 through 4

Week 5 (February 9 -13)

Monday: Jane Eyre, Vol. 1, chs. 5 through 10

Wednesday: Jane Eyre, Vol 1, chs. 11 through 13

Friday: Jane Eyre, Vol. 1, ch. 14 through Vol. II, ch. 1

Week 6 (February 16 - 20)

Monday: Jane Eyre, Vol. II, chs. 2 through 5

Wednesday: Jane Eyre, Vol. II, chs. 6 through 8

Friday: Jane Eyre, Vol. II, chs. 9 through 11

Week 7 (February 23 - 27*) ~February 27 is the middle of the semester; midterm grades are due March 2.

Monday: Jane Eyre, Vol. III, chs. 1 through 4

Wednesday: Jane Eyre, Vol. III, chs. 5 through 8

Friday: Jane Eyre, Vol. III, ch. 9 to the end. STUDY GUIDE #2

DUE

Unit 3: The Modernist Novel in America and Britain

Week 8 (March 1 - 5)

Monday: My Antonia, Book I, I through XI

UNIT 3 STUDY GUIDES DISTRIBUTED

Wednesday: My Antonia, Book I, XIV through Book I, end

Friday: My Antonia, Book II, I through Book II, XIV

Week 9 (March 8 - 12)

Monday: My Antonia, Book II, X through end of Book III

Wednesday: My Antonia, Books IV, V (to end).

Friday: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, pp. 3 through 39

Week 10 (March 15- 19)

HAPPY SPRING BREAK! Please read Portrait of the Artist while you're frolicking.

Week 11 (March 22 - 26)

Monday: Portrait, pp. 40 through 146

RESEARCH ESSAY ASSIGNED

Wednesday: Portrait, pp. 146 through 187

Friday: Portrait, pp. 188 through 235

Week 12 (March 29 - April 2)

Monday: Portrait, p. 236 to the end. UNIT 3 STUDY GUIDES

DUE

Unit 4: Ideology, Irony, and Indeterminacy in the Novel: the Mid- to Late 20th Century

Wednesday: The Violent Bear It Away, pp. 1 through 48

UNIT 4 STUDY GUIDES DISTRIBUTED

Friday: The Violent Bear It Away, pp. 48 through 93

Week 13 (April 5 - 9)

Monday: The Violent Bear It Away, pp. 97 through 147

PRECIS FOR RESEARCH ESSAY DUE

Wednesday: The Violent Bear It Away pp. 149 -177

Friday: NO CLASS: FRIDAY BEFORE EASTER HOLIDAY

Week 14 (April 12- 16)

Monday: Song of Solomon, pp. 3 through 35

Wednesday: Song of Solomon, pp. 35 through 62

Friday: Song of Solomon, pp. 35 through 62

Week 15 (April 19 - 23)

Monday: Song of Solomon, pp. 63 through 112

RESEARCH ESSAY DUE

Wednesday: Song of Solomon, pp. 113 through 151

Friday: Song of Solomon, pp. 152 through 186

Week 16 (April 26 - 30)

Monday: Song of Solomon, pp. 186 through 249

Wednesday: Song of Solomon, pp. 250 through 292

Friday: Song of Solomon, pp. 292 through end. UNIT 4 STUDY GUIDES DUE.

Please note: No work will be accepted for this class past this date, Friday, April 30, unless you have been given an extension on the Unit 4 study questions. If you have an extension on the Unit 4 study guide, that work is due no later than Monday, May 3, at 4:45 p.m. in my English office mailbox (231 Stansbury) or in my office (350 Stansbury).

Finals Week (May 3 - 7)

Please note: There will be no final exam in this class.

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