

**ENGL 680: Introduction to Literary Research**  
Spring 2016 W 4:00-6:50 G06 Colson

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**Overview**

English 680, Introduction to Literary Research, is designed to introduce students to the research and writing skills necessary for advanced study in English. While research and writing skills will continue to be developed in other courses, this course provides an explicit foundation for understanding the expectations for and forms of research. The Graduate Program Committee has specified that ENGL 680 cover three areas:

**Research methods:** locating, evaluating, and incorporating information from a variety of primary and secondary sources

**Genres of academic writing:** understanding the expectations conventions of academic genres

**Textual studies:** understanding the technologies of the transmission of texts

For the first two-thirds of the class, we will use Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* as a common text from which to work on these areas. In the final third of the class, you will use the skills you've developed in research methods and textual studies to work on a final project on a text of your choice, subject to my approval.

**Required texts**

*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. MLA, 2009. 9781603290241  
Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Ed. William Peden. 1955. U of North Carolina P, 1996. 9780807845882  
Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Ed. Frank Shuffelton. Penguin, 1999. 9780140436679  
William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbott. *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*. 4th edition. MLA, 2009. 9781603290401  
Several journal articles as listed on the schedule, available electronically through WVU libraries.

**Policies regarding late work and attendance**

Except for extraordinary circumstances, late work will not be accepted. If you must miss class, email me before class, attaching the work that is due that day.  
If you must miss class (for contagious illness, emergency, etc.), please notify me ahead of time and provide documentation. For every unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered by one letter. We will follow WVU policy for cancellation on account of weather.

**Assignments and grading** Note: all work must be documented using MLA style. Further specifications for each assignment will be given separately.

Quiz on Williams and Abbott. 5 points

Research assignments as follows:

1. Enumerative bibliography of *Notes* and report on dissemination of *Notes* in contemporary periodicals. 10 points
2. Excerpt from *Notes* prepared for a classroom anthology, with commentary. 10 points
3. Annotated bibliography of primary sources on a topic from *Notes*. 5 points
4. Report on the place of *Notes* in literary history. 10 points
5. "Meta" book review in Jefferson studies. 10 points

Final project on the transmission of a text, consisting of the following:

- Abstract and annotated bibliography for final paper. 5 points
- Presentation of final paper. 5 points
- Final conference-length paper (8 pp. plus works cited). 40 points

### **Books on reserve at Wise library**

For the first part of the course, many of the books you'll need are in the reference section (non-circulating). The following books from the circulating section have been placed on course reserve:

Kevin Hayes, ed., *Oxford Handbook to Early American Literature*.

Frank Shuffelton, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Thomas Jefferson*.

If you use other books from the circulating section of the library that you think will be of general interest, please consider carefully re-shelving them rather than checking them out, so they will be available to your fellow students.

## Schedule

| Date | Topic  | Reading  | Work Due  |
|------|--|--|---|
| 1/13 | Course introduction;<br><i>Library orientation led by Kelly Diamond: Library room 1036 @ 5:30 (bring laptop)</i>                 |  |   |
| 1/20 | Textual studies  | Williams and Abbot   | In-class quiz   |
| 1/27 | Textual studies  | Shuffelton ed., <i>Notes</i><br>Peden ed., <i>Notes</i>  |   |
| 2/3  | <i>4:00 in Rare Book Room (library, 6<sup>th</sup> floor), session led by Stewart Plein.</i><br>→ Reconvene in G06 Colson @ 5:30 | Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?' Revisited," <i>Modern Intellectual History</i> 4.3 (2007): 495-508.<br><a href="https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/3403039">https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/3403039</a>   | RA1: bibliog of <i>Notes</i> and report on periodical dissemination         |
| 2/10 | Textual studies – conversation with Christopher Hager  |  | RA2: anthology excerpt of <i>Notes</i> with apparatus                       |
| 2/17 | Contexts for research: literary histories; primary and secondary source bibliographies   | Eric Slauter, "History, Literature, and the Atlantic World," <i>Early American Literature</i> 43.1 (2008): 153-86.<br>Alison Games, "Atlantic History and Interdisciplinary Approaches";<br>Bryan Waterman, "From Text/Context to 'Situatedness'";<br>Eliga Gould, "Atlantic History and the Literary Turn";<br>Elizabeth Dillon, "Atlantic Practices," <i>Early American Literature</i> 43.1 (2008): 187-210. |   |
| 2/24 | Contexts for research: formulating research questions  | Eric Slauter, "Revolutions in the Meaning and Study of Politics," <i>American Literary History</i> 22.2 (2010), 325-40.<br>Michael Rothberg, "Quantifying Culture?" <i>American Literary History</i> 22.2 (2010), 341-46.<br>Franco Moretti, "Graphs, Maps, and Trees—1," <i>New Left Review</i> 24 (Nov./Dec. 2003), 67-93.   | RA3: annotated bibliography of primary sources on a topic from <i>Notes</i> |

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Reading</b>   | <b>Work Due</b>  |
|-------------|---|--|--|
| 3/2         | Academic genres: book reviews   | Sample book reviews (photocopied)  | RA4: place of <i>Notes</i> in literary history   |
| 3/9         | Academic genres: abstracts; annotated bibliographies; conference papers | Sample abstracts, annotated bibliographies (photocopied)                       |  |
| 3/16        | No meeting  | Book reviews for RA5   | RA5: "meta" book review in Jefferson studies   |
| 3/23        | Spring break  |  |  |
| 3/30        | Textual studies revisited: final project                                | John Bryant, "Rewriting <i>Moby-Dick</i> ," <i>PMLA</i> 125.4 (2010): 1043-60. |  |
| 4/6         | Final project: presentation of abstracts                                |  | Final project: abstract + annotated bibliography   |
| 4/13        | Individual conferences on work in progress                              |  |  |
| 4/20        | Workshop on drafts  | Drafts (in class)  | Final project: copies of draft for peer workshop, including complete list of works cited |
| 4/27        | Final project: presentation   |  | Final project: presentation  |

**Final draft of paper due Monday, May 2**