

ENGL 680: Introduction to Literary Research

Spring 2015 R 4:00-6:50 G06 Colson

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213 Colson

Office Hours TR 3:00-4:00 and by appointment

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Overview

English 680, Introduction to Literary Research, is designed to introduce first-year Master's degree 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, while a case study assignment on a text of your choice will give us a range of examples of textual production and transmission: see RA3 below. 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 that builds your work for RA3.

Required texts

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. MLA, 2009. 9781603290241

James L. Harner. *Literary Research Guide: An Annotated Listing of Reference Sources in English Literary Studies*. 5th edition. MLA, 2008. 9780873528085

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

Seven research assignments, as follows:

1. Report on access to *Notes* via electronic databases held by WVU libraries. 5 points
2. Report on the dissemination of *Notes* in periodicals, with commentary. 5 points
3. Case study of transmission of a text, with materials for presentation. 10 points
4. Comparison between the Peden and Shuffelton editions of Jefferson's *Notes*, focusing textual variants. 10 points
5. Report on the place of Jefferson's *Notes* in literary history. 10 points
6. Report on recent directions in Jefferson studies. 15 points
7. "Meta" book review: critical comparison of reviews of a book in a field of your choice (ideally related to work you did for RA3). 5 points

Final project that builds on the work you did for RA3, 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). 25 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
1/15	Course introduction; <i>Library orientation led by Kelly Diamond: move to Library room 136 @ 5:30</i>		
1/22	Textual studies	Shuffelton ed., <i>Notes</i> Peden ed., <i>Notes</i>	RA1: access to <i>Notes</i> in electronic databases
1/29	Textual studies	Williams and Abbot	In-class quiz on W and A
2/5	<i>4:00 in Rare Book Room (library, 6th floor), session led by Stewart Plein.</i> → Reconvene in G06 Colson @ approx. 5:30	Shuffelton ed., <i>Notes</i> Peden ed., <i>Notes</i>	RA2: dissemination of <i>Notes</i> in periodicals.
2/12	Textual studies: presentations of case studies	John Bryant, "Rewriting <i>Moby-Dick</i> ," <i>PMLA</i> 125.4 (2010): 1043-60.	RA3: case study of transmission of a text + presentation
2/19	class does not meet		RA4: comparison of Peden and Shuffelton editions of <i>Notes</i> focusing on variants (email this to me)
2/26	Contexts for research	Harner (esp. section Q)	RA5: report on place of <i>Notes</i> in literary history
3/5	Contexts for research	Eric Slauter, "Revolutions in the Meaning and Study of Politics," <i>American Literary History</i> 22.2 (2010), 325-40. Michael Rothberg, "Quantifying Culture?" <i>American Literary History</i> 22.2 (2010), 341-46. Franco Moretti, "Graphs, Maps, and Trees—1," <i>New Left Review</i> 24 (Nov./Dec. 2003), 67-93.	

Date	Topic	Reading	Work Due
3/12	Contexts for research	Eric Slauter, "History, Literature, and the Atlantic World," <i>Early American Literature</i> 43.1 (2008): 153-86. Alison Games, "Atlantic History and Interdisciplinary Approaches"; Bryan Waterman, "From Text/Context to 'Situatenedness'"; Eliga Gould, "Atlantic History and the Literary Turn"; Elizabeth Dillon, "Atlantic Practices," <i>Early American Literature</i> 43.1 (2008): 187-210	
3/19	Academic genres: book reviews	Sample book reviews (photocopied)	RA6: report on recent directions in Jefferson studies
3/26	Spring break		
4/2	Academic genres: abstracts; annotated bibliographies; conference papers	Sample abstracts, annotated bibliographies (photocopied)	RA7: "meta" book review
4/9	Presentation of abstracts		Final project: abstract + annotated bibliography
4/16	Individual conferences on work in progress		
4/23	Workshop on drafts	Peer drafts (in class)	Final project: draft of final paper for peer workshop, including complete list of works cited
4/30	Presentation of final projects		Final project: presentation

Final draft of paper due Monday, May 4