

ENGL 680: Introduction to Literary Research

Spring 2011 T 4:00-6:50 G06 Colson

Tim Sweet

105 Colson

Office Hours T 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

This term, we will use Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* as a common primary text from which to work on these areas. Reports on case studies in textual scholarship will open the research context to other fields of British and American literature. In the final project, we will return to Jefferson studies or a closely related research context.

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. 9780140436677

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

Eight research assignments, as follows:

1. Report on access to *Notes* via WVU electronic databases. 5 points
2. Comparison between Peden and Shuffelton editions of Jefferson's *Notes*, focusing textual variants. 10 points
3. Enumerative bibliography of all editions of *Notes*, with commentary. 5 points
4. Case study of transmission of a text, plus handouts for presentation. 10 points
5. Report on WVU library holdings from the sub-section of Harner pertinent to the case presented in RA4. 5 points
6. Report on recent major directions in Jefferson studies. 15 points
7. Critique of a book review in Jefferson studies. 5 points
8. Report on web presence of topic for your final project. 5 points

Final project, consisting of the following:

- Abstract and annotated bibliography for final paper. 10 points
- Presentation of final paper. 5 points
- Final paper on topic of your choice in Jefferson studies or a related research context (8 pp. plus works cited). 20 points

Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Work Due
1/11	Course introduction; Library orientation led by Kelly Diamond: <i>move to Library room 136 @ 5:30</i>		
1/18	Textual studies	Shuffelton ed., <i>Notes</i> Peden ed., <i>Notes</i>	RA1: report on access to <i>Notes</i> via WVU electronic databases
1/25	Textual studies	Williams and Abbot	In-class quiz on W and A
2/1	Textual studies	Shuffelton ed., <i>Notes</i> Peden ed., <i>Notes</i>	RA2: comparison of Peden and Shuffelton editions of <i>Notes</i> focusing on variants
2/8	<i>4:00 in Rare Book Room (library, 6th floor), session led by Harold Forbes. → Reconvene in G06 Colson (approx. 5:30)</i>		RA3: enumerative bibliography of all editions of <i>Notes</i> + comments
2/15	Textual studies: presentations of case studies	John Bryant, "Rewriting <i>Moby-Dick</i> ," <i>PMLA</i> 125.4 (Oct. 2010): 1043-60.	RA4: case study of transmission of a text + presentation
2/22	Contexts for research	Harner	RA5: report on WVU library holdings from section of Harner re. your RA4
3/1	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
3/8	Contexts for research	Michael Hardt, "Jefferson and Democracy," <i>American Quarterly</i> 59.1 (2007), 41-77. Betsy Erkkila, "Radical Jefferson," <i>American Quarterly</i> 59.2 (2007), 277-89. Barry Shank, "Jefferson, the Impossible," <i>American Quarterly</i> 59.2 (2007), 291-99.	
3/15	Academic genres: book reviews	Sample book reviews (photocopied)	RA6: report on recent directions in Jefferson studies
3/22	Spring break		
3/29	Academic genres: abstracts; annotated bibliographies' conference papers	Sample abstract, annotated bibliography (photocopied)	RA7: critique of a book review in Jefferson studies
4/5	Presentation of abstracts		Final project: abstract + annotated bibliography for final paper
4/12	Media contexts for early texts		RA8: report and presentation on the web presence of your topic
4/19	Workshop on drafts	Peer drafts (in class)	Final project: draft of final paper for workshop, including full list of works cited
4/26	Presentation of final projects		Final project: presentation

Final draft of paper due Friday, April 29