

“Women’s Literature”
ENGLISH 262 - section 1
Winter 2004

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 11:30am – 12:45pm
(or by appointment)

Course Credit Value: 3

Course Prerequisites: English 150 and 160

A basic competence with grammar, punctuation and spelling is expected for all English courses at the 200 level; these elements will factor into the grading of essays and exams.

The instructor will expect to see the standard essay format, as it is taught in English 150, in the essays and final exam for this course. She will also be using, and expecting an understanding of, the literary terminology explained in English 160. Very little lecture time will be devoted to discussion either of these topics. If you are not confident in your essay writing ability or your familiarity with literary analysis, you will want to postpone your enrollment in English 262.

Required Texts:

<u>Course Pack for English 262.</u>	[Approx. \$30]
Morrison, Toni. <u>Beloved.</u>	[Approx. \$20]
Woolf, Virginia. <u>A Room of One’s Own.</u>	[Approx. \$10]

Recommended Texts:

A good Dictionary (Oxford, Webster’s ...)

A good Thesaurus (Roget’s ...)

Calendar Description

Students analyze works from a variety of genres and periods by women of various nationalities and ethnicities. Attention is paid to recurring themes, socio-historical context, and feminist theories. Students participate in class

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discussions, compose critical essays, and write a final exam. Assignments range from 500-1500 words, and total 3000-5000 words.

Learning Outcomes

When reading works written by such important authors as Woolf, Chopin, Rich, Atwood, and Walker, as well as works by many lesser known authors, students will consider meaning, make and support inferences, and evaluate the works. Students will

- *evaluate works from a variety of genres (including poetry, short fiction, essay and novel) to determine the relevance of the conventions of that genre
- *analyze works from different periods of history to determine the effect of social context on women's writing
- *identify the various nationalities, ethnicities, socio-economic groups and sexual orientations from which women write in order to determine personal influences on a work

When discussing literature, students will be develop and communicate responses and interpretations using a variety of critical methods and resources. Students will

- *identify the relevance of the authors' socio-historical context to their works
- *discuss themes in order to determine and account for dominant or recurring ideas
- *describe works according to the concepts provided by feminist theorists
- *compare and contrast works and authors according to style, theme and use of literary devices

When writing about literature, students will be expected to explain, support, and illustrate their interpretations of the works in essays and a final exam. Students will

- *support claims with relevant textual evidence
- *document sources using current MLA conventions

Instructor's Approach

Through these works, we will be exploring what it means -- to various women -- to be a woman. Besides exploring how gender and society interact, we will work at gaining insight into the interior world of women. For instance, how do we approach life events, ourselves, each other? Along with analyzing the works, we will be using the experiences presented in the works as a starting point to reflect upon our own experiences, whether similar or different.

It is also my hope that this course will help extend your appreciation for, and enjoyment of, literature by women. Ideally, you will come away with the desire and confidence required to continue to individually pursue it as a means of pleasure and enlightenment.

Assignments:

Author and Work Presentation	10%
Room of One's Own Journal	10%
Essay #1 (1000 – 1500 words)	25%
Essay #2 (1000 – 1500 words)	25%
Final Exam - novel (approx. 1000 words)	30%

	100%

* all dates are subject to change*

[Printed instructions for the essays are available in the *Reading* package.
Assignment details will be discussed in class in advance of the due dates]

Evaluation:

A+ = 95-100%	B- = 70-74%
A = 90-94%	C+ = 65-69%

A- = 85-89%

B+ = 80-84%

B = 75-79%

C = 60-64%

D = 50-59%

F = below 50%

Grades for all assignments will be given in percentages.
These percentages will be tallied and translated into a letter grade
at the end of the course.

SPECIAL NOTE: Be sure to keep all rough drafts and marked material

Late Assignments:

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates specified.
- 10% per day (incl. Saturday and Sunday) will be deducted for lateness.
- Nothing will be accepted after 5 days past the due date.
- Requests for extensions will only be considered under special circumstances, and only if the request is made in advance of the due date.

Missed Exam:

Unless you can prove a medical emergency (i.e./ with a doctor's note), exams must be written in class on the date specified. A missed exam (without a note) will result in a grade of zero. The final exam cannot be re-scheduled except under special circumstances, and travel plans don't count.

Readings:

As with any course, it is vitally important that you have completed all assigned readings before coming to each class. Since our class time will consist mainly of group discussion, you must also have read the assigned works thoroughly enough to be able to intelligently participate in that discussion.

Attendance:

It is quite impossible for you to do well in this course if you do not regularly attend. Class time is your opportunity to clarify and articulate your ideas, responses and understanding of the works. Moreover, the essays and final exam will be based on the material discussed during class time. If you find it necessary to miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and complete the homework before the next class. Arriving late to class is also very disruptive to group work and class presentations. Finally, although you may decide not to come to class occasionally, repeated absences or lateness will result in my request that you drop the course.

Participation:

Class participation is not only encouraged, it is expected. It is my intention to see that everyone remains active and interested in class discussion. In no way should it be assumed, however, that the loudest (or most frequently heard) voice always wins. Appropriate participation not only means speaking independently and occasionally acting as spokesperson for your group, but also sharing within your group and encouraging others to do both as well. Similarly, it is important to remember that the study of literature does not demand a vote, and it is not necessary to compete to persuade others to change their minds. Our goal is to listen to everyone and be heard by everyone. In short, our goal is to share, not necessarily to agree.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the conscious theft and/or use of another person's ideas and/or words. When you do not clearly identify the source of your information, you are implying

that those thoughts or phrases are your own. This is a very serious offense and will be dealt with severely. At the very least, it will result in a mark of zero for the assignment. If you do not fully understand how to avoid plagiarism, or if you have any specific concerns, I will be more than happy to help you.