Course Title and Number: English 203: Writing about Literature
Instructor: Professor Christine Murray
Contact Information: 358 LAAH
Office Hours:
Term:
Class Meeting
Times/Location:

Catalog Course Description:
Engl. 203. Writing about Literature. (3-0) Credit 3. Enhancement of communication and persuasive skills through the study of literature and audience; appropriate genres, thematic issues (social, individual, ethical) and critical approaches to literature; exploration of literacy skills as these involve professional levels of command in the oral, aural, visual and written analysis and interpretation of literature.

Course Description:
English 203 introduces students to communicating persuasively about literature, for the purpose of enhancing skills in academic and professional communication. Learning goals are, to consider the effects of messages, foster understanding, and improve skills necessary to communicate persuasively on issues raised and elaborated by literature from social, individual, and ethical perspectives. The course focuses on texts drawn from various historical periods while also representing a variety of literary genres (drama, novel, short story, poetry, autobiography, film). Students will work to develop the critical thinking skills that lead to persuasive communication that interprets literature and provides the richest possible evaluative reading and writing experience by completing assignments in writing, analytical reading, and presentations based on the principles of visual rhetoric as applied to literature and/or films. The course provides extensive study and practice in argumentation techniques, considering differing audiences as applied to writing about literature and involving a professional level of command in oral, aural, written and visual literacy skill.

Learning Outcomes:
At the end of the semester, students will be able to do the following:
- Communicate clearly on key issues, themes, and ideas expressed multi-modally in and about literature: in forms involving oral, aural, visual and written assignments
- Identify major authors, works, and critical approaches regarding literature
- Communicate clearly and persuasively to demonstrate critical thinking about principle themes and ideas in literature
- Communicate clearly to foster understanding in grouped team-work assignments
- Research, synthesize, analyze, write and present orally to communicate clear persuasive ideas interpreting literature and its social, individualized, and ethical ideas and contexts
- Ethically synthesize, cite and document ideas and sources in all forms of presentation about literature

Core Curriculum Objectives:
- Critical Thinking Skills (CTS): The course will enhance critical thinking skills through regular reading of literature, presentations on the reading (aural skill building), through class discussion (including multi-modal visual, oral, and Power Point presentations), and extensive writing assignments focused on critical approaches to analysis and interpretation of literature.
• *Communication Skills (CS):* The course promotes communication skills through small and large group discussion of major literary ideas, authors, periods, and social, individual and ethical issues central to course readings in literature and/or film (visual) and appropriate critical approaches; the course promotes communication skills through extensive, regular practice (formal assignments of argumentation about literature for multiple audiences), in persuasive forms of writing about literature.

• *Teamwork (T):* The course enhances the ability to work in teams by providing students with regular opportunities in and out of class to collaborate with classmates on relevant projects employing written skills, oral presentational skills, and classroom tasks on literature.

• *Personal Responsibility (PR):* The course teaches personal responsibility by enhancing students' understanding of how to use sources ethically while composing a persuasive argument or answer to an essay question about literature; the course teaches personal responsibility by regular practice in teams and group discussion about literary ideas and issues.

Assessment of Core Objectives:

• CTS: The assessment of critical thinking skills will be based on written work, exams, oral presentations, and/or participation in class discussions.

• CS: The assessment of communication skills will be based on written work, exams, oral presentations, and/or participation during class discussions, individually and/or in teamed groups.

• T: The assessment of teamwork ability will be based on participation in collaborative learning projects making interactive, cooperative use of differing points of view in course readings, writing assignments, and oral presentational skills to support a shared purpose or goal.

• PR: The assessment of personal responsibility will be based on assignments in which students are expected ethically to cite another person's work in composing written research essays and/or oral presentations.

Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Grade Categories/Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project 1: Essay: Critical Analysis of a Short Story</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project 2: Essay: Poetry Explication</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project 3: Essay: Play Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Writing Project 4: Essay: Researched Argument/Novel/Oral-Visual Presentation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar and Mechanics Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamed Group Work and In-class Activities: teamed group reading facilitation, rough drafts, peer review workshops, reading responses: due each week in class activities</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Teamed Group-work Rubric: In structured, predetermined roles and duties, each group member contributes equally to the whole project for an equal percentage of the overall project grade. Each group completes not only the project as given, but also a project evaluative form detailing the roles and duties of members. The grade is assessed by instructor review of the oral and multimedia presentation and the details of the individually completed project evaluative form. The emphasis of the group-work projects is on cooperation and negotiation, equally distributed work, and individual responsibility to the group and the project's final outcome. The entire class is the intended audience for the group-work presentation; each member of the audience will provide feedback according to a structured format focused to the learning goals of the group-work project, as well as strengths and areas in need of improvement (quantity and quality of preparation, quality of researched support and evidentiary materials, modes of and quality in delivery).

Grading Scale: A (90-100) B (80-89) C (70-79) D (60-69) F (0-59)
Attendance and Absenteeism: see policies in general: http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07, and policies in particular. Student Rules 7.1.6.1 and 7.1.6.2. Students are required to be in class at the stated times, and to turn in work as instructed, on the stated due dates.

Requirements: All Major Writing Projects submitted for a grade must be computer-typed and must ethically cite and document all sources in the proper MLA format. All Major Writing Projects must focus on one or more of the texts read in class and offer a close reading and interpretive analysis of the literary text(s). Overall, the Major Writing Projects comprise a minimum of 40 pages of original, formal writing (10000 words) completed outside of class.

The process of writing persuasive arguments and giving presentations about literature with attention to audience in the Major Writing Projects includes: 1. prewriting and drafting with focus on various audience perspectives; 2. an introduction with a thesis statement and summary of main points to be discussed in the essay; 3. the middle section of interpretive analysis and persuasion where all points stated in the introduction are developed and appropriately supported with all sources ethically cited; 4. an original and fitting conclusion to the essay. 5. a proper MLA formatted Works Cited page where all sources are ethically included and properly documented. 6. One presentation of a Major Writing Project (Final Research Paper: on the novel), incorporating oral delivery, visual and aural examples, interpretive analysis and clear communication of ideas with the aim of persuasion. Student essays will go through at least one team-worked peer review in each Unit of the course.

Grades for essays are based on clarity and persuasiveness of argument, use of visual and aural examples in presentation, knowledge of the literary text(s), accurate citation of sources; and appropriate use of grammar, and mechanics. Research assignments in English 203 will use a variety of materials, print and electronic. Printed sources must be consulted and ethically integrated into the paper in proper MLA formatting for citing of sources. Students will be required to submit copies of any research sources used, notes and drafts with the final revision of the essays.

Reading assignments and peer review require critical thinking and response: Students will also need to apply critical thinking to their own work, revising with the goal of communicating ideas as clearly as possible. Daily practice in critical forms of writing about literature will be a vital part of the course. Students are expected to participate in collaborative, team work activities and class discussion, and to write during every class. Overall, the Major Writing Project assignments will emphasize the core objectives: critical thinking, communication skills, peer review team-work, and personal responsibility for original thought and the ethical citation of all sources. Through collaborative peer review exercises, the Major Writing Projects will provide practice in the core curriculum objective of Team Work.

Make-up work for absences is only acceptable with university-approved documentation. Other reasons for late work are unacceptable and will be graded as zero. See university policies at http://student-rules.tamu.edu

Textbook and Resource Material:

By enrolling in this course, you accept responsibility for purchasing all required textbooks and materials. Failure to purchase them will not be accepted as an excuse for late, missing, or incomplete assignments.

- Four standard-sized file folders with which to compile paper-based portfolios of all draft materials and final submissions of the 4 major writing projects (see below)
## Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Reading/ Assignments due</th>
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| 1    | **Critical Analysis of the Short Story**  
- Reading Literature  
- Responding in Writing to Literature | Introductions/ Syllabus  
Gardner, readings Parts 1 and 4  
Writing Argument in Response to Literature |
| 2    |  
- Plot and Setting  
- Character and Symbol  
- Point of View | Gardner, readings, Parts 1 and 4 |
| 3    |  
- Setting and Symbol  
- Theme | Gardner, readings Parts 1 and 4 |
| 4    |  
- Tone and Irony  
- Team Work Peer Review | Gardner, readings Parts 1 and 4  
**Due: Portfolio 1** |
| 5 | **Poetry Explication**  
  - Close Reading of Poetry: Who Is Speaking?  
  - Reading Aloud  
  - Sound, Rhythm and Meter | Gardner readings, Parts 2 and 4 |
|---|---|
| 6 | **Poetic Voice(s) and Figurative Language** | Gardner readings, Parts 2 and 4  
**Due: Grammar and Mechanics Exercises** |
| 7 | **The Forms of Poetry**  
  - Writing about Poetry  
  - Team Work Peer Review | Gardner readings, Parts 2 and 4  
**Due: Portfolio 2** |
| 8 | **Analysis of Drama**  
  - Delivery, Dialogue, Performance | Gardner readings, Parts 3 and 4 |
| 9 | **Character, Conflict, Plot**  
  - Writing about Drama | Gardner readings, Parts 3 and 4 |
| 10 | **Stage, Scene, Setting**  
  - Team Work Peer Review | Gardner readings, Parts 3 and 4  
**Due: Portfolio 3** |
| 11 | **Critical Analysis of the Novel**  
  - Theme, Historical Context, and the Idea of Time in the novel | Readings assigned from *Frankenstein* |
<p>| 12 | <strong>Intertextuality: Dialogism, the Novel, and Discourse</strong> | Readings assigned from <em>Frankenstein</em> |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due: Portfolio 4</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 13   | • Symbolism, Influence, Mimesis and Significance—the Novel in Its Other Lives: Film and Visual Storytelling  
      • Begin Presentations  
      • Team Work Peer Review   | Readings assigned from *Frankenstein* |
| 14   | • Revising, proofreading, submitting the Final Essay  
      • Finish Presentations   |                  |

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu

**Academic Integrity**

For additional information please visit: http://www.aggiehonor.tamu.edu

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

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