

English 203-01: Writing for English Majors  
Eastern Connecticut State University  
Spring Semester, 2010  
MWF 12-12:50am, Webb 112

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Office hours: M 3-5pm; W 11am-  
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## Writing for English Majors

*Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.*  
– Sir Francis Bacon, “Of Studies” (1601)

This class is intended as an intensive introduction to the conventions of scholarly writing in the discipline of literary studies. Over the course of the semester, we will read, discuss, and write about works in the three principal forms: poetry, fiction and drama. We will also explore several of the most prominent varieties of literary criticism and theory that inform the work of scholars in English and the modern languages today. Finally, we will address methods of research in literary studies: the use of bibliographies to locate relevant criticism; strategies for reading and understanding critical work; synthesizing the views of multiple critics and bringing them to bear in your own literary analysis; and properly documenting your entrance into the scholarly conversation.

The format for this class will be a hybrid of a seminar discussion and a writing workshop. In addition to reading, discussing, and writing about literary texts, we will also discuss the *process* of writing about literature. Students will read and comment on each others’ drafts—you will both give and receive feedback on essays.

The overriding objective of this class is to help students acculturate themselves to the discipline of literary studies in English—to teach them how to think like scholars of English literature, indeed, to begin their initiation as independent scholars in that discipline. As part of that larger aim, the course has several subordinate objectives:

- 1) To help students gain facility in interpreting and writing about complex literary texts in the major genres of poetry, fiction, and drama.
- 2) To help students gain facility in understanding and assimilating the arguments of literary scholars.
  - a. To introduce students to some of the major theoretical considerations that stand behind the work of literary critics.
- 3) To help students develop strategies for independent research in literary studies and related disciplines in the humanities.

### Required texts (available at the campus bookstore)

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (W. W. Norton)  
American Poetry and Literacy Project, *101 Great American Poems* (Dover)  
Philip Smith, ed., *100 Best-loved Poems* (Dover)  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, ed. Maurice Hindle (Penguin)  
William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, ed. James Ogden (Methuen)

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard, or will be available online, accessible via the library’s research databases.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Please Note:** It is Eastern Connecticut State University's policy to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will also need to contact the Office of AccessAbility at (860) 465-5573. The Office of AccessAbility coordinates all arrangements with instructors, and I can't provide accommodations for you unless your need for them has been documented with that office.

### Written Work

There are three major papers for this class: two primarily interpretive essays of 5-7pp. each and a longer (10-12pp.) research paper. In conjunction with the research paper, you will also prepare an annotated bibliography of five scholarly sources related to your topic. For each of the papers, you will write a full first draft and then complete revisions for the final draft. Additionally, for each paper, you will submit a self-assessment (approximately two pages), in which you will discuss your sense of how the paper went—things that you believe were successful, as well as things you feel could have gone better. Though the first drafts and self-assessments will not receive separate grades, the work you do in those pieces will be a factor in the grade for each completed paper. All assignments should be submitted in either Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or rich text format (.rtf) via Blackboard.

You will provide other students with written feedback on their work. I will review the feedback that you provide your peers with an eye towards assessing the care and thoroughness with which you have read and commented on their work. (The feedback you provide other students will be factored into the participation portion of your grade for the course.)

There are clearly specified due dates for each stage of each assignment listed on the schedule below. I will only grant extensions on these deadlines in extraordinary circumstances. If you need to request an extension, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible: don't wait until the deadline has already passed. The final paper with annotated bibliography will be due Monday, May 17 (the day the Registrar's office has scheduled for a final examination).

Over the course of the semester, there will also be several brief written assignments meant to help you focus your thoughts in preparation for discussion. While these will be factored into your final grade, they aren't meant to be formal essays. To give you a sense of the scope of these pieces, I'll say that you should generally spend one hour writing them.

***A note on plagiarism:*** In the world of the university, plagiarism is a very serious offense. If I discover that you have attempted to pass off someone else's work as your own, you will receive a grade of "F" in the course. In keeping with Eastern's academic misconduct policy, I will also report instances of plagiarism to the University's judicial officer.

### Attendance and Participation

The real work of this class comes in our discussions of the texts we'll be reading and in our conversations about how to write about these texts. This is not a class where you can catch up on what you missed simply by borrowing someone else's notes: the discussion *is* the class. While I don't maintain a formal policy on numbers of absences, a pattern of absence will certainly affect your grade in the class.

📞 Please make sure your cell phone is silenced before you sit down in class. "Set on vibrate" is not the same thing as "silenced."

**Grading**

Your final grade for the course will be no lower than the grade arrived at using this formula:

Short assignments:	10%
Research assignment	10%
Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	15%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Paper 3	15%
Course Participation (including workshopping)	25%

In calculating grades, I use the grade point scale published in the University's faculty handbook (i.e. A = 4.0; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3.0; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.3; C = 2.0; C- = 1.7; D+ = 1.3; D = 1.0; F = 0).

In some cases, an assignment may receive a "slashed" grade, which will be interpreted as falling midway between the two grades on the quality point scale (e.g., "C+/B-" would equal 2.5).

**SCHEDULE**

(Some shifting may occur)

**Section I – Poetry**

Week 1	Mon	1/25	Introductions
	Wed	1/27	Thomas Gray, "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College" (handout)
	Fri	1/29	Thomas Gray, "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College" (handout)
Week 2	Mon	2/1	<b>Sound and rhythm</b> Alexander Pope, from <i>An Essay on Criticism</i>
	Wed	2/3	<b>Figurative Language</b> John Donne, "Batter my heart, three-personed God" ( <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> , p. 10) Langston Hughes, "Mother to Son" ( <i>101 Great American Poems</i> , p. 77)
	Fri	2/5	<b>Set forms (The example of the sonnet)</b> William Shakespeare, "Sonnet XVII" ( <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> , p. 6) William Wordsworth, "The World is Too Much with Us; Late and Soon" ( <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> , p. 30) Edna St. Vincent Millay, "I Will Put Chaos into Fourteen Lines" (handout)
Week 3	Mon	2/8	<b>Open forms</b> Marianne Moore, "Poetry" ( <i>101 Great American Poems</i> , pp. 65-6) Archibald Macleish, "Ars Poetica" ( <i>101 Great American Poems</i> , pp. 72-3)
	Wed	2/10	<b>Formalism/New Criticism</b> Robert Herrick, "Corinna's Going a Maying" (Blackboard) Cleanth Brooks, "What Does Poetry Communicate?" (Blackboard)
	Fri	2/12	Continuing Discussion of Brooks, "What Does Poetry Communicate?" Graff and Birkenstein, pp. xvi-15

Week 4	Mon	2/15	Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" ( <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> , pp. 17-18)
	Wed	2/17	Workshop: Strong claims
	Fri	2/19	No class (Individual Conferences)
Week 5	Mon	2/22	<b>First draft of Paper 1 due</b> Peer review of first draft of paper 1
	Wed	2/24	In-class workshop: Clarity and organization
	Fri	2/26	No class (Individual conferences)

**Section II - Fiction**

Week 6	Mon	3/1	<b>Paper 1 due</b> Workshop: Introduction to research tools
	Wed	3/3	In-class research project
	Fri	3/5	In-class research project
Week 7	Mon	3/8	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> , pp. 5-34
	Wed	3/10	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> , pp. 34-58
	Fri	3/12	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> , pp. 59-101
Week 8	Mon	3/15	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> , pp. 103-139
	Wed	3/17	NO CLASS: PROF. PAULEY AT A CONFERENCE (Finish reading <i>Frankenstein</i> !!)
	Fri	3/19	NO CLASS: PROF. PAULEY AT A CONFERENCE
SPRING BREAK (WOO HOO!)			
Week 9	Mon	3/28	Maurice Hindle, "Note on the Text" ( <i>Frankenstein</i> , pp. lviii-lxiii) Jerome J. McGann, from <i>A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism</i> Johanna M. Smith, "Hideous Progenies: Texts of <i>Frankenstein</i> " Selected passages from 1818 text of <i>Frankenstein</i>
	Wed	3/30	Marilyn Butler, " <i>Frankenstein</i> and Radical Science" Graff and Birkenstein, pp. 19-41
	Fri	4/2	Ellen Moers, from <i>Literary Women</i> Anne K. Mellor, from <i>Romanticism and Feminism</i> Graff and Birkenstein, pp. 42-51

Week 10	Mon	4/5	Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" Graff and Birkenstein, pp. 145-155
	Wed	4/7	Lawrence Lipking, " <i>Frankenstein</i> , The True Story" Graff and Birkenstein, pp. 55-91
	Fri	4/9	No class (Individual conferences)
Week 11	Mon	4/12	<b>First draft of Paper 2 due</b> Peer review of first draft of Paper 2
	Wed	4/14	In-class workshop: Structuring Graff and Birkenstein, pp. 105-120, 129-138
	Fri	4/16	No class (Individual conferences)

### Section III - Drama

Week 12	Mon	4/19	<b>Paper 2 due</b> Introduction to Drama
	Wed	4/21	William Wycherley, <i>The Country Wife</i> , Act 1
	Fri	4/23	William Wycherley, <i>The Country Wife</i> , Acts 2-3
Week 13	Mon	4/26	William Wycherley, <i>The Country Wife</i> , Acts 4-5
	Wed	4/28	Wycherley criticism since 1960
	Fri	4/30	Wycherley criticism since 1960
Week 14	Mon	5/3	<b>Prospectus for Paper 3 due, with preliminary list of five sources</b> In-class workshop: MLA format is your friend
	Wed	5/5	Graff and Birkenstein, pp.
	Fri	5/7	No class (Individual Conferences)
Week 15	Mon	5/10	<b>First draft of Paper 3 due</b> Peer review of first draft of Paper 3
	Wed	5/12	Conclusions