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ENG 113: Writing about Literature

Joseph Donica

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ENG 113: English Composition II, Writing about Literature (OER VERSION)

Instructor: Joseph L.V. Donica, PhD

Course Description: General introduction to prose fiction, poetry, and drama as well as the application of principles of organization, rhetoric, and literary analysis; expository writing and research based on literary texts; development of critical thinking. Research paper with MLA documentation is required. Recommended for all English majors.

Prerequisites: English 110 or 111

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

1. Read and discuss several pieces of fiction, poems, and plays as well as relevant critical articles; students analyze all texts to identify and understand main ideas and supporting evidence.
2. Write several formal documented essays, including a research paper; they also write in-class essays, including a final examination. Students write and share essays using electronic technologies.
3. Complete assignments, including the formal research paper, requiring use and evaluation of multiple sources, including those retrieved from academic databases.
4. Analyze readings to identify and evaluate arguments and differentiate between fact and opinion.
5. Learn Modern Language Association (MLA) methods for citation, attribution, and bibliography.

Course Materials: As this is an OER/Zero-Cost course, students do not need to buy a textbook for this class. All course materials will be provided to them on Blackboard and through Open Access sites. We will use a variety of sources, but our primary texts will come from the open-access [LitHub](#), [Wikipedia](#) (a site consistently considered as a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#)), and a number of other open-access sites where we will explore literature and its history, analysis, and application to contemporary life.

A Note About Open-Source Education: This course uses fully open-sourced materials. We will be talking about the open-source movement throughout the course as we consider the gatekeepers to publishing and how many voices are left out of this course because of those gatekeepers. For now, though, please look at [this brief overview](#) of the open-source movement in education.

Course Policies

Attendance: To succeed in this course you must be in class every day and engaged in the class discussions. Most of our time spent in class will be discussing the readings in the modules. So, coming to class prepared to engage is key to your success in the course. The policy is as follows:

3 unexcused absences: 1 entire letter grade off your final grade

6 unexcused absences: 3 letter grades off your final grade

9 unexcused absences: automatically fail the course

20 mins late for any class: counted as an absence

Academic Integrity: Whereas collaboration on all projects is invited and encouraged, academic dishonesty including plagiarism, falsifying information, lying to instructor or students, or using other's work as your own will not be tolerated. If you are found plagiarizing on essays or using others' work as their own on quizzes, exams, or essays, the first time you will receive a 0 on that assignment. The second time a student plagiarizes or passes others' work as her/his own they will not be able to pass the course. If there are any issues with plagiarism we will use BCC's definitions of academic dishonesty found here: [BCC Academic Policies and Procedures](#).

Class Conduct: The classroom is an environment in which we learn, create, argue, explore, and engage.

Any conduct that runs counter to these aims will not be tolerated. The guiding principle in all interactions in the course should be respect. Any communication or exchange that runs counter to the [college's nondiscrimination policy](#) will not be tolerated. This statement is itself an argument about the kind of institution BCC wants to be and the protections it offers its students, staff, and faculty.

Grammar and Mechanics: ENG 113 is not a grammar course. However, in grading essays and assignments I will consider any distracting grammatical, mechanical, or spelling elements that impede meaning. If you need a grammar refresher, please refer to [UNC's Online Writing Lab](#) (another open-source resource). We will be going over how to navigate their site and covering some essential writing concepts that I expect to see you gradually incorporate into your writing.

Assignments

Readings: The core of this course is the readings. You are expected to read all assigned readings and engage with them both in the reading responses as well as in class discussion. Some of the readings are difficult. So, do not worry if you struggle through them. The point is for you to engage with them and find your own path through them.

Reading Responses: Each week you will respond to the readings on the Blackboard discussion board. You must post your readings by Wednesday and respond to two other students' posts by Friday.

Midterm and Final Exams: You will take two exams during the semester. One at midterm and one during finals week. These exams will consist of short answer, multiple choice, and short essay sections. We will review for the exams well in advance of them.

Critical Essays: Throughout the semester, you will have four smaller critical essays that will include original research and strong thesis statements. The prompts for each of these can be found on the weekly schedule in Blackboard. Essay 1 is an examination of fiction. Essay 2 is an examination of poetry. Essay 3 is an examination of drama. And the final essay is a personal essay about your relationship to literature and the analysis of it.

Museum Visit: Time and weather permitting, we will be visiting the American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art together as a class. Many of the figures and events we discuss throughout the semester are depicted in the art there. As not all students will be able to make it, this is an extra credit assignment. For students who cannot make it, an alternative assignment will be provided.

Grading

Reading Responses	30%
Critical Essays	30%
Midterm and Final Exams	30%
Engagement including Attendance	10%
Museum Visit	10% (Extra credit)

Student Resources

I want to provide you with every resource available at BCC to help you succeed. Your success at BCC is a combination of my expectations for your performance and your goals for your future. BCC and I are committed to your future. We offer several resources and centers that can move you closer to that goal or help you along the way. I have listed the basic contact info and sites for these places. Please ask me if you need any other information about them.

Writing Center: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-resources/writing-center/>

BCC Single Stop: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-resources/single-stop/>

Disability Services: <https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-resources/disability-services/>

Computer Labs: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-resources/computer-labs/>
Personal Counseling: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-resources/personal-counseling-services/>
BCC Library Site: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/library/>
Complete list of Student Services: <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/students/#1565896102729-aboedo80-5a06>

Accommodations/DisAbilities

BCC respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact DisAbility Services as soon as possible this semester. A Disability Services specialist will work with you to review the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations for this course. You can reach DisAbility Services by email at disabilityservices@bcc.cuny.edu or by phone at (718)289-5874. You may also reach DisAbility Services through Microsoft Teams. Download the Teams app, login using your CUNYfirst login, and join the DSO Student Service Center team using the following access code: newu66.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Topics: What is literature?
Readings: [Literature](#), [Literary Terms and Devices](#),
Assignments: Reading Response 1

Week 2

Topics: What is fiction?
Readings: [Fiction](#), [Fiction Writing](#), ["The Lottery," Shirley Jackson](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 2

Week 3

Topic: Analyzing and writing about fiction
Readings: [Happy Endings](#), [Margaret Atwood](#), [Analyzing Happy Endings](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 3
Proposal for Essay 1

Week 4

Topics: Analyzing and writing about fiction

Readings: [Linden Hills](#), Gloria Naylor, [Analyzing Linden Hills](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 4
Critical Essay 1

Week 5

Topics: What is Poetry?
Reading: [Poetry](#), [What is poetry?](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 5
Critical Essay 2 Proposal

Week 6

Topics: Poetry Analysis
Reading: ["Adonais" by Shelley](#), [Analysis of "Adonais"](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 6
Midterm Exam

Week 7

Topics: Poetry Analysis
Reading: ["Times Square Shoeshine Composition" by Angelou](#), [Analysis of "Times Square Shoeshine Composition"](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 7
US History Quiz 2nd Attempt
Critical Essay 2

Week 8

Topics: Poetry Analysis
Reading: ["Diving into the wreck" by Rich](#), [Analysis of "Diving into the wreck"](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 8
Proposal for Critical Essay 3

Week 9

Topics: What is Drama? What is Theater?
Reading: [Drama](#), [Theater](#), [Drama Theory](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 9

Week 10

Topics: Analyzing Drama

Reading: [Three Tall Women by Albee](#), [Analysis of Three Tall Women](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 10
Critical Essay 3

Week 11

Topics: Analyzing Theater
Reading: [A Raisin in the Sun](#), [Analyzing A Raisin in the Sun](#), [African American Drama](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 11
Critical Essay 4 Proposal

Week 12

Topics: Adaptation Theory, Analyzing Film
Reading: [Adaptation](#), [The Sociology of Aesthetics and Film Adaptation](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 12

Week 13

Topics: The meaning of literature to contemporary life
Reading: [What is literature for?](#), [Literature and its influence on human life](#), [Literature and Life](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 13

Week 14

Topics: What is critical theory? What is literary theory and criticism?
Reading: [Critical Theory](#), [Critical Theory](#), Literary [Theory](#) and [Criticism](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 14

Week 15

Topics: Writing Workshop
Readings: [Writing about Literature](#)
Assignments: Reading Response 15
Critical Essay 4 Draft

Week 16

Assignments: Final Exam
Critical Essay 4 Final Draft