

English ECE-ENGL 1007

Seminar and Studio in Writing and Multimodal Composition (4 credits)

University of Connecticut First-Year Writing (FYW) Course

This course is given in cooperation with UConn Early College Experience: www.ece.uconn.edu

Course Description

As suggested by its ECE moniker, this seminar-style class gives students a college-level academic experience within a high school setting, where college credit is awarded to students who successfully achieve the benchmark provided by each assessment. The course offers instruction in academic writing through reading literature with an emphasis on literary texts as a starting point for inquiry, information literacy, reflective writing, and multimodal ways of approaching texts in order to help students identify and develop their own critical methodology conducive to literary scholarship offered at the college level. Revision of both formal and informal assignments is stressed, particularly as a means of reconsidering and expanding the way students approach the texts they read. This class offers a wide-ranging selection of texts situated both within and outside the typical English literary canon.

Organized thematically, each unit presents literature that crosses disciplines, genres, and cultures in an effort to generate and support projects that extend beyond the purview of any particular work. As a seminar, classes emphasize close-reading, class discussion, group work, and multi-modal responses that serve as a starting-point for primarily student-led, inquiry-driven projects. The central point of inquiry for this course is just precisely this – to explore inquiry itself, both in and out of purely academic contexts – as students develop how they learn from and convey their ideas about the texts they examine. To be clear, this is not a lecture or survey course, nor is it a course about literature or an introduction to literary analysis. Rather, students should think of the seminar as a series of opportunities that will help them broaden their ability to respond to ideas presented in literature as they develop both a discerning critical lens and a healthy repertoire with which to express it. In alignment with the school's *Portrait of the Crusader*, students share ideas and perspectives with kindness, thoughtfulness, and mutual respect, particularly when learning diverse viewpoints. Thus, students practice respecting the beliefs of others while appreciating the diversity that represents what it means to an informed and empathetic global citizen.

Goals of the Course

- Analyze literature through varied critical lenses.
- Explore and situate one's ideas within a broader scholarly community.
- Establish a scholarly vocabulary for analysis.
- Practice different modes of response to a wide range of cultural output.
- Develop mastery and artistry when expressing oneself in varied forms of writing and through oral presentations.
- Expand and appreciate reading and viewing experiences beyond the world of English-speaking literature/culture/art.
- Explore and articulate a personal opinion of how art and life inform one another and address what makes a work of literature worth reading.

Required Readings

Austin, Michael. *Reading the World: Ideas that Matter*. 3rd ed. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2017 ISBN 978-0-393-61742-9

Roberts, Edgar and Henry E. Jacobs. *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*. 7th ed. New York: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004 ISBN 0-13-048584-5

(Note: Readings that are not part of the anthologies will be linked electronically and/or available in PDF format or via open-source hosts.)

Course Curriculum

Q1- Unit One: Introduction to the course

Required Summer Reading: *White Noise*, Don DeLillo

Topics:

- College writing and academic scholarship.
- Methods for close reading and critical analysis.
- Structuring the literary analysis.
- Citing sources in MLA format, both in-text and in full; footnotes and endnotes.
- Postmodern theory and culture.

Assessments:

- Literary Analysis Essay - "Pastiche and the Post-Modern," based on the novel *White Noise*.

Q1 - Unit Two: Literary Criticism, Terms, and Critical Approaches to Literature

Reserved Readings: "Critical Approaches Important in the Study of Literature" (Roberts: pp. 1914-1927); "Reading Ideas" (Austin: pp. 605-6); Hsun Tzu - "Encouraging Learning" (Austin: pp. 5-11); William Hazlitt - *from* "On Poetry in General" (linked text); Nathaniel Hawthorne - "The Birthmark" (filed PDF)

Topics:

- Schools of Literary Criticism.
- Strategies for reading and writing critically and for an academic audience.

Assessments:

- Literary Criticism Essay - Cultivate and apply an individual critical methodology to Hawthorne's short story, "The Birthmark".

Q1 - Unit Three: Self-Identity and Subjectivity

Reserved Readings: Augustine - *The Confessions*, Book 1: Chapters 1-7 (filed PDF); Percy Shelly - "Ode to the West Wind" (linked text); (selections from) *Sonnets* (Williams Shakespeare); John Dane - *A Declaration of Remarkable Providences* (linked text); William Wordsworth - *The Prelude*, Book Eighth: Love of Nature Leading to Love of Man (filed PDF); William Shakespeare - *Macbeth* (linked text); Akira Kurosawa – *Rashomon* (film); Wallace Stevens - "13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (linked text); Emily Dickinson - "I Heard a Fly Buzz, When I Died" (linked text); James Joyce - "Araby" (linked text); Frederick Douglass - "Learning to Read" (filed PDF)

Topics:

- "Subjectivity" in literary discourse.
- Conventions of the personal narrative across cultures and historical periods.
- Reading a film (*Rashomon*).

Assessments:

- Film Analysis - *Rashomon*.
- Personal Narrative - "A Prelude to Your Life"
- Poetry - Writing in the form and style of Dickinson.

Q2 - Unit Four: Ideology and Cultural Identity

Reserved Readings: Carl Jung - *From The Red Book* – "On the Collective Unconscious" (Austin); Ruth Benedict - "The Individual and the Pattern of Culture" (Austin); Benjamin Franklin - *The Way to Wealth* (linked text); (excerpts from) Vladimir Lenin - *State and Revolution* ("Preface", Ch.1: "The State an Instrument of Exploitation", "The Withering Away of the State" [linked text]); Desiderius Erasmus - *Against War* (Austin); (selections from) Niccolo Machiavelli - *The Prince* (Austin); Malcolm X (as told by Alex Haley) - *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Ch.1: "Nightmare" [linked text]); Seamus Heaney - "Bogland", "Requiem for the Croppies" (linked texts); Langston Hughes - "Let America Be America Again" (Roberts: p. 818); E. E. Cummings – "next to of course god america i," (Roberts: p. 648); Gloria Anzaldua - "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (Roberts)

Topics:

- Self-representation in light of the cultural norms and social structures that inform this process.
- Identity, identity-politics, and culture.
- Journal writing vs. autobiography.
- Relationship between literature and memory.

Assessments:

- Research and Presentation - "What is your culture and what are ways you express it?"
- Multimodal Presentation - "What is the Idea State?"
- Epitaphs - Write epitaphs for yourself and others.

Q2 - Unit Five: Surveying “Others”: Literature of the Frontier and the Post-Colonial Mind

Reserved Readings: (excerpts from) Mary Rowlandson - *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration* ("Preface", "First Remove", "Second Remove", "Third Remove" [linked text]); Jonathan Swift – “A Modest Proposal” (linked text); Desmond Tutu - "Nuremberg or National Amnesia: A Third Way" (Austin); Umed Singh – "Colonialism and Post-Colonialism (linked text); (excerpts from) *The Journal of Christopher Columbus* (linked text); - (excerpts from) John Smith - *A True Relation of Such Occurrences*" (linked text); Chinua Achebe - *Things Fall Apart* (text provided); *Shaka Zulu* (T.V. series – YouTube)

Topics:

- Postcolonialism then and today.
- Forms of political discourse and satire in particular.
- Concepts of “Otherness” and “Orientalism”
- The Captivity Narrative.
- Writing like a journalist or political cartoonist.

Assessments:

- Personal Reflection and Presentation - “Reflect on your most treasured things held captive.”
- Satirical Writing - “What Did Columbus First See?”
- Film Analysis- *Shaka Zulu*.
- Political Cartoon - Create an original political cartoon/caricature.

Q2 - Unit Six: Social Justice, Civil Rights, and Civil Relationships

Reserved Readings: James Madison - “Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments" (Austin); (excerpts from) Henry David Thoreau - *Walden* (linked text); Walt Whitman - *Leaves of Grass* ("Song of Myself" [linked text]); Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, Maya Angelou (selected poems); Mohandas Gandhi - “Economic and Moral Progress” (Austin); Ralph Ellison - *Invisible Man* ("Prologue" [filed PDF]); Martin Luther King Jr. - *Letter from Birmingham Jail* (Austin); Zeynep Tufekci – “Networked Politics from Tahrir to Taksim: Is There a Social Media-Fueled Protest Style?” (Austin); Barack Obama - “A More Perfect Union” (YouTube). Desmond Tutu – “Nuremberg or National Amnesia: A Third Way (Austin)

Topics:

- Explore how we are connected (student led seminar discussion over multiple class sessions).
- Explore and discuss steps we must take for moral progress.
- Navigate and discern between credible and “fake news” sites on the Internet.

Assessments:

- Personal Manifesto: “Where do you live and what do you live for?”
- Independent Research and Lesson - Make something/do something/learn something/teach others. Midterm assessment.
- Letter - Formal letter to The President of the United States on an issue of personal concern.

Q3 – Unit Seven: Nature-Writing and the “Environmental Imagination”

Reserved Readings: Lawrence Buell – *The Environmental Imagination* (select chapters); Audubon Society – *Birds of North America*; Lucretius - *De Rerum Natura* (Austin); Boethius - *Of Music* (Austin); William Paley - *Natural Theology* (Austin); (excerpts from) Charles Darwin - *Natural Selection; or, the Survival of the Fittest* (Austin); Margaret Laurence - “The Loons” (Roberts p. 376); Elizabeth Bishop - “The Fish” (Roberts: p. 700); Barry Commoner - “The Four Laws of Ecology” (Austin); Jack London - “To Build a Fire” (Filed PDF); Robert Frost (selected poems); Rachel Carson - “The Obligation to Endure” (Austin); (excerpts from) Vandana Shiva – *Soil, Not Oil* (Austin)

Topics:

- Ecocriticism and nature writing.
- Science/technical writing.
- Genres of Realism, Naturalism, and Hyper-realism (digital art forms).
- Lyric poetry writing; Haiku writing.

Assessments:

- Original Poetry - Short collection of lyric poems on the topic of nature and the natural world.
- Descriptive Writing - Observe nature and write like Audubon.
- Expository Essay - Define nature.

Q3 - Unit Eight: “Transcending Bonds and Bounds”: Experiences of Faith and Spirituality

Reserved Readings: Lao Tzu (selections from) *Tao Te Ching* (linked text); King James Bible – “The Parable of the Prodigal Son”; “Job” (linked text); (excerpts from) *The Holy Koran*; Rumi (selections from) *Spiritual Poetry*; John Keats – “Ode to a Nightingale”; Christina Rossetti – “A Christmas Carol” (linked text); Nathaniel Hawthorne – “Young Goodman Brown” (linked text); Ralph Waldo Emerson – “Nature” (linked text); John Marrant – *Narrative of John Marrant* (linked text); Hermann Hesse – *Siddhartha* (linked text); (selections from) *The Bhagavad-Gita* (“Arjuna’s Dejection”, “The Vision of Krishna’s Totality” [linked text])

Topics:

- Black Atlantic narratives.
- Forms and conventions of spiritual experience and expression.
- Exploration of the possibilities and limitations of religious writing.

Assessments:

- Argumentative Essay - “Can we express transcendent experiences in prose?”

Q3- Unit Nine: Modernist Fragmentation and Postmodern Anxieties

Reserved Readings: Eugene O’Neill – *Long Day’s Journey into Night* (film); Franz Kafka – “Before the Law”, “The Metamorphosis” (linked texts); William Faulkner – “Barn Burning”, (excerpts from) *The Sound and the Fury* (linked texts); Marevasei Kachere – *War Memoir* (Austin); Pablo Picasso – *Guernica* (Austin); Wilfred Owen – “Anthem for Doomed Youth” (linked text); E. E. Cummings – (selected poems); Samuel Beckett – *Waiting for Godot* (Filed PDF); T. S. Eliot – *The Waste Land* (filed PDF)

Topics:

- Modernism and postmodernism across varying cultural forms.

Assessments:

- Argumentative Essay - "Ambiguity and Life: How do we make meaning?"
- Creative Writing - One-act play that treats ambiguity as an ontological starting-point.

Q3 - Unit Ten: "A Strange New World": Post-Apocalyptic Fiction

Reserved Readings: Matthew Arnold – "Culture and Anarchy" (linked PDF); Oswald Spengler – "The Decline of the West" (linked PDF); Ray Bradbury – "There Will Come Soft Rains", "A Sound of Thunder" (Filed PDF); H. G. Wells – *War of the Worlds* (Filed PDF); (selections from) Kurt Vonnegut – *Welcome to the Monkey House* (Filed PDF); Robert Penn Warren – "Evening Hawk" (linked text); W. B. Yeats - "The Second Coming" (linked text); Joy Harjo – "Perhaps the World Ends Here" (Filed PDF); Mary Karr – "Disappointments of the Apocalypse" (linked text); Loren Eiseley – "The Bird and the Machine"; *Night of the Living Dead* (film – 1968)

Topics:

- Science fiction as a genre.
- Op-Ed and review writing.

Assessments:

- Film review and presentation of *Night of the Living Dead*.

Q4 - Unit Eleven: "Dangerous Women": Female Authors, Authorship, and the Politics of Gender

Reserved Readings: Anne Bradstreet (selected poems [linked text]); (excerpts from) Mary Shelly – *Frankenstein* (filed PDF); Emily Dickinson (selected poems [linked text]); Flannery O'Connor – "A Good Man is Hard to Find", "Everything that Rises Must Converge" (filed PDF); Kate Chopin – "The Story of an Hour" (linked text); D. H. Lawrence – "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" (linked text); (excerpts from) Gertrude Stein – *Tender Buttons* (filed PDF); Virginia Woolf – "Shakespeare's Sister" (Austin); (excerpts from) Susan Sontag – *On Photography* (filed PDF); (selections from) Toni Morrison – *Song of Solomon* (filed PDF); Amy Tan – "Two Kinds" (Roberts), Joyce Carol Oates – "Shopping" (Roberts); Anne Sexton – "Cinderella" (linked text); Margaret Atwood – "Happy Endings" (linked text).

Topics:

- Gender analysis as a critical methodology.
- "Subtext" and "subversion" as vehicles of political protest/expression.
- Counter-culture.
- Feminism (first, second, and third-wave discussed and applied to works of literature).

Assessments:

- A polemic, multi-modal response arguing for the relevance of gender studies in academia.

Q4 - Unit Twelve: Literature from around the World

Reserved Readings: (selections from) Aesop's fables (linked text); (excerpts from) Sun Tzu – *The Art of War* (filed PDF); (selections from) Saadi Shirazi – *Bustan + Golestan* (linked text); (selections from) *The Arabian Nights* (trans. Sir Richard Burton [Filed PDF]); Michel De Montaigne – “To the Reader”, “Of the Power of the Imagination”, “The Inconsistency of Our Imagination” (linked text); (excerpts from) Miguel De Cervantes – *Don Quixote* (linked text); (excerpts from) Octavio Paz – *The Day of the Dead* (Octavio Paz)

Topics:

- Issues of translation in literature.
- The impact of culture on art and the impact of art on values and traditions.

Assessments:

- Written Assessment - Literary Terms.

Q4 - Unit Thirteen: “Philosophy 101”

Reserved Readings: Hsun Tzu – *Man's Nature Is Good* (Austin); Plato – “Allegory of the Cave” (linked text); Samuel Taylor Coleridge – “On Reason and Understanding” (linked text); John Locke – “Of Ideas” (linked text); (excerpts from) Thomas Hobbes – *Leviathan* (filed PDF); (excerpts from) John Henry Newman – *Knowledge Its Own End* (linked text); Matsuo Basho – “The Narrow Road to the Interior” (Austin); (selections from) Albert Camus – *The Myth of Sisyphus* (filed PDF); Jean-Paul Sartre – “Existentialism” (linked text); Garrett Hardin – “Lifeboat Ethics: The Case Against Helping the Poor” (Austin); Erich Fromm – “Man for Himself” (filed PDF)

Topics:

- Overview of western/eastern philosophy.
- The value and influence of philosophical thinking in literature.
- Formal components of a philosophical treatise.
- Formal parameters of an oral defense.

Assessment:

- Argument and defense: Articulate and defend your philosophy on a specific topic.

Q4 - Unit Fourteen: Writing, Revising, and Presenting an Academic Article

Reserved Readings: “Writing and Documenting the Research Essay “Structuring Ideas” (Roberts); “Generating Ideas”, “Supporting Ideas”, “Revising and Editing” (Austin); “MLA Recommendations for Documenting Sources” (Roberts); “Incorporating Ideas”, “Synthesizing Ideas” (Austin)

Topics:

- Revising and conferencing regarding formal written work; peer review.
- Work on titles, abstracts, bibliographies/works cited page.
- Reading scholarly journals.

Assessment:

- Conference Paper - Use all steps of the writing process to develop a publishable conference paper.
 - Presentation - Develop and present an abstract of your conference paper to the class.
-

Grading Practices: Grading procedures vary for individual projects and papers. As initial student responses are offered, they are evaluated and given feedback at various stages to allow for students to develop more formal, scholarly responses. There are three main grading categories for this course, each building on the previous level, beginning with engagement and participation and culminating with assessments that demonstrate formal mastery. This grading scheme is in-line with those set out by the Holy Cross High School English Department.

Percentage Breakdown of Assessments:

I - Mastery/Summative Assessments (40%)

- Essays and Original Writing.
- Tests.
- Projects and Presentations.

II - Formative Assessments (40%)

- Reading quizzes focused on close reading and literary engagement.
- Reading responses written, peer-reviewed, and presented.
- Annotations, notes, and independent preparation.
- In-class and homework writing assignments.
- Independent, focused research assignments.

III - Engagement/Participation (20%)

- In-class discussion and discussion board participation.
- Active engagement in one-on-one meetings as a means of seeking additional feedback.
- Displaying the engagement and awareness to ask questions.
- Respectful consideration of all ideas.
- Understanding the classroom setting as a place of scholarly discourse and engagement.
- Self-advocacy and office hours visits.

Disclaimer: This syllabus acts as a contract and also serves as an overview of the course, its goals and objectives, required reading materials, schedule, assignments, and assessments. It also clarifies policies and expectations. Please note, however, that I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any time based on the needs of students or the inclusion of new information.