

Course Syllabus
English 102: Literature & Composition
CRN 3213 Online Fall 2017

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12:30, Wednesday 9:30-11:30, and by appointment (Snow 520)

Course Description: Students will learn how to develop interpretations of literature through reading short fiction, poetry, drama, and essays. They will be introduced to literary terminology and to standard critical approaches. They will also learn how to use source materials in order to clearly express their views about literature in several argumentative essays, which includes at least one research essay. *Prerequisite: a grade of "C" or better in ENG*101, ENG*101E, or ENG*101ALP. This is an "L" course.*

Required Text:

- ❖ Rather than having you spend \$150 on a textbook, I will post all readings on BlackBoard.
- ❖ You do need to purchase one play: *Equus* by Peter Shaffer. I recommend the Penguin Plays edition, which can be found on Amazon for a penny.

Recommended "Text":

- ❖ I recommend purchasing the movie *Dead Poets Society*—or making sure you can get it on some streaming device. You will not be required to view it; however, your final research paper will include an option of using the movie as one of your two outside sources.

Scope of Course: In my section of ENG 102, you'll be reading and "discussing" some of the best short fiction ever written, and you'll be *writing intelligent, thoughtful, insightful compositions* about literature. You should expect to devote time *and thought* to each reading. Earning a "C" in English 101 is a prerequisite for a reason. Expect to spend ~5 hours/week doing homework for this class.

Here's where I echo the words of David Foster Wallace (great author—check him out!) from a course syllabus of his: "If you are used to whipping off papers the night before they're due, running them quickly through the computer's Spellchecker, handing them in full of high-school errors and sentences that make no sense and having the professor accept them 'because the ideas are good' or something, please be informed that I draw no distinction between the quality of one's ideas and the quality of those ideas' written expression, and I will not accept sloppy, rough-draftish, or semiliterate college writing. Again, I am absolutely not kidding."¹

BlackBoard Mail Policy: If you ever have questions of concerns, don't hesitate to ask. I will get back to you as soon as possible and will always do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

PLEASE use the "**BlackBoard Mail**" link in BlackBoard (NOT external e-mail) to send me any questions that are of a personal nature.

Otherwise, **PLEASE** post any other, general questions (anything about the readings or the assignments or simply the course that is unclear) on the "Course Questions" discussion board. That way, other students can see both the question and the answer I post.

¹ Roiphe, Katie. "The Extraordinary Syllabus of David Foster Wallace: What his Lesson Plans Teach Us About How to Live." *Slate.com*. The Slate Group, 23 Nov. 2011. Web. 4 Dec. 2011.

(Note: Be sure to check both your BlackBoard Messages and the “Course Questions” board as I expect you to know/follow any answers I post there whether or not you are the one who asked the question.)

Assignments:

*Short Story Test 15%

* Short Fiction Essay (3-5 pages) 20%

* Drama Essay (5-8 pages) 25%

* Poetry Essay (3-5 pages) 20%

*Discussion Posts 20%

Grading Scale:

A 100.0 - 93.0

B 86.9 - 83.0

C 76.9 - 73.0

D 66.9 – 63.0

A- 92.9 - 90.0

B- 82.9 – 80.0

C- 72.9 – 70.0

D- 62.9 - 60.0

B+ 89.9 – 87.0

C+ 79.9 – 77.0

D+ 69.9 – 67.0

F 59.9 – 0.0

Paper Grading: “A” papers are *exceptional* in critical thinking, style, structure, development, and mechanics. Ideas are engaging, original, *well-developed*, and *convincing*—which also means that these essays tend to be close to the higher end of the required page limit. B papers are well *above average* in those areas, with a few grammatical issues and generally less development. “C” papers are *average*, with relatively minor grammar, organizational, or development problems that distract from the easy flow of the essay. Generally these lack true depth of thought. “D” or “F” papers are those that do not meet the assignment, contain numerous errors, are not organized logically, or have repetition rather than development. Note: An “F” can be anywhere from a zero to a 59, and I have given single digit grades to papers that earn single digit grades. Please follow directions carefully and **proofread** (at least twice and, I recommend, slowly and out loud!): the three papers make up 65% of your grade! I want to challenge you to *read* actively, *think* critically, and *write* effectively and convincingly. Earning a “C” in English 101 is a prerequisite for a reason.

Late Work: I have no tolerance for late work. All assignments must be submitted BEFORE the posted deadline. It does not matter if work is turned in one week, one day, one hour, or one *second* late: I will not read or grade any late work. Please see the “Late Work Addendum” in the “Syllabus” section of BlackBoard for further explanation. If you need an extension, please request one in advance of the due dates. If there is a major medical emergency, notify me asap.

Everything will be due online before 11:59 PM on a Tuesday or Saturday.

Revision: I really, sincerely believe that the best way to improve your writing is to learn from your own mistakes; that means carefully revising papers. In fact, the majority of the actual writing instruction I give will be in the form of feedback on your papers. When I return the first two papers to you, I will give you far more than just a letter grade—I will give you detailed, specific feedback about what worked and what didn’t work on that paper.

I encourage you to rewrite papers that receive a “B-” or lower. You may re-write the paper regardless of the grade, BUT to earn a higher grade I need to see that you have made extensive improvements rather than simply minor revisions (which is often more difficult for a paper that has already earned an above-average grade). **Your final grade for the paper will be determined by averaging the grade of the original and that of the rewrite** (remember what I mentioned above about the range of “F” papers before you think about handing in garbage because you know you can re-write it.)

Schedule: As soon as you enter the first unit (Short Stories), you will see that I have arranged the class into weekly folders, each starting on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. In each week’s folder, I will provide very clear instructions regarding what needs to be accomplished each day via a “To Do” list. You can also download a calendar with the assignments and due

dates in the “Syllabus” section of BlackBoard. I really strive to make things as user-friendly and as intuitive as possible.

All work will be due by 11:59 PM on either a Saturday or a Tuesday. Typically, you will have to read a few stories or a bunch of poems and post about one of them by Saturday evening. By the following Tuesday evening, you will usually have to post a reply to a classmate. Directions for posting are on the next page. In addition to the discussions postings detailed below, there will be powerpoints, notes, and other such items for you to read/review as well.

I have programmed a new week’s worth of work to “unlock” and become visible Saturdays at 11:59 PM, and I will always let you work at least a week ahead.

Discussion Board Expectations

Just about every Saturday during the first two units, you will choose one of the poems or stories assigned and write a one page **Close Reading/Quote Explication** by 11:59 PM. By the following Tuesday, you will have to respond to a classmate's posting by 11:59 PM. Full directions and samples are in the first week's folder; however, these are the overall **Discussion Board instructions**:

1) In **about 250 words**, you will select one quotation from one of the readings and *explicate* it fully to demonstrate your understanding of the text. This is your chance to show your capacity to interpret a text by analyzing a specific passage (again, see full instructions in week 1!). You are encouraged to take risks in your interpretations – just always base your analysis soundly in the text. Discussion board rubrics will be posted to the site so that you clearly understand how you are being graded/assessed. Writing should be 100% *formal* and *academic*. This is worth 10 points.

2) Write a **response to someone else's discussion** post. **Note:** You must choose a peer-response that addresses a different story or poem from the one you chose to post about. This should reflect real *engagement* with your classmate's ideas. This should be at least one *solid* paragraph (about 100-150 words) and should also contain some direct textual support (ie: a quote). In other words, something like, "Wow, great post Adam. I totally agree with what you said. I thought the same thing about the reading. We're totally on the same page" will earn you a zero. I want thought and engagement, not fluff. Writing can be more *conversational* in tone. This will be worth 5 points.

Discussion Board Grading Scale

Discussion board postings are graded on a scale from 1-10. You will also be expected to reply to a classmate's posting, which will be worth 5 points. That means each week, your total Discussion Board grade will be out of 15 possible points. I use the numbers for the sanity of my spreadsheet. **Discussion board posts are not revisable; don't post until you're sure you've clearly said what you have to say.**

- Please note that I rarely give out 10s on discussion board posts – your work must be truly extraordinary. Simply meeting the criteria for the assignment does not earn you an A.
- If you meet the criteria for the assignment and do average work, you will earn a C (a 7).
- 9s and 10s are reserved for those students who are going above and beyond basic course expectations and who are thus engaging in above average work.
- I have programmed Bboard to drop your lowest discussion grade.

Guided Reading Questions: For each unit I will post a set of Guided Reading Questions. Since I don't have the pleasure of talking to you in class about the important aspects of each reading, this is my attempt to help you focus on significant parts/concept/ideas/language. You do not need to answer these and I will **never collect or grade them**. *However*, they should be a valuable tool as you read each text and answer one of the discussion questions. Really, these are my way of trying to help you get even more out of each reading assignment. You can also use these as a starting point for a casual conversation about the readings in the "**Wanna Chat**" discussion board. Nothing on this board is graded, yet the more active you are on it, the more likely I am to give your grade a friendly little bump at the end of the semester. This is also a great place to chat casually (and publicly) with me and your classmates about any of the course material...or life in general!

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

1) “At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees’ Proscribed Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaborations on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another’s idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally.” (Board of Trustees’ Policy 5.2.1)

2) So that was MxCC’s official policy on plagiarism. Here’s how I apply it in my class. If you do any of the following:

- Turn in material you did not write,
- Turn in papers written by you for another class (either high school or college),
- Turn in papers you drafted but revised or edited by another,
- Fail to paraphrase, summarize, or quote sources properly,
- Turn in papers written by someone else and edited or revised by you, or
- Get any of your *ideas* from another source. (*Anywhere* on the internet, for example)

then you have plagiarized.

Presenting another person’s (or *website’s*) **ideas or language** as your own will result in an automatic “F” (zero). **If you plagiarize ANY of the discussion posts, then you will receive an “F” (zero) for that ENTIRE 20% of your grade.** It may also result in an “F” for the course because I will report the incident to the Chair of the English Department and to the Academic Dean since it is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Don’t do it. I check, and it’s *really* not worth the consequences. My sincere advice/plea/warning: Don’t succumb to the urge to see what Sparknotes (or any of the other online sites) say about what we’re reading. That will only open up the possibility that you will use *ideas* (maybe not even words) from that source, and that’s plagiarism. I want to challenge you to think, and I want to read your ideas. If I want to read what other people on the internet think, then I’ll do that myself. YOU should NOT be doing that while taking this course. Basically, just STAY OFF THE INTERNET (I know, ironic advice for an online course)! (You can, of course, use dictionaries—real or virtual—especially for the poetry unit!)

In the interest of full disclosure: I will use the computer to scan every single writing assignment turned in to see if *any* of it is plagiarized. Remember, if you can find something online, so can I. And I do check!

3) Because ENG 101 is a prerequisite for this course, I expect you to know how to use proper MLA citation. You **MUST** cite texts correctly. Failure to do so will either lower your grade or earn you a zero for plagiarism.

4) **Again, plain and simple: Even if you don’t understand a reading, do not look up summaries/analyses somewhere else. The goal is for YOU to develop YOUR OWN interpretations!**

(The next few pages are college policies that I have to include—read at your own discretion)

General Outcomes of the Course

(Statement identifying educational goals of the course)

Written Communication (full competency)

- Students will be prepared to develop oral messages and written texts of varying lengths and styles that communicate effectively and appropriately across a variety of settings.

Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking (full competency)

- Students will be able to organize, interpret, and evaluate evidence and ideas within and across disciplines; draw reasoned inferences and defensible conclusions; and solve problems and make decisions based on analytical processes.

Unit No	Instructional Unit	Specific Objectives of Instructional Unit (The specific objectives reflect the behavioral outcomes, which include what the student will be able to do at the completion of the unit. Evaluation is then to be based on the student's accomplishment of these objectives. Assume that each statement is prefixed with "The student will be able to".)
Written and Oral Communications in English Committee	Students will be prepared to develop oral messages and written texts of varying lengths and styles that communicate effectively and appropriately across a variety of settings.	<p>In written communication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to Rhetorical Situations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and evaluate the specific audience and purpose in different writing situations, and adapt their writing appropriately to those situations. • Develop effective prose that influences attitudes, beliefs, and actions through appropriate logical, ethical, and emotional appeals. 2. Use Sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate and evaluate sources appropriate to the rhetorical situation. • Read, comprehend, and summarize an argument from a complex piece of writing. • Analyze, evaluate, and respond to an argument from a complex piece of writing. • Summarize, paraphrase, and quote accurately the ideas of others, clearly differentiating them from the students' own ideas. • Synthesize and integrate others' ideas purposefully and ethically with correct and appropriate documentation. 3. Craft Logical Arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a controlling idea or thesis. • Provide clear and logical evidence, support, or illustration for their assertions. • Choose appropriate and effective organizing methods, employing effective transitions and signposts. • Write a focused and sustained argument of at least 1500 words that demonstrates all of these outcomes 4. Apply Language Conventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use diction, tone, and level of formality appropriate to audience, purpose, and situation. • Apply the conventions of Standard English grammar, spelling, and mechanics. 5. Formulate Effective Writing Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading their writing. • Reflect on and explain the effectiveness of their writing choices regarding the audience, purpose, and situation.
Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking Committee	Students will be able to organize, interpret, and evaluate evidence and ideas within and across disciplines; draw reasoned inferences and defensible conclusions; and solve problems and make decisions based on analytical	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate competence in argumentation by identifying issues, evidence and reasoning processes: recognizing various types of arguments, analyzing components of arguments, and formulating good arguments, including a significant focus on inductive reasoning as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the presence of arguments, as distinguishable from explanations, illustrations, descriptions, or creative works. • Identify the components of an argument (premises/evidence and conclusion/thesis) and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between these components. • Identify different types of reasoning (e.g., generalization, analogy, induction, deduction, and "reasoning to the best explanation"). 2. Demonstrate competence in analysis by breaking subject matter into components and identifying their interrelations to ascertain the defining features of the work and their contributions to the whole as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish fact from opinion. • Examine works in order to identify distinct elements, patterns, and their interrelationships and

	processes.	<p>express their significance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate competence in identifying assumptions, assessing the quality and reliability of sources of evidence, and learning the criteria for evaluating the success of each kind of inference as outlined below : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the reliability, reasonableness, and perspective of the sources of evidence. Identify their own assumptions and minimize confirmation (“my-side”) bias while considering viewpoints other than their own. Apply criteria for evaluating the success of each kind of inference Draw together disparate claims into a coherent whole in order to arrive at well-reasoned and well-supported inferences that can be justified as a conclusion as outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and present an integrated, well-reasoned, and well-supported independent interpretation of ideas based on appropriate evidence and methodology.
Continuing Learning/ Information Literacy Committee	Students will be able to use traditional and digital technology to access, evaluate, and apply information to the needs or questions confronting them throughout their academic, professional, and personal lives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate competency in using current, relevant technologies to solve problems, complete projects, and make informed decisions. Access, navigate, identify and evaluate information that is appropriate for their need(s) and audience(s). Synthesize information to broaden knowledge and experiences and produce both independent and collaborative work. Evaluate the economic, legal, ethical, and social issues surrounding the access and use of information and relevant technologies.
Historical Knowledge/ Understanding Committee	Students will study the interrelatedness of various realms of human experience from multiple historical perspectives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret and differentiate types of historical sources including popular, academic, primary, and secondary. Recognize ever-changing interpretations of history. Examine the development of societies in national and/or international contexts. Explain the influence and agency of race, class, gender, and other perspectives on historical events. Describe the impact of the past on subsequent events, including the present. Examine the complex, dynamic, and interrelated nature of change.
Social Phenomena Knowledge/ Understanding Committee	Students will develop an increased understanding of the influences that shape a person’s, or group’s attitudes, beliefs, emotions, symbols, and actions, and how these systems of influence are created, maintained, and altered by individual, familial, group, situational or cultural means.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explain social, organizational, political, economic, historical, or cultural elements that influence and are influenced by individuals and groups. Describe different theories and research methods used to investigate social phenomena. Recognize ethical issues pertaining to social contexts and phenomena. Explain issues of diversity within and across cultures.
Appreciation of the <u>Aesthetic</u> and Ethical Dimensions of Humankind Committee	Students will understand the diverse nature, meanings, and functions of creative endeavors through the study and practice of literature, music, the theatrical and visual arts, and related forms of expression.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Apply key concepts, terminology, and methodologies in the analysis of literary, performing, visual, or other arts. Identify works of visual, performing, or literary art within historical, social, political, cultural, and aesthetic contexts. Articulate ways in which literature, performance, the visual arts or related forms respond to and influence society and culture. Actively engage with the literary, performing or visual arts or other cultural forms through experience or creative expression. Articulate the ethical dimensions surrounding the creation, circulation, and interpretation of works of visual, performing, or literary art.
Appreciation	Students will	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Respond critically to ethical issues.

of the Aesthetic and Ethical Dimensions of Humankind Committee	identify ethical principles that guide individual and collective actions and apply those principles to the analysis of contemporary social and political problems.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Apply appropriate concepts and terminology in identifying ethical problems, proposing and defending solutions to them.3. Apply standards and practices of scholarship, research, and documentation to defend positions and beliefs, including reevaluating beliefs in light of unforeseen implications or new evidence.4. Recognize the value of creative, collaborative, and innovative approaches to problem-solving, including the ability to acknowledge differing points of view.
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ADDITIONAL SYLLABUS INFORMATION

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather/emergency closings, and more, please go to the following website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123|

Hey, are you still reading? The syllabus is over—go get started on the actual work! 😊