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.*

Texts:

❖ Rather than having you spend $150 on a textbook, I will post all short story and poem readings on BlackBoard. You should also review all handouts and powerpoints carefully and frequently: consider that stuff your textbook!

❖ You are **required** to purchase one play: *Equus* by Peter Shaffer. I recommend the Penguin Plays edition, which can be found on Amazon for a penny last I checked. That is the one my page numbers will refer to.

❖ 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.

What to Expect:

First, welcome to a whirlwind section of English 102! For the next 35 days—that's right, only THIRTY-FIVE days!—we will be reading, discussing, and analyzing some of the best short stories and poems ever written and read an entire play. Exciting, right? Well you know what else that means? We've got a heck of a lot to cram into 35 days. **My advice: if you plan to pass this course, make sure you can allocate the time it will take you to do all the work, and to do it well. Honestly, you should probably expect to spend ~2-4 hours per day doing work for this class.** There will be something due nearly *every* day.

This course is NOT easier because it is a 5-week course. It is NOT easier because it is online. Both of those aspects actually make it quite a bit MORE challenging. ENG 102 is ENG 102; that means that you will be completing the same amount of work that you would in a traditional 16-week semester…all *crammed* into 35 days. If you are a struggling reader or writer, then this class is probably not for you. THIS WILL BE CHALLENGING! Of course, that should also make success all the more rewarding!

Something less frightening: It's worth knowing that I have taught this same class as a winter session, which is only 19 days long! Most of those students realized what they were getting into and really did quite well—and you have twice as much time as them 😊.

The Syllabus

Think of this syllabus as a contract. It's my best attempt to tell you honestly and accurately what you can expect in the course. All rules and expectations are clearly outlined (I hope), and unless you experience some major medical emergency and notify me ASAP there won't be any exceptions. You probably have jobs and family responsibilities and other classes and friends and such. So do I; so does everyone else in this class. That means that none of us are special, so none of us should expect special treatment.

(NO) 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 if you need further explanation.

Everything will be due *before* 11:59 PM.

Schedule:

I will provide very clear daily instructions in the form of a "To Do" list regarding what needs to be accomplished each day. **FOLLOW THOSE DIRECTIONS.**

You can also download a calendar with the assignments and due dates in the "Important Due Dates" section of BlackBoard. I ABSOLUTELY encourage you to get ahead as much as possible. Use the week before classes start when Distance Learning unlocks the Bboard shell; I've got *everything* posted! In addition to the discussion postings detailed below, there will be powerpoints, notes, and other such items for you to read/review as well.

Just as I am holding you to very strict deadlines, I assure you that I will be working just as hard as you. I will grade and return your work as soon as possible; that is my daily homework. That is also another reason I have zero tolerance for late work.

BlackBoard Mail Policy:

o I will always do my best to reply within 24 hours.
o PLEASE use the "**BlackBoard Mail**" link (NOT external e-mail) to send me questions that are of a personal nature.
o Otherwise, **PLEASE** post all other 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.
o **Note:** Be sure to check both your BlackBoard mail and the "Course Questions" board as I expect you to know/follow any answers/advice I post there whether or not you are the one who asked the

Office Hours:

Because this is an online summer class, the professor is *not* in his office at all. Sorry! Don't bother calling my office phone; stick to the Course Questions discussion board and internal BlackBoard e-mail; I promise I will check and reply promptly!

Assignments:

*Short Story Test 15%

*Discussion Posts 20%

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

*Poetry Essay (3-5 pages) 20%

*Drama Essay (5-8 pages) 25%

Revision:

Unlike other English classes you may have taken, there are **no re-writes or extra credit assignments** of any kind. Every assignment counts for *a lot* of your final grade, so make sure to do your best on every assignment. *Normally*, revision is something I encourage; however, in this abbreviated session we simply do not have time, so make sure you get it right the first time. Feel free to run ideas and outlines by me!

Grading:

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

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. Textual analysis is thorough and insightful.

B papers are well *above average* in those areas, with a few grammatical issues and generally less development. Textual evidence is present, but analysis could be more thorough.

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 and are closer to the minimum page requirement. Ideas lack depth and analysis of quotations is limited and often just summary.

D papers are *below average* and contain numerous grammatical/mechanical errors, are not organized logically, have repetition rather than development, demonstrate limited understanding of the text. Textual evidence is sparse.

F papers are *very weak* and have significant error patterns in grammar and/or mechanics, lack basic essay structure/organization, lack coherent paragraphs, have little/no development or direct textual support, and/or do not follow the assignment.

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, refer back to all course materials, and **proofread** (I recommend, slowly and out loud!): the three papers make up 65% of your grade!

Discussion Board:

Just about every other day during the first two units, you will choose one of the short stories or poems assigned, write a **Close Reading** on it, and respond to a classmate's posting. You will not be able to see others' postings until *after* you submit your work. At that point, you will also be able to see the sample posts I wrote. The MOST IMPORTANT MATERIALS for this semester-long assignment are all in the "CLOSE READING MATERIALS" folder (located in one of the first days' folders).

1) Your Post: Your discussion posts are the **Close Reading** assignment. See all the materials in the first "All Close Reading Materials" folder. Writing should be formal, academic, and meet all required criteria stated in the directions/checklists/rubric/outline. This will be graded on a 0-10 scale.

2) Your Reply: You must write your reply to a classmate who posted on a **different reading from the one you chose to post about.** The goal is not so much to praise or criticize the original post; rather it is to support or challenge your classmate's interpretation by offering further evidence or counter-evidence. Your reply must:

a. be about 150 words
b. include a quotation from the story
c. be a bit more relaxed and feel free to write "conversationally" (contractions are fine here, first and second person are okay), but spelling/grammar should still be strong.

The reply should reflect real *engagement* with your classmate's ideas. 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.
This will be graded on a 0-5 scale. As long as you put some *thought* into the reply and meet the above criteria, this should be an easy 5.

Discussion board posts are not editable once submitted; do not post until you are sure you have clearly said what you have to say.

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Discussion Board Grading Scale

Each day, your total Discussion Board grade will be out of 15 possible points.
➢ Please note that I *rarely* give out 10s on discussion board posts – your work must be truly exceptional to receive a *perfect* score.
➢ 9s and 10s are reserved for those students who are going above and beyond basic course expectations and who are thus engaging in well above-average work. 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 7.5).
➢ I have programmed Bboard to automatically drop your lowest discussion grade.

Odds & Ends

- ❖ **Follow Directions:** One of the most important skills required to successfully complete an online course (or any course for that matter) is the ability to *follow directions*. I have done my best to make the design of BlackBoard as intuitive as possible and to clearly label everything. I have arranged the class into daily folders. In each folder, you will see a "To Do" list: <u>follow that</u>. There will be powerpoints, and handouts, and checklists, and directions: refer back to them regularly. The materials on BlackBoard ARE your textbook, so use them. After finishing reading over this exciting syllabus, the next thing to do is to watch the "Intro to Course" video. Then you will move on to Unit 1, the first days' folder, and your first discussion post. Trust me, it will be easy to see who has followed directions…

- ❖ **Get Ahead:** Never wait until the final seconds, or minutes, or even hours to submit work. What happens if your internet fails, or BlackBoard kicks you off, or your dog runs away or…whatever! Don't risk getting a zero by cutting it close. Remember my late work policy and know that the entire course is unlocked and just waiting for you to get crackin'.

- ❖ **Workload:** In my section of ENG 102, you will 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.

- ❖ **Close Readings:** This assignment—which will comprise pretty much all of your discussion posts—*can* be difficult for students at first because, typically, it is not a type of writing/thinking they have been exposed to. As long as you follow directions, use the materials provided, and read the samples I have posted (after you post), then you should quickly get the hang of it! Remember, it's going to be all about focusing on specific words in the quote you choose to analyze.

- ❖ **My Goal:** I swear, the goal of this syllabus is not to scare you off. I am a stickler for rules/deadlines, but other than that I'm a pretty nice, down-to-earth guy (I think so at least). The nicest thing I can do is to plainly lay out all rules, expectations, and deadlines on day one so that everything is crystal clear. I promise that I will be busting my butt, too, and I will return all work as quickly as possible (honestly, I strive for a 24 hour turn-around). None of the assignments are "busy work." Your time and mine are too valuable for that. I really have tried to thoughtfully design a course that will help you become a stronger <u>reader, writer, and *thinker*</u>. While there will be a lot of work, I truly hope that you are able to enjoy the class and feel rewarded for everything you put into it. Remember, what you get out of anything depends on what you put into it.

G'Luck!

(p.s. Definitely READ the next page on Plagiarism carefully!)

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

College Policy: "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)

My Explanation: If you do any of the following, then you have plagiarized:
o   Turn in material you did not write,
o   Turn in papers written by you for another class (either high school or college),
o   Turn in papers you drafted but that were revised or edited by another,
o   Fail to paraphrase, summarize, or quote sources properly,
o   Turn in papers written by someone else and edited or revised by you, or
o   Get any of your *ideas* from another source. (*Anywhere* on the internet, for example)

My Penalties:
- Presenting another person'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. (I will enter a zero for all discussion posts past and future.)
- Plagiarism 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.

My Plea: 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 is 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)!** I'll find out, and it's *really* not worth the consequences. **Remember, if you can find something online, so can I.** *And I do check!*

Unfortunately: Despite this warning, in ten years I have never taught this course without failing at least one student for plagiarism.

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 page is course and college information that I have to include. Read at your leisure.

TAP Competencies and Course Outcomes

Critical Analysis and Logical Thinking (TAP 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.

Written Communication (TAP 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.

Outcomes/Objectives of Course

The students in ENG 102 will:

- Read works of recognized merit in poetry, drama, fiction and the essay, the readings to be drawn from a variety of historical eras.
- Read works of literary criticism—both primary and secondary sources.
- Learn about the historical, social, cultural, and creative contexts that influence the writing of literature from period to period.
- Learn about the relationship between the literature and the lives of the writers.
- Learn to interpret literature on the basis of textual evidence.
- Learn to recognize and understand the value of standard literary elements and devices within literary works.
- Learn to recognize conventional themes within and among literary works learn to distinguish between generally-held and private interpretations, and to accept that there may be more than one valid interpretation of a given work.
- Learn about evaluating literature by means of various strategies of literary criticism.
- Write formal documented essays combining personal analysis with professional analysis gathered from critical texts.
- Write examinations in acceptable prose, demonstrating a grasp of the elements listed above.

College Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with the college's policies, which can be found here:
http://mxcc.edu/catalog/academic-policies

Hey, are you still reading?

The syllabus is over—go get started on the actual work! ☺

Go watch the "Intro to Course" video, and then

click on the "Short Story" Unit and go into the first days' folder