

**Course Syllabus: English 102: Literature & Composition Online Winter 2017-2018 (CRN 4009)**

**Professor:** Adam Florida

**E-mail:** [aflordia@mxcc.edu](mailto:aflordia@mxcc.edu) (please use Bboard Mail not external e-mail)

**Phone:** 860-343-5805 (Don't bother calling; I won't be in the office at all over winter "break")



# IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

## 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.*

## BlackBoard Mail Policy:



- I will always do my best to reply within 12 hours.
- PLEASE use the "**BlackBoard Mail**" link (NOT external e-mail) to send me 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.
- Note:** Be sure to check both your BlackBoard mail 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.

## Really Important Note:



Welcome to a whirlwind section of English 102! For the next 20 days—that's right, only twenty 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 20 days. My advice: if you plan to pass this course, take time off from your job and tell your friends and family that you won't see them for the next twenty days. **Honestly, you should expect to spend 3-6 hours per day doing work for this class.** When I taught this as a ground course over the winter, the class was 3.5 hours/day 5 days/week. Then students would have to go home and do all the reading and writing on top of that.

This course is NOT easier because it is a winter 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 semester...all *crammed* into 20 days. If you are a struggling reader or writer, then this class is probably not for you. **THIS WILL BE CHALLENGING**—and, hopefully, rewarding in the end!

### Texts:



- ❖ Rather than having you spend \$150 on a textbook, I will post all 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.
- ❖ 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.

### 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%

### 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!

### (NO) 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.

### (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 for further explanation.

Everything will be due either by noon or by 8 PM.

### 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. In each folder, you will see a “To Do” list: follow that. There will be powerpoints, and handouts, and checklists, and directions: refer back to them regularly.
- ❖ **Get Ahead:** This might be wishful thinking in this particular online course, but I do encourage you to get as ahead in the work as possible. Everything will be posted and available when Distance Learning opens the course to you the week before it officially starts; I strongly encourage you to use that time to get ahead! That gives you an extra 33% of class time essentially.
- ❖ **My Goal:** 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.
- ❖ **Reassurance:** I swear, the goal of this syllabus is not to scare you off. I just want you all to know exactly what you are getting into so that you don’t enter the course with false pretenses. I am a stickler for rules, but other than that I’m a pretty nice, easy-going guy (I think so at least). If you’re willing to work hard, there’s no reason you can’t do very well in this course. In fact, when I taught this same online class last winter, here is how the students did: 4 As, 7 Bs, 3 Cs, 2 Ds, 6 Fs. Note that half of those Fs were students who simply did not turn in nearly any work.

## Discussion Board:



Each day during the first two units, you will choose one of the poems or stories 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.

**1) Your Post:** Your discussion posts are the **Close Reading** assignment. See all the materials in the first day's "Handouts" folder. 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 should:

- 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.

**Discussion board posts are not editable once submitted; don't post until you're sure you've 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 extraordinary. Simply meeting the criteria for the assignment does not earn you an A.
- 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.
- 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 drop your lowest discussion grade.

## 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:

- 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 that were 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)

### **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!**

### Proposed Schedule:

Here is an overview of what the “semester” holds for you. I ABSOLUTELY encourage you to get ahead as much as possible. Heck, the BlackBoard course shell is available a week before the course officially starts—that’s a whole extra week to do this work. I will have everything available/unlocked on Bboard as soon as the course “goes live.” I will also provide very clear daily instructions regarding what needs to be accomplished each day. In addition to the below, there will be powerpoints, notes, and other such items for you to read/review as well.

Date	To Do Today	Due Tomorrow by Noon	Due Tomorrow by 8 PM
Tuesday 12/26	-Read Notes and “Scarlet Ibis” -Begin Ibis Packet	---	<b>-Scarlet Ibis Test Packet</b>
Wednesday 12/27	<b>-Submit Test Packet by 8PM</b> -Read “The Lottery” and “The Story of an Hour”	*Post on “The Lottery” or “The Story of an Hour”	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Thursday 12/28	-Read “The Things They Carried,” and “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,”	*Post on “The Things They Carried” or “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Friday 12/29	-Read “A Rose for Emily,” “The Chrysanthemums,” and “Eveline”	*Post on “A Rose for Emily,” “Chrysanthemums,” or “Eveline”	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Saturday 12/30	-Read “I Stand Here Ironing,” “Hills Like White Elephants,” and “The Cask of Amontillado”	*Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Nothing (or get ahead...)
Sunday 12/31	-Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Nothing (or get ahead...)
Monday 1/1	-Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Post on “Hills Like White Elephants,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” or “I Stand Here Ironing”	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Tuesday 1/2	-Read “A+P,” “Araby,”	*Post on “A+P” or “Araby”	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Wednesday 1/3	<b>Write Short Story Essay</b>	---	<b>Short Story Essay Due</b>
Thursday 1/4	<b>-Short Story Essay due by 8PM</b> -Read Elizabethan + Metaphysical Poems	*Post on one of the Elizabethan + Metaphysical Poems	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Friday 1/5	-Read Romantics and Victorians Poems	*Post on one of the Romantic + Victorian Poems	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Saturday 1/6	-Read Modernists Poems and Prufrock	*Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Nothing (or get ahead...)
Sunday 1/7	-Nothing (or get ahead...)	*Post on one of the Modernist Poems	*Reply to a classmate’s post
Monday 1/8	<b>Write Poetry Essay</b>	---	<b>Poetry Essay Due</b>
Tuesday 1/9	<b>-Poetry Essay Due by 8PM</b> -Read all of Act 1 of <i>Equus</i>	---	* <i>Equus</i> Questions 1
Wednesday 1/10	- Finish <i>Equus</i>		* <i>Equus</i> Questions 2
Thursday 1/11	-Research	---	---
Friday 1/12	-Research	---	<b>Drama Essay Due</b>

Saturday 1/13	<b>-Drama Essay Due by 8PM</b>	---	---
Sunday 1/14	*You're D-O-N-E. Take a huge sigh of relief and pat yourself on the back!	---	---

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

## *TAP Competencies:*

### **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.

### *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.



### 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/](http://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! 😊**

**Click on the “Short Story” Unit and go into the first day’s folder**