

ADVANCED COMPOSITION Spring 2010

In this section of 120A we will concentrate on how to write effective essays about literature. This will not be a “general” writing class; our focus is literature and how one makes an argument about literary texts. We will consider the genres of poetry, short fiction, and novels. Students will write two shorter essays and then choose one of the “anchor” texts and write a longer research paper. We will cover such issues as crafting an argumentative thesis, marshalling evidence from the text, seeking and incorporating secondary sources, and analyzing ideas and material in a compelling fashion.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

M-1/25--INTRODUCTION

W-1/27--In-Class Essay & Gardner, Chapters 1 ("The Role of Good Reading") & 2 ("The Writing Process")

M-2/1--

W-2/3-- Gardner, Chapter 5 ("Writing About Poems")

M-2/8--Anne Bradstreet, "The Author to Her Book," E. A. Robinson, "Miniver Cheevy," & Robert Frost "Come In" (web site)

W-2/10--Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" & W. B. Yeats's "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop" (web)

M-2/15--**CLASS CUT DUE TO IMPOSED FURLOUGH***

W-2/17--Paragraphing (web)

M-2/22-- Emily Dickenson, "The Soul Selects her own Society--" & Wallace Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar" (web)

W-2/24--Hacker, "Clarity" & Sentences (web)

M-3/1--WORKSHOP (bring *complete* draft of poetry essay)

W-3/3--James Joyce, "Araby" (web) **PAPER DUE!!**

M-3/8--Herman Melville "Bartleby the Scrivener" (web)

W-3/10--Nathanael Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" (web)

M-3/15--**CLASS CUT DUE TO IMPOSED FURLOUGH***

W-3/17--Margaret Atwood, "Rape Fantasies" (web)

M-3/22-- WORKSHOP (bring *complete* draft of short fiction essay)

W-3/24--Ernest Hemingway "Hills Like White Elephants" (web) **PAPER DUE!!**

M--3/29--**SPRING BREAK**

M-4/5--Review of Critical articles on Hemingway (web)

W-4/7--Resources Workshop in Computer Lab

M-4/12--Grammar (web)

W-4/14--**CLASS CUT DUE TO IMPOSED FURLOUGH***

M-4/19-- Gardner, Chapter 7 ("Writing a Literary Research Paper")
W-4/21--

Annotated Bib Due

M-4/26-- WORKSHOP (bring complete draft of final essay)
W-4/28-- "**PAPER DUE!!**"

M-5/3--Conferences

W-5/5--**CLASS CUT DUE TO IMPOSED FURLOUGH***

M-5/10--Conferences

W-5/12-- **Last Day of Instruction**

****FURLOUGHS**--As part of the state's attempts to balance its budget, furloughs have been imposed on all faculty and staff for the academic year 2009-10. I have noted those dates when we will not hold class, and there are other non-instructional days during which I am also furloughed. Under the terms established by the university and the state, I am not allowed to conduct university business; therefore, I will not be available to teach, to hold office visits, nor to respond to phone calls or emails. These furlough conditions are out of my hands; if you have objections, I recommend you address them to the proper authorities--Gov. Schwarzenegger, your representatives in the California Senate and Assembly, and Charles Reed, Chancellor of the CSU.*

One of the most annoying aspects of the state's failure to adequately fund the university extends to simple items, like paper. The English department does not have the resources to provide copies of all exercise or essays we will be discussing. Therefore, **you must, must, must check my web site constantly.** There I will post materials for this class that I expect you to **download, read, and prepare these on the dates assigned above and bring all assigned materials to class.** I will not accept any excuses that you forgot, couldn't find the material, or were too busy with other assignments. This is a **firm requirement**—be prepared!

You should also look through the "Important Handouts" section of my web site, especially consider "Guidelines for Preparing an English Essay," "English Department Writing Standards," the two guides to MLA formatting, and the "Key to Marginal Symbols." These materials have been prepared to help you; make full use of them.

TEXTS

Janet Gardner, <i>Writing About Literature</i>	Required
Diana Hacker, <i>A Pocket Manual of Style</i>	Required
Joan Didion. <i>Play It as It Lays</i>	Required
Herman Melville. <i>Billy Budd</i>	
Ralph Ellison. <i>Invisible Man</i>	Choose One
Marilynne Robinson. <i>Housekeeping</i>	
F. Scott Fitzgerald. <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	

INSTRUCTOR--Dave Madden, Calaveras 156, Office Hrs--MW 11:00-12:00; Phone: 278-5623 or 278-6586; Email: **maddendw@csus.edu**. The course syllabus and general policies can also be found at my home page--**<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/m/maddendw>**

EXPECTATIONS

- *Complete all reading assignments by dates assigned
- *Participate in class discussions
- *Regular class attendance

Since this is not a correspondence course, attendance is mandatory. A student will be allowed no more than two (2) unexcused absences (and no more than two excused absences). Those who have more than 2 unexcused absences will have one third of a grade deducted from the final grade for each additional absence. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If a student arrives after attendance has been taken, it is his/her responsibility to see that s/he is recorded as being present. Excused absences will be granted only for extenuating circumstances (neither general malaise nor an assignment in another class will do) and must be cleared no later than the next class period. It is your responsibility to check your attendance; my records are final.

Class begins on the hour; students arriving consistently late by more than 5 minutes will be considered absent for any time missed. The time missed will be calculated as absences which will affect the final grade as explained above.

GRADING

The final course grade will be based on;

- 1 poetry essay--20% final grade
- 1 short fiction essay—25% final grade
- 1 research essay--45% final grade
- Exercises--10% final grade
- Class participation & improvement--swing factors

*To miss any of the assignments above will result in an automatic failure of the course.
NO EXCEPTIONS.

GRADING STANDARDS

- A Exemplary achievement of the course objectives. In addition to being clearly and significantly above the requirements, the work exhibited is of an independent, creative, contributory nature.
- B Superior achievement of the course objectives. The performance is clearly and significantly above the satisfactory fulfillment of course requirements.

- C Satisfactory achievement of the course objectives. The student is now prepared for advanced work or study.
- D Unsatisfactory achievement toward the course objectives, yet achievement of a sufficient proportion of the objectives so that it is not necessary to repeat the course unless required to do so by the academic department.
- F Ineffective achievement toward the course objectives. The student has made no clearly significant progress.

NB: I do not negotiate grades. If you have questions about performance on an assignment (not the grade), I will be glad to explain, but I will not barter a grade up or down. If you wish to discuss a paper, you may not do so on the day it is returned to you; see me at my next office hour. No exceptions.

GENERAL POLICIES

LATE PAPERS--in this class they do not exist; the date an assignment is due is the date the assignment is due. If there is some clear and compelling reason for a late paper (not great powder at one's favorite ski resort, general malaise, or an assignment in any other class), see or call me in advance of submission. All papers must be submitted in class on date due, not some time that day.

TYPING--mandatory for all papers and out-of-class exercises or assignments. Papers should be neat and free of extreme typographical errors. Double-space, use 1" margins, and use *only* a 12 pt font. Number pages, beginning with second page, in upper right hand corner, and secure pages only with a staple in the upper left hand corner. On a cover page center the title and put in the lower right hand corner your name, the date the assignment is due, the topic number you are addressing, and my name.

PLAGIARISM—Plagiarism is the false assumption of authorship, and, as the *MLA Handbook* notes, it constitutes the “use of another person’s ideas, information, or expressions without acknowledging that person’s work. . . Passing off another person’s ideas, information, or expressions as your own to get a better grade or gain some other advantage constitutes fraud.” Simply put, if you didn’t think of it, didn’t say it, or didn’t write it, you must give full attribution in the form of proper citation. I will not tolerate plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, and I will fail anyone I catch cheating and report that student to the Dean of Students. See Hacker “Avoiding plagiarism” (107-09). For information on the university’s policy concerning plagiarism and academic honesty, see <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/UMA00150.htm>.

BEHAVIOR---recently a professor in another department did a survey of standards of behavior, and the results suggested there is some confusion about what is (and is not) acceptable in university classes. She has advised that professors define their standards, so here are mine: certain fundamental standards of behavior must be observed in this

class. Common courtesy and respect is demanded of all enrolled in this class. Therefore you are not to read the newspaper or a textbook for another course once the class meeting has begun. **Turn off your cell phones**; no one is to take or make a call or read or send a text message during class. **No laptops**; turn them off. Likewise, no one is to work on assignments for another course in this class. Do not talk or otherwise interrupt me or another student who is speaking, and under no condition will anyone be permitted to sleep during class lectures or discussions. Those who cannot or will not follow these obvious rules of behavior will be counted as absent for that class period and may be subject to dismissal from the course.

MISCELLANEOUS--Students must keep abreast of assignments; I will not accept the excuse that because someone misses a class s/he did not know there was a change in the syllabus or an assignment. If there are any changes in the syllabus, they will be announced in class, and students are then responsible for these on dates announced.