

English 3398
Spring 2013
TU/TH 12:45-2:05
Denney Hall 202

Prof. Friedman
Office Hours: TU/TH 2:15-3:15
& by appointment (Denney 565)
Email: friedman.193@osu.edu

WRITING FOR ENGLISH MAJORS

This course will focus on developing writing skills essential to academic English studies. We will explore what it means to read critically or to interpret literary texts from different genres (poetry, narrative fiction, and drama) as well as narrative films. Through class discussions, workshop activities, and short written assignments, we will practice raising significant questions of interpretation about texts and developing arguments in response to these questions. We will also explore different approaches to interpreting the texts on our syllabus. To emphasize the process of writing, our course will be structured around a series of essay assignments, which allow you to practice the range of techniques necessary to produce high-quality essays about literature: outlining, doing close analysis, using textual evidence, thesis writing, using argumentative rhetoric effectively, organizing paragraphs, responding to other critics, and revising.

Required Texts:

- F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender Is the Night* (Scribner)
- Kelley Griffith, *Writing Essays about Literature*, 8th ed. (Wadsworth)
- August Wilson, *The Piano Lesson* (Plume)

Available at Be&N OSU, SBX, College Town, UBX, Buckeye Books; call ahead to check stock

*Supplementary readings (anything not indicated as being in one of the texts listed above) are available through the library's e-reserves system; use the "Content" page of our class's Carmen site (carmen.osu.edu). A streaming video of *Zodiac* will be available through the university's Secured Media Library (drm.osu.edu); further instructions to follow.

Requirements:

- One 3-page essay (=15% of final grade)
- One 5-page essay (=17.5% of final grade)
- One 8-10-page research paper (=25% of final grade)
- Ten short written exercises (average score=20% of final grade)
- One turn at leading class discussion (=5% of final grade)
- Class participation (=17.5% of final grade)
- Regular attendance (see policy below)

Schedule of Assignments (subject to minor changes):

What is literature? Why do we read it? What is interpretation? Why do we (have to) write about literature? What does writing have to do with interpretation?

TU 1/8 Course Introduction

TH 1/10 Reading Due: Griffith, *Writing Essays about Literature*: pp. 3-35, 225-228 (Chapters 1, 2, and 7)

Poetry / Close Reading

Poetry as form: What does it mean to do a formalist reading?

TU 1/15 Reading Due: Griffith, *Writing*: pp. 115-137 (from Ch. 5)
Elizabeth Bishop, "One Art," "The Man-Moth," "The Fish," "In the Waiting Room"

Writing Due: Short Exercise 1

TH 1/17 Reading Due: Bishop, "Arrival at Santos," "The Armadillo"
Griffith, *Writing*: pp. 137-168 (from Ch. 5)

Poems in sequence: the collection.

TU 1/22 Reading Due: Bishop, "Questions of Travel," "Brazil, January 1, 1502," "Squatter's Children"

Writing Due: Short Exercise 2

Poetry and context: What does it mean to read contextually?

TH 1/24 Reading Due: Bishop, "Manuelzinho," "Electrical Storm," "Song for the Rainy Season," "Twelfth Morning; or What You Will," "The Burglar of Babylon"

TU 1/29 Reading Due: Bishop, "The Riverman"
"Dossier" on Bishop's "The Riverman" (Carmen)

Writing Due: FIRST ESSAY

Drama / Thesis-Driven Writing

Drama as form: Can we do close readings of plays?

TH 1/31 Reading Due: Griffith, *Writing*: Chapter 4 (pp. 83-111)
Susan Glaspell, "Trifles" (in Appendix to Griffith)

Drama and context: Conflict, dialogue, and history; reading thematically.

TU 2/5 Reading Due: August Wilson, *The Piano Lesson*, Act 1

TH 2/7 Reading Due: Wilson, *The Piano Lesson*, Act 2 (finish the play)

Writing Due: Short Exercise 3

Drama and performance: Theater as textual interpretation.

TU 2/12 Screening Due: *The Piano Lesson*, dir. Lloyd Richards (2002)

Reading Due: Griffith, *Writing*: Chapter 8 (pp. 229-247)

Film / Drafting and Revising

Analyzing film: Can we “read” something that’s not a text?

TH 2/14 Screening Due: First part of *Zodiac* (2007), dir. David Fincher (watch up to 1:38:00 mark)

Writing Due: DRAFT OF SECOND ESSAY

TU 2/19 Screening Due: Finish *Zodiac*

Writing Due: Short Exercise 4

Narrative Fiction / Entering the Critical Conversation

Narrative as form: The tension between storytelling and description.

TH 2/21 Reading Due: Griffith, *Writing*: Chapter 3
Edgar Allan Poe, “The Cask of Amontillado” (in Appendix to Griffith)
Ernest Hemingway, “Hills like White Elephants” (in Appendix to Griffith)

Narrative and poetics: Can we close read prose fiction?

TU 2/26 Reading Due: F. Scott Fitzgerald, “May Day”

Writing Due: Short Exercise 5

Narrative and context: Approaching a “familiar” author. Recognizing/analyzing discourses.

TH 2/28 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, “Echoes of the Jazz Age”
Fitzgerald, *Tender Is the Night*: Book 1, Chapters i-iv

Writing Due: SECOND ESSAY DUE (FINAL VERSION)

TU 3/5 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: Book 1, Chapters v-xvi
Fitzgerald, letter to Edmund Wilson, Spring 1925
Jon Lewis, from *American Film: A History*

Writing Due: Short Exercise 6

- TH 3/7 Class does not meet
- TU 3/12 Spring Break
- TH 3/14 Spring Break
- TU 3/19 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: finish Book 1
- TH 3/21 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: Book 2, Chapters i-viii
Sigmund Freud, “Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through”
- TU 3/26 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: Book 2, Chapters ix-xix
- Writing Due: Short Exercise 7
- TH 3/28 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: Book 2, Chapter xx-Book 3, Chapter ii
- TU 4/2 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: Book 3, Chapters iii-vii
Fitzgerald, letter to Edmund Wilson, May 1921
Henry Fairfield Osborn, Prefaces to Madison Grant’s *The Passing of the Great Race*
Lothrop Stoddard, from *The Rising Tide of Color*
- Writing Due: Short Exercise 8
- TH 4/4 Reading Due: Fitzgerald, *Tender*: finish novel
Reviews by Gilbert Seldes, John Chamberlain, Philip Rahv, Malcolm Cowley, and C.
Hartley Grattan
- Literary criticism: Specialized approaches to textual analysis*
- TU 4/9 Reading Due: Milton Stern, “*Tender Is the Night* and American History”
- Writing Due: Short Exercise 9
- TH 4/11 Reading Due: Dana Brand, “Tourism and Modernity in *Tender Is the Night*”
Susan Keller, “The Riviera’s Golden Boy: Fitzgerald, Cosmopolitan Tanning, and
Racial Commodities in *Tender Is the Night*”
- TU 4/16 Writing Due: Short Exercise 10
- Final paper research workshop, details t.b.a.
- TH 4/18 Final paper research workshop, details t.b.a.
- M 4/29 << FINAL PAPER DUE: to English Dept. Office (421 Denney), by 4:00 >>
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Course Policies/Description of Assignments:

Attendance: Your attendance at class meetings is required. You are allowed to miss two meetings (for any reason) without penalty. Each subsequent absence beyond these two will result in a five-point reduction of your overall grade for the course.

If, on a particular day, you need to leave class a bit early for some legitimate reason—to get to a job interview, to attend a special event for another class, and so on—please let me know ahead of time so that I will know why you are leaving. Leaving class before the period ends is, otherwise, rude and disruptive; I will consider anyone who leaves early without checking with me first to be absent from the day's meeting.

Participation: Participation in class discussions and small-group activities is required, not optional: read/view the assigned material and come to class ready to respond to it. Your involvement in class discussion is essential to the learning experience that this course offers: you learn the concepts and interpretive strategies that the course introduces by trying them out in conversation with your classmates. It's also your opportunity to demonstrate the quality of the work you are doing as a critical reader and to shape how we study the assigned material, by sharing your ideas, questions, and concerns about it.

My evaluation of the quality of your contributions to discussion over the course of the semester represents a substantial portion of your final grade. In order to be able to judge students' participation, I must have some record to consider—it is impossible to compare something to nothing. Hence, I reserve the right to call on people during class. Anything that prevents you from being able to participate in or engage with the activities of the class—sleeping, reading or sending text messages, surfing the web on a laptop—will negatively affect this aspect of your grade.

Discussion leadership: Each member of the class will lead a brief portion of class discussion on an assigned day: see the schedule distributed at the first class meeting. Your task here is to identify for the class some theme, issue, or point of literary technique in the assigned reading that you find significant—and to get the class talking about this theme/issue/point. While there are various ways of approaching this assignment, a basic and effective one would be to sketch out your topic for the class very briefly and then to pose a series of thought-provoking questions that relate to it. While you are not responsible for occupying a lot of class time (around 10-15 minutes), you are expected to establish a productive direction for the discussion to take. The goal of this assignment is to encourage student participation and to give you the chance to use your concerns and interests to guide our discussions.

Short written exercises: Beginning Tuesday, January 15, you will hand in a series of 10 written exercises; most will be due on Tuesdays, with a few on Thursdays—see above schedule for exact due dates. All of these exercises will serve as preparation for the longer essays, formalizing your process of planning, drafting, and revising those essays. While the length and format of these exercises will vary—from outlines to short, formal essays—I expect legible, typed work that you have proofread to eliminate mechanical mistakes. Specific prompts/instructions will be distributed in class on the meeting before each exercise is due; it is your responsibility to keep up to date with the assignments. I will grade these exercises on a 10-point scale and take the average of the 10 scores to calculate this component (20%) of your final grade. Any missed exercise will be factored into this component of your grade as a zero, so it's essential that you complete them all.

Essays: Detailed topics for the longer essays will be distributed at least two weeks before the due dates (see above schedule). Essays submitted after the due date will not be accepted without prior approval. The basic format for each essay will be as follows. Essay 1 (3 pages): A close reading of one of the assigned poems. Essay 2 (5 pages): A thesis-driven essay advancing a comprehensive interpretation of the play. You will submit a complete draft of this essay for my review in advance of the final due date. Essay 3 (8-10 pages): A multi-part analysis of a crucial issue or theme in the novel, which engages with literary criticism and/or other secondary sources.

A Word on Office Hours and Writing Consultation: I am available in my office (Denney 565) every Tuesday and Thursday after class and encourage you to see me during this time to talk about paper writing or to discuss other aspects of the course material. I view one-on-one writing consultation as a central aspect of my job, and our small class size and focus on writing makes this activity especially feasible and valuable. Note also that the College of Arts and Sciences runs a writing center, which offers useful tutorials on projects like the ones assigned in our class. Consult the CSTW Writing Center website or call (688-5865) for more information.

University Policies:

Grading Scale:

A	93+	C+	79-77
A-	92-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	72-70
B	86-83	D	69-60
B-	82-80	E	59-

Academic Integrity: This course follows the standards laid out by the University's Office of Academic Affairs: "Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, and that all students will complete all academic...assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct* may constitute 'Academic Misconduct' [and lead to subsequent referral to the COAM]. OSU's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: 'Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process.' Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism [the unauthorized representation of another's ideas or words as one's own], collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination." The *Code of Student Conduct* is available online (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

*If you have any questions about academic integrity, please contact me, or consult the COAM's helpful website (<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/faq.html#faqlist>). We will be discussing the concept of plagiarism at length later in the quarter, but you are expected to be familiar already with university policies on plagiarism and other aspects of academic integrity.

Disability Services: The Office of Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall; x2-3307) offers support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Their policies and procedures can be viewed online (<http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/current.asp>).