

## **English 3000, Research and Methodology**

Dr Laura Miller

Office TLC 2238, x94891, [lmiller@westga.edu](mailto:lmiller@westga.edu)

Office Hours: MW 8:45-9:15; 12:30-1:45. F (online and by appointment) 8:45-12:45.

Class Meets: Pafford 309 MW 9:30-10:45

When people think about the research of scholars in English departments, they often envision people sitting around reading wonderful works of literature and appreciating literature's aesthetic qualities. Although this happens from time to time, the vast majority of literary research involves, well, *research*. Research includes the use of an appropriate methodology or formula to solve a problem or prove a hypothesis. In literary study, problems and hypotheses are identified and solved through a variety of approaches, which we will detail in this class. Just like scientists choose particular formulae that are best suited to the problems they address, so too do literary scholars. This class will teach you what several important methods are for literary study, and it will give you exposure in applying those methods to literary texts. As students progress in English departments and grow from undergraduates to graduate students to professors (if they want to get that far!), their methodologies grow more sophisticated and exacting. For now, however, we'll start off gradually and show you some basic tools that you can use to write about literature, as well as understand the literary criticism you encounter when you're assigned research papers in senior-level classes.

### **Course Goals**

- Students will cultivate skills in reading, writing, and critical analysis appropriate for the advanced English major.
- Students will understand major critical approaches that are employed in the field of literary studies.
- Students will be able to read, discuss, and analyze literary works using a variety of critical perspectives.
- Students will articulate how these perspectives both inform and direct our understanding and appreciation of literature.
- Students will develop competence in literary analysis from at least three different critical perspectives.
- Students will organize and complete a substantive research paper that demonstrates the ability to engage effectively in critical research and writing.
- Students will demonstrate in both oral and written work a discipline-specific critical facility through convincing and well supported analysis of course-related material.
- Students will demonstrate their command of academic English and of the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

### **Program Goals**

- Oral and written communication will be characterized by clarity, critical analysis, logic, coherence, persuasion, precision, and rhetorical awareness ([Core Curriculum learning outcomes I](#))
- Cultural and Social Perspectives: Cultural and social perspective will be characterized by cultural awareness and an understanding of the complexity and dynamic nature of social/political/economic systems; human and institutional behavior, values, and belief systems; historical and spatial relationship; and, flexibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance. ([Core Curriculum learning outcomes III](#))

- Aesthetic Perspective: Aesthetic perspective will be characterized by critical appreciation of and ability to make informed aesthetic judgments about the arts of various cultures as media for human expression (Core Curriculum learning outcomes V)
- This course fulfills an Area F requirement for English majors (all tracks) in the core.
- This course is required for the major in English as a prerequisite to upper-division study. It is designed to prepare students for their work in the major.
- This course will contribute to the larger goal of equipping students with a foundation in literary theory, research, and methods, with an emphasis on the issues surrounding literary study in contemporary culture.
- Students will develop the analytical, oral and written skills to pursue graduate study or careers in teaching, writing, business and a variety of other fields.
- Students will be able to define and pursue independent research agendas.
- This course contributes to the program goal of equipping students with a foundation in literary history and the issues surrounding literary study in contemporary culture.
- This course broadens students' desire and ability to take pleasure in their encounter with literature.

**Texts:** Peter Barry, *Literary Theory* (3rd edition). ISBN 9780719079276 (You need this one right away)

Steven J. Venturino, *Complete Idiot's Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* ISBN 9781615642410 (I know you are smart and not idiots! I have had students who were a bit frustrated with Barry's book for being too difficult in places, so I am including the *Idiot's Guide* to help you understand Barry better.)

*Broadview Anthology of British Literature, The 20th Century and Beyond*. ISBN 1551116146 (You need this one by the second week of class)

MLA Guidelines from the Purdue Online Writing Lab  
(<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>)

\*\*\*Bring the Barry book to class each day (and the Broadview when we are doing readings from it) and consult the Purdue OWL frequently so that you are citing correctly. We will also go over citation and bibliography in class as needed.

**Assignments:** 2-page mini-papers (4), worth 10% each, or 40% total

Exam on literary theory concepts/approaches, 25%

8-10-page Final paper/project using a theoretical perspective/methodology of your choice, 30%

Class participation, engagement, occasional quizzes, 15%

**Student Responsibilities:** Your main responsibilities are to come to class prepared, participate in discussions, turn in your assignments on time, and do as well as you can on the assignments. Assignments will be graded according to the English department's grading guidelines (available on the department website).

**Handouts for all assignments will be distributed in class and on CourseDen.**

### **Attendance policy**

- You are required to attend and participate in each session of this class.
- You will have **three free absence days** for life events, illness, and emergencies. You can miss these three sessions for any reason at all. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the work during that class. If you miss only one class, but it is on an exam or presentation

day, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

- **If you miss more than three class sessions**, your overall grade for the class will be reduced by one letter grade for each two additional class sessions missed. For example, if you earn a B in the class and you have missed five classes, your B will be reduced to a C. If you are having problems with attendance, please see me.
- **If you are late or absent, get notes from another classmate.** Most of the important announcements happen during the first ten minutes of class. Excessive lateness will also result in a deduction from the overall course grade. Look at your schedule and make sure you have enough time to get to class.

### **Class atmosphere and guidelines**

- You must do all of the required reading before coming to class so that you will understand our discussions. I will institute reading quizzes if not enough students are doing the reading.
- Be respectful of your classmates in class discussions.
- Take notes in class, even if you think you'll remember what is said.
- Silence all phones and laptops before class. **No texting or social media in class.** If there is an emergency and you must take a call or send a text, sit by the door and leave quickly and quietly to do so. If it's not worth getting up and leaving the classroom, then it can wait until class ends.

### **University policies that apply to all courses may be found at the following link:**

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf) You must familiarize yourself with these policies. They concern plagiarism/the honor code, the Americans with Disabilities Act, our credit hour policy, and some information regarding workload expectations for college-level classes.

**Citation Style and Formatting:** We will use MLA style and formatting on all essays for this class. If you ever have any questions about how to cite a source, please see me.

**Recycled papers:** no paper previously submitted for any course—even if you wrote it—will be accepted for course credit. If you would like to build on something you've worked on previously, bring your old paper by my office, and we'll arrange for you to develop another aspect of your topic.

**Late work** will be penalized 5 points for each day that it is late. Late includes everything following the last minute of class. So, a paper due on a Monday and turned in on a Wednesday loses ten points. A paper due on a Monday and turned in an hour after class ends will lose 5 points.

Other Important Dates:

Drop period ENDS 1/11

Add period ENDS 1/12

Withdrawal deadline to receive a grade of W March 2.

**Schedule of readings and assignments** (what is listed next to a date is DUE ON THAT DAY and will be covered in class): BT = Beginning Theory; BR = Broadview; IG = Idiot's Guide

Topic	Date	In-Class Activity	Reading, Due that day
Introduction	Jan 9	Intro: what this class will be like	Syllabus
Literary criticism	Jan 11	Before literary theory: Liberal Humanism	Read <i>Beginning Theory</i> , pp 1-37. Answer questions 1-4 on p. 8 and questions 1-6 on pp.

and literary theory: what it means and what we can do with it			11-12. For the second exercise, do as the author suggests and try to predict the right answers before filling in the correct ones. Also read the primary texts at the back of the book (318-324) (BT) Optional: Idiot's Guide Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 (IG)
	Jan 18	Structuralism	Read <i>Beginning Theory</i> , pp 38-58 Answer questions on 52, 53, and 55-56. (BT) Idiot's Guide Chapters 3, 4, 16 (IG)
	Jan 23	Poststructuralism/deconstruction	Read: Barry 59-76. Pay particular attention to the passages from Derrida on pages 66-67. (BT) Idiot's Guide Chapter 17 (IG)
	Jan 25	Poststructuralism: practical application:	Read: "Anna Liffey" (1041-1044) and "Against Love Poetry" (1045-1046) by Boland in the anthology (BR)
	Jan 30	Postmodernism	Read Barry pages 78-91, IG Chapter 19.
	Feb 1	Postmodernism practical application:	Beckett, <i>Krapp's Last Tape</i> (BR) (there are productions of the play on YouTube if it's challenging to read—you can follow along)
	Feb 6	Feminist and LGBTQ criticism	read <i>Beginning Theory</i> , pp 116-149 (BT), IG Chs 12 and 13.
	Feb 8	Marxist criticism	BT 151-165, IG Ch 9.
	Feb 13	Feminist/Marxist practical application	Read <i>Mrs. Warren's Profession</i> by Shaw (BR)
	Feb 15	New Historicism	BT 166-184, IG Ch 20
	Feb 20	New Historicism practical application	Read Sassoon, "Glory of Women" (102), Brooke, "The Soldier," (106), Rosenberg, "Dead Man's Dump," (108), Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est" (112). Also read pp. 124-130 on WWI. All in BR.
	Feb 22	Postcolonial criticism and Race and Ethnic Studies	BT 185-195, IG Chapters 14 and 21. also read Johnson, "Inglan Is a Bitch" (1051), Alvi, "And If" (1052).
	Feb 27	Ecocriticism and Disability Studies	BT 239-261, IG Ch 15, 21 also read: Breeze, "earth cries," (1053), O'Reilly, "Hide," (1056), Kay, "In My Country," (1054).
	Mar 1	Animal Studies	Boisseau, "Parchment," Sunaura Taylor, "Vegans, Freaks, and Animals,"
	Mar 6	Science Studies	
	Mar 8	Book history/ media and technology theory practical	English Broadside Ballad Archive. Read "Ballad Circulation" essay

		application 1: Media History	<a href="http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/ballad-creation--circulation">http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/ballad-creation--circulation</a> “The Social Function of Broadside Ballads” essay <a href="http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/social-function-of-the-ballad">http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/social-function-of-the-ballad</a> and the ballad “Jane Shore” <a href="http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/20229/transcription">http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/20229/transcription</a>
	Mar 13	Book history/ media and technology theory practical application 2: Histories of Reading/Library History	New York Society Library <a href="http://cityreaders.nysoclib.org/">http://cityreaders.nysoclib.org/</a> What Middletown Read <a href="http://www.bsu.edu/libraries/wmr/">http://www.bsu.edu/libraries/wmr/</a> Look at these sites and bring in a summary of what you think is useful or interesting about them.
	Mar 15	New Directions in Literary Studies 1	“The Slaughterhouse of Literature,” “Style, Inc.,” “Network Theory, Plot Analysis.” (on courseden)
	Mar 27	New Directions in Literary Studies 2	Digital Humanities materials on courseden
	Mar 29	No Class	Dr Miller is at ASECS.
Academic Writing 1: Prewriting	Apr 3	New Directions in Literary Studies 3	Levine, <i>Forms</i> , selections (on courseden)
	Apr 5	Because you should really know something about Foucault	Foucault, “Panopticism,” <i>Discipline and Punish</i> ; “We Other Victorians” and “The Repressive Hypothesis” from <i>History of Sexuality Vol 1</i> . (on courseden)
	Apr 10	Brainstorming your own project!	Bring in notes on the text – anything from our anthology is eligible (or clear another text with me!) – that you would like to write about. Think about what you care about, and what interests you enough to pursue a long paper about it. Think of a couple of possible theoretical approaches that would work well with your primary text/topic.
Academic Writing 2: Researching your Topic	Apr 12	Research 1: Scholarly books!	Leary, “Googling the Victorians,” <a href="http://www.victorianresearch.org/googling.pdf">http://www.victorianresearch.org/googling.pdf</a> Bring in an academic book (published by a university press) from the library that relates to your topic. Read and summarize the introductory chapter before coming to class, so that you can tell us what the book is about. Bring the summary to class.
	Apr 17	Research 2: Articles!	Bring in a copy of a journal article on your topic you have found online and downloaded and/or printed. Read it before coming to class

			and bring your notes on it.
	Apr 19	Research 3: Focusing your ideas	Bring in a 250-word summary of your topic to share with the class. The summary should show the context for your argument, the perspective you have on the topic, and preview the structure of your paper.
Academic Writing 3: Drafting your Essay	Apr 24	Writing 1: Getting things done	Bring in a draft of your essay (4-plus pages).
	Apr 26	Writing 2: Staying on top of your sources	Bring a draft of your essay as well as all of the sources you are using.
	May 1	Writing 3: Sentence-level editing	Bring a draft of your essay for fine-tuning
	May 3	final exam 8-10 AM	Exam on literary theory terms and concepts. Essays due at final exam.