

English 120, Sections 01 and 02  
Dr. Julianne Newmark  
Fall 2014

## Introduction to Literature

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00-2:00 p.m. and by appointment in 211 Fitch.

### ABOUT OUR COURSE:

This course seeks to introduce you to three primary genres of literature: the short story, the poem, and the play. These, of course, are extremely capacious categories in themselves and as such serve as large “generic” terms. What I mean by this is that there are many sub-types of plays, or short stories, or poems (of course you’ve noticed that some poems rhyme and some don’t; some are written in 17<sup>th</sup>-century English and some are written in modern slang; some have words scattered all over the page and some are organized into neat stanzas). We will investigate the history of artistic writing, writing as “literary art,” primarily, across linguistic and geographic boundaries, as well as national and cultural boundaries. Sadly, we will not have the opportunity to read any novels or novellas this semester, but my hope is that the historical knowledge and critical tools with which this course will equip you will enable you to become a more sensitive and insightful reader of the novels you choose to read by yourself or that you will read in upcoming classes in your college career. The “Introduction to Literature” course seeks to introduce you to the beauties of writing *through* the act of reading beautiful and complex writing, writing that for centuries has made men and women feel compelled to react, struggle, celebrate, and contemplate. We will do all of these over the course of this semester.

### POLICIES:

#### **Required texts:**

- *An Introduction to Literature, Fifteenth Edition*. Barnet, Burto, Cain. Please buy the 15<sup>th</sup> edition via an online seller of your choice
- A style-guide of your choice
- Occasional texts that I will post on my website

#### **Required work and grading scale:**

Your grade will be based on various factors, including attendance, participation, and completion and quality of written work. You will be expected to participate in daily class discussions and occasional group work in class and to create an online presence via your own blog about the literary texts we’re reading. You will write two formal papers and complete two exams.

Essay one (four to five pages)	75	<b>Grading scale:</b>	
Essay two (four to five pages)	75	A	465 and above
Midterm Exam	100	A-	450-464
Final Exam	150	B+	435-449
Textual analysis	20	B	415-434
Quizzes (as needed)	5	B-	400-414
Poetry recitation/drama presentation	15	C+	385-399
Blog postings	30	C	365-384
Participation and attendance	30	C-	350-364

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>
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**Class Participation:**

You will be evaluated on your ability and willingness to participate in classroom discussions and other activities. Keep this in mind and be sure to be alert in class, prepared for class work, and engaged in our subject matter.

**Textual Analysis, Poetry Recitation, Drama:**

Once during the term, each student will offer an analysis of a reading of the student's choice (by the scheduled author for the class-day's discussion). This brief presentation must also incorporate discussion of one or two pieces of pertinent criticism of the author's work along with the student's own reading (i.e. analysis) of the text. During our week of poetry recitation, each student will have to memorize and present to the class a poem chosen from the selected authors for that week. The student must demonstrate preparedness and comprehension and be able to explain why he/she chose the selected poem to recite. This is perhaps an "old-fashioned" activity, but it is one that students find that they enjoy! Also, student groups will present scenes from plays at the end of the semester. This fun activity will be an opportunity for students to work with peers on presenting and reflecting on dramatic literature.

**Attendance and Tardiness:**

If you miss more than three classes, you will be asked to drop the course or you will receive a failing grade. There are, of course, extraordinary situations in which absences might be excused. A stay in the hospital, for example, is what I would call "extraordinary." I do take attendance into consideration in the calculation of your final grade, along with the abovementioned factor of participation. Be sure to attend all class meetings and to be on time. Every three days that you are tardy (more than five minutes) count as one "absent" day. I consider this syllabus, incidentally, as your contract with me, and mine with you. If you choose to continue in this class, after reading this syllabus, I expect that you will abide by the requirements of this course.

**Quizzes:**

There **may** be unannounced reading quizzes throughout the term.

**Your Blog:**

All students need to create their own reading blog for the course, using a blogging platform of their choice. Students should provide at least two robust paragraphs of discussion for each required reading. I require students to read the text closely in their blog postings, not to use the text merely as a "spring board" or "suggestion" to write about something seemingly (or really) unrelated. A student should refer to the text, perhaps quote from it, write about the author, write about the language or style, write about the historical time period or context in which the text was written, or write about discussions about this text we had in class. We will discuss this blogging requirement further in class.

**Late Papers:**

Papers must be turned in at the beginning of our class time on the day the assignment is due. After this time, for each day an assignment is late, I will deduct one letter grade (meaning, if the paper begins at an "A" or 100 per cent and is one day late, I will begin grading it from an "A-," a 92 per cent -- etcetera). Again, extraordinary circumstances might excuse a late assignment, but these are rare. I will not accept emailed versions of papers; you must come to class, or arrange to see me in my office, to turn in your paper-copy of your assignment. I reserve the right not to accept late papers.

**Courteousness and Cell Phones:**

We will be covering some sensitive topics in this class. So, I will expect you to behave appropriately and be open to different opinions. Above all, be courteous to your classmates. One sign of courteousness is that you turn off your cell phone (turn it to vibrate or silent) before entering class. You *must not* use your cell phone during class. If there are repeated problems with your cell phone, I will ask you to leave the classroom for the day. You will take an absence that day.

**Equal Access:**

Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative accessible formats upon request.

**Plagiarism:**

In our course, I will review the standards of correct citation, academic honesty, and intellectual property. After this information has been presented to you in class, you are responsible for it and cannot claim ignorance as a defense against an accusation of academic dishonesty. You will need to quote directly from literary texts, and appropriately cite these texts, in your blog, in your papers, and on your exams. Each of your papers must have a Works Cited page.

Plagiarism, in very general terms, is the use of someone else's words or ideas without proper citation. The style guide *Everyday Writer*, which you may have from English 111 or 112, includes information about plagiarism. I suggest that you become familiar with pages 168 and 173-175 and commit to memory the information regarding plagiarism that I provide for you in class. All other good style guides provide detailed information on avoiding plagiarism. Also, the NMT library offers a handy website addressing many plagiarism issues and provides advice on avoiding plagiarism:  
<http://infohost.nmt.edu/~nmtlib/INFO/ORef/plagiarism.html>

**Essay Format:**

All work that is to be handed in must be in MLA format, typed, double-spaced, printed on white paper in black ink, and must use twelve-point font (preferably Times New Roman). If your paper does not conform to these stylistic requirements, I will hand it back to you without a grade and you will be required to reformat in and will suffer a late-paper penalty. Again, your papers must include correct text citations and a Works Cited page.

**Course calendar:**

	DATE	ITEMS DUE
111	Tuesday, August 19	Course introduction. What is literature? Why do we read it? What our course will – and won't – cover, and why.
	Thursday, August 21	Ch. 1 through pg.13. Sign up for student textual analysis.
2	Tuesday, August 26	Ch. 1 to end. Genres of literature. Discuss student textual analysis.
	Thursday, August 28	Ch. 5 to pg. 108. Plot, character, theme. Maugham, Chekhov, Chopin. <b>Student Textual Analysis</b>
3	Tuesday, September 2	Ch. 6 to 141. Narrative point of view. Concentrate on Updike and Bierce Ch. 31 to 1546
	Thursday, September 4	Ch. 7 to 162. Hawthorne. Ch. 31, 1546-1558
4	Tuesday, September 9	Ch. 7, 176 to end. Márquez, Lawrence, Jackson. <b>Student Textual Analysis</b>
	Thursday, September 11	Ch. 8, 203-210. View Bierce film. P.O.V. in film, in literature.
5	Tuesday, September 16	Raymond Carver, "Cathedral": 313-323
	Thursday, September 18	Oscar Casares, "Yolanda": 323-329 Ralph Ellison, "Battle Royal": 349-360 <i>Assign Essay One.</i>
6	Tuesday, September 23	Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper": 391-402 <b>Student Textual Analysis</b>
	Thursday, September 25	<b>NO CLASS. DR. NEWMARK WILL BE AT CPTSC CONFERENCE</b>
7	Tuesday, September 30	James Joyce, "Araby," and Franz Kafka "A Hunger Artist": 412-423 Ch. 3
	Thursday, October 2	<b>ESSAY ONE DUE</b> Appendix B: Writing Essay Exams. Discuss blogs. Salient themes. Exam review.

8	Tuesday, October 7	<b>In-Class MIDTERM EXAM</b>
	Thursday, October 9	<b>TBA</b> Poem list for next two weeks posted online.
9	Tuesday, October 14	Read all of Ch. 11. Poetry discussion and review: During this week, I will read many poems to you and we will discuss narrative and lyric poetry, poetic tone and figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and rhythm. Sign up for poetry recitation week.
	Thursday, October 16	Poetry continued. Writing about poetry.
10	Tuesday, October 21	<b>Poetry Recitation Week:</b> EACH student will present a poem from memory and will interpret the poem and explain <i>why</i> the particular poem was the student's choice.
	Thursday, October 23	
11	Tuesday, October 28	Ch. 25, 947-952; Ch. 26, 1098-1133 (to the beginning of <i>Hamlet</i> 2.1)
	Thursday, October 30	Ch. 26, 1133-1179 (to the beginning of <i>Hamlet</i> 4.2)
12	Tuesday, November 4	Ch. 26, 1179-1217 (from <i>Hamlet</i> 4.2 to end) <b>Student Textual Analysis</b>
	Thursday, November 6	Ch. 30, 1471-1499 (August Wilson, <i>Fences</i> , to beginning of Act 2) Assign Essay Two
13	Tuesday, November 11	Ch. 30, 1499- 1520 (to end of <i>Fences</i> ) <b>Student Textual Analysis</b>
	Thursday, November 13	Ch. 31 review
14	Tuesday, November 18	Essay question-and-answer day and begin group drama presentation work in class.
	Thursday, November 20	<b>ESSAY TWO DUE</b> Group presentation of scenes from plays, with critical interpretation and explanation.
15	Tuesday, November 25	Group presentation of scenes from plays, with critical interpretation and explanation.
	Thursday, November 27	NO CLASSES – Thanksgiving
16	Tuesday, December 2	Exam review. Course evaluation. <b>Final exam Part 1, the take-home part, distributed.</b>
	Thursday, December 4	<b>In-Class FINAL EXAM Part 2</b>