

ENGL-UF 9101-L01

Introduction to the Study of Literature

NYU London

Course Information

- Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30-5:45 pm
- Location: Room 301
- Prerequisite: Completion of CAS or Liberal Studies Writing requirement (Writing I fulfills this for LS students)

Course Overview and Goals

Designed for English majors and minors, this course introduces students to the full range of possibility inherent in literary study. Among our questions: How are 'literary' reading and writing different from other kinds of reading and writing? What is useful or vital about such practices? In addition to canonical literature, what other subjects of study do students and scholars of literature address?

The course is split into three "units", focusing on poetry, drama and prose fiction. For each of these areas of study, we will first consider the fundamentals of reading and writing about them, and how this may vary across media. We will then closely read both traditional and radical forms of each medium, to consider the different ways in which literature can be pushed beyond our traditional notions of storytelling. The class will be largely discussion-based, with great emphasis placed on participation and student preparedness.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will:

- Have fostered an informed enjoyment of literature across time periods, locales, media and genre
- Have developed sophistication as literary critics. This includes building understanding of literary forms and techniques and using close reading to become conversant in interpretation of a variety of narrative modes.
- Have developed research acumen, including asking research questions to build critical analysis, searching for academic resources, and proper synthesis and integration of literary evidence and citations.

Course Requirements

Assessment Components

Assignments/ Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Essay 1, "Poetry and Place"	1,300-1,800 words (4-5 pages)	15%	
Essay 2, Drama and/or Narrative	1,500-2,000 words (5-6 pages)	20%	
Research Paper	1,800-2,200 words (6-7 pages)	35%	
Blog posts	500-1000 words each	15%	
Participation	Arriving on time, being well-prepared, workshop engagement, and helping to create valuable discussion	15%	

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

Assessment Expectations

Letter Grade	Percent	Description
A	Example: 93.5% and higher	Demonstrates a truly sophisticated grasp of the material and a concentrated, specific, interesting argument. Well-structured and clearly presented, with an excellent sense of language and tone. Incorporates textual and/or contextual evidence to great effect, with a solid understanding of form, context and genre. Virtually free of grammatical errors.
B	Example: 82.5% - 87.49%	Close engagement with text and/or context; good insights linked to evidence; generally well written and clear, but does not reach the heights of sophisticated critical analysis seen in an A paper.
C	Example: 72.5% - 77.49%	Demonstrates basic knowledge and some effort in close analysis; may have an argument that is poorly outlined/structured, or may lack central argument. May make poorly substantiated or subjective claims, or do a lot of summarizing. Weak expression/poor clarity.
D	Example: 62.5% - 67.49	Errors of fact; no evidence that texts were read, slipshod or disorganised thinking; failure to relate generalisations to evidence; careless writing.
F	Example: 59.99% and lower	Culpably bad writing; no evidence of careful thought; does not meet minimal requirements of assignment.

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

****A note on texts:** Please attempt to get the editions listed here, so that we do not struggle to get ourselves on the same pages during class discussion

I and You by Lauren Gunderson, Methuen Drama, London [ISBN: 978-1-3501-0508-9]

As You Like It by William Shakespeare, Arden edition [ISBN: 9781904271222]

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, Penguin Classics edition [ISBN: 9780141439518]

Fun Home by Alison Bechdel, Jonathan Cape [ISBN: 9780224080514]

The rest of the readings are in your **Course Reader**, provided on the first day of class

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **NYUL Library Collection:** [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk) (catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Schedule

- Assignments are due for the class on which they are listed.
- Blog posts should be posted by 10 am at the latest on the day of class they are due.

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1:	Introductions/ Goals	none	
Session 2:	Poetry and Prose	“Hills Like White Elephants,” by Ernest Hemingway, “Metaphors” by Sylvia Plath, “Collective Nouns for Humans in the Wild” by Kathy Fish (all in Course Reader)	Blog post 1 – How do we read poetry and prose differently? How do we write about them differently? Essay 1 assigned
Session 3:	Sound, Rhyme, Rhythm, Meter	“We Real Cool” by Gwendolyn Brooks, “Because I could not stop for death” by Emily	

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		Dickinson", "We Reguees" by Benjamin Zephaniah	
Session 4:	Poetry and memoir	Excerpts from <i>My Poets</i> by Maureen McLane, "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" and "This is Just to Say"	Blog post 2 – How does McLane twist together memoir and poetic forms? How does this affect your understanding of both the poems and her experience?
Session 5:	Figurative Language	"The Thought Fox" by Ted Hughes and "This Room and Everything in it" by Li-Young Lee	
Session 6:	Elizabethan comedy	<i>As You Like It</i> Acts 1 and 2	
Session 7:	Draft workshop	No reading unless you want to get ahead with <i>As You Like It</i>	Please bring in three hard copies of your essay for the workshop
Session 8:	Elizabethan comedy	<i>As You Like It</i> Acts 3, 4 and 5	Essay 1 Due to NYU Classes by 4:30 pm
Sessions 9/10	Co-Curricular Trip: Stratford Upon Avon / Performance of <i>As You Like It</i>		
Session 11:	Modernism	"The Embankment" by T.E. Hulme, "Leda and the Swan" by W.B. Yeats, and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot	Blog post 3 – Consider one or two specific decisions made by the director of the production we saw and evaluate it in relation to the text. Choose specific scenes or elements from the text to work with.
Session 12:	Intro to Aristotelian drama	Excerpts from Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i> and excerpts from <i>Song of Myself</i> by Walt Whitman	
Session 13:	Contemporary Drama	<i>I and You</i> (full play)	Blog post 4 – Why is Whitman's <i>Song of Myself</i> the framing literary conceit for <i>I and You</i> ? Consider it in relation to the play's form and content. Essay 2 assigned

Session/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 14:	Introduction to Narrative	“The Death of the Author,” Barthes; “The Author Function,” Foucault; “Petunias,” Alice Walker; “Answers to a Questionnaire,” JG Ballard	
Session 15:	Imagined Futures	“Black Box” by Jennifer Egan and “Zimmer Land” by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah	Blog Post 5 – Consider how the human body is put to use in these two stories. What happens when we put them in conversation with each other? Be specific.
Session 16:	Writing Introductions	“Writing Effective Journal Essay Introductions” by James Phelan and Faye Halpern	Bring in three copies of your draft introduction for Essay 2
Session 17:	Narrative and Ethics	“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” by Ursula Le Guin and “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson	Essay 2 due to NYU classes by 4:30 pm
Session 18:	Narrative and Language	“Speech Sounds” by Octavia Butler and “The Era” by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah	
Session 19:	Romanticism	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> pp. 5-123 (chapters 1-22)	
Session 20:	Class Structures	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> pp. 124-197 (chapters 23-35)	
Session 21:	Turning Points	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> pp. 198-291 (chapters 36-49)	Blog Post 6 - Close read a scene and consider one or more of the following: how social class functions, how people say one thing but mean another, how relationships are established or how they are show to evolve.
Session 22:	Novel Structure	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> pp. 292-end (chapters 50-61)	

BREAK

Session 23:	Austen’s Afterlives	“How Not to Improve the Estate: Lopping & Cropping Jane Austen”	
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Session 24:	Visual Narrative	“Blood in the Gutter” by Scott McCloud and ch. 1 of <i>The Arrival</i> by Shaun Tan (see NYU Classes)	
Session 25:	The Graphic Novel	<i>Fun Home</i> (full text)	Blog Post 7 – Consider how this story is told uniquely through the medium of the graphic novel. Choose a key moment or moments and discuss what it accomplishes that it could not do just in words.
Session 26:	Research & Literary Criticism	“Finding and Evolving a Thesis” by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen	Come to class prepared with three research questions (to be handed in!)
Session 27:	Draft Workshop	None	Please bring three copies of your final paper draft for the workshop
Session 28:	Conclusions	“Let us Now Praise Stupid Women” by Margaret Atwood	
		No class meeting – exam week	Research paper due to NYU Classes by 5 pm.

Required Co-Curricular Activities

- day trip to Stratford-upon-Avon

Classroom Etiquette

This is a “screen free” class. This means that unless you have a special academic accommodation that entitles you to take notes on a computer, all phones and laptops must be put away in bags during class time. This is because studies have shown that even just the presence of a phone or tablet on a table impedes conversation, and really this class is one big, 14-week conversation.

Please arrive on time – late arrivals disrupt our conversation and are a pet peeve of mine. Punctuality is an important skill to develop in life, not just college, so please make your classes a priority and arrive on time.

Finally, while I hope you will all express your opinions honestly and eloquently in class, I also expect you to respect the values of others. You are not required to agree with every idea I or anyone else proposes, but you are required to consider them.

NYUL Academic Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work

You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL [website](https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on [the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html) for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

Classroom Conduct

Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services. Please refer to the [NYU Disruptive Student Behavior Policy](#) for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Instructor Bio

I am an immigrant from the United States and have been living in London since 2010. Prior to that I lived in northern California, where I did my PhD, and Bordeaux, France, where I taught for a year. I also did my MA degree at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, and I studied abroad as an undergraduate at the University of Kent in Canterbury. I grew up in a very small town in upstate New York (pop. 5,000), which may go some way to explaining the above sentences.

I have taught writing and English at the university level for about 15 years. As an academic I am interested in narrative theory and how storytelling affects identity. I have published articles on collaboration, memory and social media, and the author David Mitchell. I am the co-editor of *David Mitchell: Critical Essays*, due out this year.