2014

205-04H Literature and the Moral Imagination: Honors

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Spring 2014
English 205-04 (Honors/English Majors & Minors)
Literature and the Moral Imagination: Family

11:00 – 11:50 MWF Hailstones Hall 3
Professor: Dr. Jodi L. Wyett Office: Hinkle 304
E-mail: wyett@xavier.edu Office Phone: 745-3158
Office Hours: WF, 1:00-2:30 p.m. and by appointment

Required Texts:
William Shakespeare, King Lear (Folger Library)
Series: Folger Shakespeare Library
Paperback: 384 pages
Publisher: Simon & Schuster (August 1, 2005)
ISBN-10: 0743484959

Mary Shelley, Frankenstein (Oxford’s World Classics)
Series: Oxford World's Classics
Paperback: 264 pages
Publisher: Oxford University Press, USA; Reprint edition (October 15, 2008)
ISBN-10: 019953716X

Toni Morrison, Beloved (Vintage)
Paperback: 321 pages
Publisher: Vintage; 2004 edition (June 8, 2004)
ISBN-10: 1400033411

Mark Haddon, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time (Vintage)
Paperback: 226 pages
Publisher: Vintage (May 18, 2004)
ISBN-10: 1400032717

Some of these books are available in Kindle or electronic versions. I don’t mind if you use an
electronic text if you must but I prefer that you have a tablet and that you get the paginated version of
the book by the same publisher so that you can follow along in class. I do not allow laptops in class
except in cases of documented special needs. If I discover you toggling between the course text and
Facebook, email, text messaging, etc. in class you will lose the privilege to use your tablet in class.

The shorter readings indicated on the schedule with an asterisk (*) are on electronic reserve. If
you link to e-reserves via our Canvas site (look under Syllabus or Modules), you will not need a
password. Otherwise, the password necessary to retrieve these reserves is family.
Course Description:
This course constitutes the literature component of the Ethics/Religion and Society focus of the Xavier core curriculum. We will read, write about, and discuss a variety of literary texts with an emphasis on thinking critically about their social and ethical implications, understanding them not only in terms of our own perspectives but also in relation to the times and places for which they were produced. In specific, we will focus on representations of marriage, sex, and the family in several genres of writing produced in a variety of historical contexts. Some issues we will discuss include how the concepts of duty to family and specific roles within the family are defined and how these definitions determine the function, or dysfunction, of the family unit as a whole. We will also consider the relation of the family to other social and cultural institutions and beliefs. Finally, this course serves as an elective for the Gender and Diversity Studies minor and fulfills 3 credit hours of the Diversity Curriculum Requirement, thus we will explore how and why gender and diversity issues are related to and resonate with family issues. We will focus on gendered roles within cultural and family structures quite a bit, but we will also discuss how these intersect with other aspects of identity including race, social and economic class, sexuality, and mental ability. Please note that the structure and subject matter of this course demand maturity as well as sensitivity to the opinions and beliefs of others.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives:
The aims of this course include to help students to:
• read and write critically, closely, and effectively;
• articulate ideas orally;
• conduct and evaluate research in literary studies;
• understand literature in its social and historical contexts;
• understand the ethical dimensions of literature;
• understand and use some of the basic concepts of diversity studies;
• understand the moral and ethical dimensions of some of the individual and cultural issues the readings address.

Requirements:
Since another course goal is to strengthen and to emphasize the relationships between your reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, you will read and/or write every day for this course. Two exams and two analytical essays (7-8 pp., typed, double-spaced) are required. You will also complete a research assignment that involves both a short paper and bibliography and a class presentation. Weekly unannounced reading quizzes and at least one shorter (1 paragraph/1 page) analytical writing assignment will also be required. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. If you are late for class on a quiz day you will receive a zero for the quiz. Please note that due to the nature of the quizzes, they cannot be made up under any circumstances.

Attendance and Participation: Class discussions and in-class activities are essential to this course. Thus if you wish to succeed in this class, you need to attend and participate every day. Participation includes not only coming to class but also arriving prepared, on time, and ready to contribute to class discussions and activities. Your contribution will be measured by the “step up/step out” method. That is, you’ll be expected to offer thoughtful comments during discussion (step up), but you should do so without monopolizing the class or blurring out whatever crosses your mind (step out). Also note that for the duration of the class period, you will be expected to disconnect from your personal technology. No phone calls or texts should be coming in or going
out during class. Laptops should be stowed unless you have a documentable need for one. Adult comportment is expected of all students.

If you must miss class, consult as soon as possible with a trusted classmate for any notes and announcements. Attendance will also be taken into consideration when calculating participation grades. Sustained habitual absences, defined as missing a week’s worth of consecutive classes, will result in a grade of VF (vanishing failure).

Grading:

You are responsible for your own grade in this course. You must be actively engaged in claiming an education. I cannot help you with problems in this class if you do not tell me what they are. You are encouraged to make individual appointments to see me, to come to my office hours, to call me at my office, to send me e-mail messages, and, of course, to speak up in class! Be aware that e-mail is not an appropriate venue for discussing certain issues and I do not always check my email on the weekends.

I do not accept late assignments or e-mail attachments. Late is defined as anything turned in after the beginning of the class period in which it is due and I must receive a hard copy of your work at that time. Except in the most dire, unavoidable and documentable circumstances, you must have prior approval from me for any late or missed assignments.

Plagiarism, the use of another person’s words or ideas as one’s own (yes, this applies to anything you find on the internet, too), will not be tolerated. It is against the law. If you plagiarize, it will result in, at the very least, failure of this course and may result in further academic discipline from the University. Don’t do it.

Everything will be graded on a 100-point scale (e.g., 80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+).

Assignments will be weighted as follows:

- Exam #1 — 15%
- Exam #2 — 15%
- Paper #1 — 20%
- Paper #2 — 20%
- Critical review, bibliography and presentation – 15%
- Quizzes and Exercises — 10%
- Participation — 5%

Tutoring:

A valuable resource for all students is the Writing Center, 400 Conaton Learning Commons, 745-2875. Tutors can help you on an individual basis with any aspect of your writing at any stage in the writing process. They will not write papers for you nor will they proofread.

Students with Disabilities:

Anyone who feels he/she may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability (e.g.: sensory, learning, psychological, medical, mobility) should contact me to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs as soon as possible. I rely on the Disability Services Office for assistance in verifying your eligibility for academic accommodations related to your disability. If you have not previously contacted Disability Services, I encourage you to do so at 513-745-3280 on the Fifth Floor of the Conaton Learning Commons, Room 514 or e-mail Cassandra Jones at jonesc20@xavier.edu, to coordinate reasonable accommodations.
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

All assignments are to be read, viewed or otherwise completed for the day on which they are listed.
Any changes to the schedule will be discussed and announced in class.

WEEK I
M 1/13 Syllabus, course expectations, introductions. Receive criticism assignment, analysis paragraph guidelines, and “How to Write Literary Analysis” handouts.
W 1/15 Go over criticism assignment and how to conduct research in literary studies. Sign up for presentations.
F 1/17 William Shakespeare, King Lear (1608), introductory material (pp xiii-lxvii) and Act I only.

WEEK II
M 1/20 no class—MLK day
W 1/22 King Lear, Acts II & III.
F 1/24 King Lear, Act IV. Read and discuss: "How to Write Literary Analysis" handout and analysis paragraph guidelines.

WEEK III
M 1/27 King Lear, Act V. Analysis paragraph due.
W 1/29 King Lear, presentation/review due: ______________, ______________,

WEEK IV
F 2/7 Frankenstein, Vol. I, ch. 6-7, pp. 51-68.

WEEK V

WEEK VI
W 2/19 Frankenstein, presentation/review due: ______________, ______________,
F 2/21 Exam review. Discuss Paper #1 assignment.

WEEK VII
F 2/28 “Why I Live at the P.O,” presentation/review due: ______________, ______________,
WEEK VIII  SPRING BREAK

WEEK IX
W 3/12 “Sonny’s Blues,” presentation/review due: _______________, _______________, _______________.

WEEK X
No class rest of week (I will be at a conference. Work on papers and keep reading Beloved!)

WEEK XI
M 3/24 Beloved, pp. 139-195 (Finish Part One). PAPER #1 DUE.
F 3/28 Beloved, Part Two, cont.

WEEK XII
W 4/2 Beloved presentation/review due: _______________, _______________, _______________.

WEEK XIII
M 4/7 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, pp. 48-102 (to No. 157).

WEEK XIV
W 4/16 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, presentation/review due:
                    ____________________________.
F 4/18 no class-EASTER BREAK

WEEK XV
M 4/21 no class-EASTER BREAK

WEEK XVI
M 4/28 PAPER #2 DUE.
W 4/30 Wrap up, course evaluations.
F 5/2 Exam review.

EXAM #2: 10:00 - 11:50 a.m., Friday, May 9.