



**ENG 2326.001 (80671)—US-Intro to Literature
“Understanding Literature and Its Uses”**

**Fall 2015
TR—2:00 pm-3:15 pm
Room: HL 304**

Instructor: (Christopher Gonzalez, PhD – Assistant Professor)
Office Location: Hall of Languages (HL) 225
Office Hours: MW 12:00 pm-2:30 pm and by appointment
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NOTE: I reserve the right to revise the contents of this syllabus as I deem necessary.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

Mays, Kelly J. *The Norton Introduction to Literature, Portable 11th edition*. (ISBN: 9780393923391).
Note: Many of the selections in this work can be found in other editions and books. Students are free to locate other sources with the selected entries.

Martinez, Domingo. *The Boy Kings of Texas* (ISBN: 978-0762779192)

Sacco, Joe. *Journalism* (ISBN: 978-0805097931)

(ENG 2326 catalogue description): Introduction to Literature. Three semester hours. (1, 2; 3 or 4) An introduction to the three major genres of literature: poetry, drama, and fiction. The course is designed to develop discriminating reading habits, and the student may be required to make analyses and value judgments based on critical thought. Prerequisite: Eng 1302.

Course Description

ENG 2326 is designed to provide undergraduate students with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with a critical understanding of literature— what it is, its uses, and its reception. In this particular iteration of ENG 2326, the emphasis is on understanding why literature matters. Further, the course seeks to

provide students with a particular set of skills, skills that can be used to recognize, probe, critique, and respond to works of literature across media. The course will encourage students to become comfortable with such intellectual interactions with any given work of literature. Indeed, literature—as a creative process, as an immersive experience, as a cultural artifact—helps define who we are. Thus, by using different critical approaches on a single work of literature, distinct interpretations of that work may be equally valid and compelling and may, in turn, tell us something valuable about who we are.

This course is an exploration of the expansive field of literature. As we trace our way through the major literary modes such as fiction, poetry, graphic narrative, drama, and nonfiction, we will work to develop a model of literary criticism—a specific procedure or rules of engagement that will allow for a deeper understanding of a given work literature. At its core, this journey through literature will make students more cognizant of the structural, thematic, social, political, and interpretive features that undergird the power and meaning of literature, how literary works are experienced, and how they remain relevant in our changing world. Students should plan to engage in productive discussions based on commonplace readings as well as to compose short, critical papers over each of the five literary forms we study.

Course Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of literary forms.
- Students will hone their ability to write a critical essay.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will hone their ability to interpret literature by participating in class discussions.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of different types of literature by submitting a critical essay on a given literary form.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes and objectives of this course and instructional units/modules. By the end of this course the class will read an array of literary forms, including poetry, fiction, drama, graphic narrative, and nonfiction.

During the semester you will complete several major assignments designed to build on each other intellectually and conceptually. These assignments are:

Class Participation

25%

Active class participation is vital in class. You should be prepared to discuss several aspects of the readings during each class meeting. Each class meeting ought to be viewed as a collaboration of an investigative team that is charged with examining a problem. Everyone's sustained attention and participation is key to this approach. **You will be called on** to discuss some facet of the day's readings and to elaborate on these points via discussion.

Note: If you are absent for any reason, you must submit a 200 word response to a specific issue in the readings. This takes the place of your absence in participation. If you fail to do this, you receive no participation credit for the day.

Critical Essays (x 5)

75%

Throughout the course you will compose five (5) short but focused papers. Each paper will concern one of the five literary forms we will explore (Poetry, Fiction, Drama, Graphic Narrative, and Nonfiction). You will engage the specified work of literature in a sustained, focus, critical, and analytical way. You will not consult outside scholarship or writings other than the specified work. Each essay will be 3-4 full, double-spaced pages with one-inch margins (MLA style). The goal of each paper is to explore one specific component of the given work and demonstrate how your observations clarify how the work has a greater meaning beyond narrative or lyric poetry. In other words, you will attempt to argue why the literary work under examination matters. (Each essay will comprise 15% of your course grade; the final essay will, in effect, be your final exam.)

Class Participation	25%
Critical Essays	75%
Total:	100%

Scale used to compute final letter grades:

Percentage

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59-0

Technology

This course is conducted face to face (f2f). However, some aspects of the course (e.g., grades, dropbox) are accessed online. **This course will not use eCollege.** Instead, you will receive information on how to access grades and the dropbox during class. Do not allow a technological problem or question keep you from a successful outcome in this course. Technology is designed to facilitate your learning experience in this class, not to hinder it.

There will be no extra credit assignments. As a rule, I do not accept late work.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of **academic dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally-accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another person and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of

academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension and expulsion (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1, 2, 3]). Cheating, including plagiarizing papers in whole or part, will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment for the first offense and failure of the course for any subsequent offenses.

Attendance Policy

Attendance in this class equates to participation in the discussions and is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer/student. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you notify me of potential conflicts with course expectations. The expectation is that you will do more than simply show up to class. Your active participation, in the form of discussion responses and questions, is vital for success in this course. Deadline extensions and other allowances can often be accommodated before they are required, but this requires advance notice. Related to this, SEE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignment Policy

Student work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. Students who know they will miss class when an assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment.

All papers should conform to the MLA style guidelines.

Late Work

I will not accept any assignment after its due date. Assignments submitted after the due date may receive a score of zero (0).

Drop a Course

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled "Drop a class" from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the Web page.

Incompletes

Incompletes (grade of "X") are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Administrative Withdrawal

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of student conduct codes.

Grievances

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 ("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation").

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. It is next to impossible to explore ideas in a classroom setting if students and instructors do not feel safe or otherwise supported. I will not tolerate discrimination in all its forms. Likewise, rudeness has no place in any classroom, and I will ensure that my classroom remains a rudeness-free environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Responsibility

You are responsible for understanding all of the material contained in this syllabus, as well as any announced changes to this syllabus. You are also responsible for understanding instructions and directives related to assignments, exams, and grades. This means visiting your professor during office hours if instructions and/or directives remain unclear. Unless you state otherwise, I will assume that you have understood what is expected of you in this class.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The following course schedule is subject to revisions and other modifications, as the instructor deems necessary for the course. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced on the course website in advance of the week in which the change will occur.

Fall 2015

Date	Agenda/Readings
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Week 1	<p>Tuesday 9/1: Introduction, syllabus overview</p> <p>Thursday 9/3: “What Is Literature?” “What Does Literature Do?” “What Are the Genres of Literature?” “Why Read Literature?” “Why Study Literature?”</p>
Week 2	<p>Tuesday 9/8: Lydia Davis, “Head, Heart” Edwin Arlington Robinson, “Richard Cory” Thomas Hardy, “The Ruined Maid” William Wordsworth, [I wandered lonely as a cloud] Frank O’Hara, [Lana Turner has collapsed] Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” Emily Dickinson, “[The Sky is low—the Clouds are mean] Billy Collins, “Divorce” Bruce Springsteen, “Nebraska” Robert Hayden, “A Letter from Phillis Wheatley”</p> <p>Thursday 9/10: X.J. Kennedy, “In a Prominent Bar in Secaucus One Day” Robert Browning, “Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister” Margaret Atwood, “Death of a Young Son by Drowning” William Wordsworth, “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways” Dorothy Parker, “A Certain Lady” Robert Frost, “Home Burial” E.E. Cummings, [next to of course god america i] Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool” Walt Whitman, [I celebrate myself, and sing myself] Elizabeth Bishop, “Exchanging Hats” Terrence Hayes, “Mr. T—”</p>

<p>Week 3</p>	<p>Tuesday 9/15: Rita Dove, "Daystar" Linda Pastan, "To a Daughter Leaving Home" John Donne, "The Flea" Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach" John Milton, "On the Late Massacre in Piedmont" Martín Espada, "Litany at the Tomb of Frederick Douglass" Li-Young Lee, "Persimmons" James Dickey, "Cherrylog Road" Natasha Trethewey, "Pilgrimage" Maya Angelou, "Africa" Derek Walcott, "A Far Cry from Africa" Judith Ortiz Cofer, "The Latin Deli: An Ars Poetica"</p> <p>Thursday 9/17: W.D. Snodgrass, "Leaving the Motel" Maxine Kumin, "Woodchucks" Adrienne Rich, "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" Marge Piercy, "Barbie Doll" Etheridge Knight, "Hard Rock Returns to Prison from the Hospital for the Criminal Insane" William Blake, "London" Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Sympathy" Sharon Olds, "Last Night" Kay Ryan, "Repulsive Theory" W.H. Auden, "[Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone]" Galway Kennell, "After Making Love We Hear Footsteps" Robert Hayden, "Those Winter Sundays" Kelly Cherry, "Alzheimer's" Simon Ortiz, "My Father's Song"</p>
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<p>Week 4</p> <p>Essay 1 Due 9/28/15</p>	<p>Tuesday 9/22: Sarah Cleghorn, [The golf links lie so near the mill] Charles Bernstein, "Of Time and the Line" Walter De La Mare, "Slim Cunning Hands" Theodore Roethke, "My Papa's Waltz" Sharon Olds, "Sex without Love" Yvor Winters, "At the San Francisco Airport" Martha Collins, "Lies" William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow" William Carlos Williams, "This Is Just To Say" Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Pied Beauty" Kay Ryan, "Blandeur"</p> <p>Thursday 9/24: Richard Wilbur, "Beautiful Changes" Lynn Powell, "Kind of Blue" William Shakespeare, [That time of year thou mayst in me behold] Linda Pastan, "Marks" Emily Dickinson, [Because I could not stop for Death--] Robert Burns, "A Red, Red Rose" Andrew Marvell, "On a Drop of Dew" William Shakespeare, [Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?] Anonymous, "The Twenty-third Psalm" John Donne, [Better my heart, three-personed God] David Ferry, "At the Hospital" Randall Jarrell, "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner"</p>
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<p>Week 5</p>	<p>Tuesday 9/29: James Dickey, "The Leap" Edmund Waller, "Song" Dorothy Parker, "One Perfect Rose" William Blake, "The Sick Rose" Howard Nemerov, "The Vacuum" Adrienne Rich, "Diving into the Wreck" Brian Turner, "Jundee Ameriki" Helen Chasin, "The Word <i>Plum</i>" Kenneth Fearing, "Dirge" Alexander Pope, "Sound and Sense" Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Metrical Feet" Alfred, Lord Tennyson, from "The Charge of the Light Brigade" John Dryden, "To the Memory of Mr. Oldham" Wilfred Owen, "Strange Meeting" Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Spring and Fall"</p> <p>Thursday 10/1: Pat Mora, "Sonrisas" Galway Kinnell, "Blackberry Eating" Seamus Heaney, "Punishment" Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Frost at Midnight" Sharon Olds, "The Victims" Walt Whitman, "I Hear America Singing" Philip Larkin, "Church Going" Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Ode to the West Wind" Dylan Thomas, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" Natasha Tretheway, "Myth" Dudley Randall, "Ballad of Birmingham" John Keats, "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" Christina Rossetti, "In an Artist's Studio" Gwendolyn Brooks, "First Fight. Then Fiddle" Julia Alvarez, "Poetry Makes Nothing Happen?" Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Tears, Idle Tears" W.B. Yeats, "The Second Coming"</p>
<p>Week 6</p>	<p>Tuesday 10/6: Anonymous, "The Elephant in the Village of the Blind" Linda Brewer, "20/20" Marjane Satrapi, "The Shabbat" Raymond Carver, "Cathedral"</p> <p>Thursday 10/8: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, "The Shroud" Guy de Maupassant, "The Jewelry" James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"</p>

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Tuesday 10/13: Edgar Allan Poe, “The Cask of Amontillado” Ernest Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants” Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl”</p> <p>Thursday 10/15: Toni Morrison, “Recitatif” David Foster Wallace, “Good People” Toni Cade Bambara, “Gorilla, My Love”</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Essay 2 Due 10/26/15</p>	<p>Tuesday 10/20: Anton Chekhov, “The Lady with the Dog” Amy Tan, “A Pair of Tickets” Judith Ortiz Cofer, “Volar”</p> <p>Thursday 10/22: Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birth-Mark” Edwidge Danticat, “A Wall of Fire Rising”</p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Tuesday 10/27: Aesop, “The Two Crabs” Stephen Crane, “The Open Boat” Yasunari Kawabata, “The Grasshopper and the Bell Cricket”</p> <p>Thursday 10/29: James Joyce, “Araby” David Sedaris, “Jesus Shaves” Louise Erdrich, “Love Medicine”</p>
<p>Week 10</p>	<p>Tuesday 11/3: Susan Glaspell, <i>Trifles</i></p> <p>Thursday 11/5: Continue <i>Trifles</i></p>

<p>Week 11</p> <p>Essay 3 Due 11/16/15</p>	<p>Tuesday 11/10: August Wilson, <i>The Piano Lesson</i></p> <p>Thursday 11/12: Continue <i>The Piano Lesson</i></p>
<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Tuesday 11/17: Joe Sacco, <i>Journalism</i></p> <p>Thursday 11/19: Joe Sacco, <i>Journalism</i></p>
<p>Week 13</p> <p>Essay 4 Due 11/30/15</p>	<p>Tuesday 11/24: Joe Sacco, <i>Journalism</i></p> <p>Thursday 11/26: No Class (Thanksgiving)</p>
<p>Week 14</p>	<p>Tuesday 12/1: Domingo Martinez, <i>The Boy Kings of Texas</i></p> <p>Thursday 12/3: Domingo Martinez, <i>The Boy Kings of Texas</i></p>
<p>Week 15</p>	<p>Tuesday 12/8: Domingo Martinez, <i>The Boy Kings of Texas</i></p> <p>Thursday 12/10: Domingo Martinez, <i>The Boy Kings of Texas</i></p> <p>Course Wrap up</p>
	<p>Final Essay Due: December 15, 2015</p>

