

English 225

Marilyn Francus, ENGL 225, Fall 2005, Western World Literature

Professor Marilyn Francus

English 225: Western World Literature

Fall 2005

252 Hodges

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:15

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 - 3:00, and by appointment.

Calendar

August 23 Introduction

August 25 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books I-TV

August 30 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books V-X, **Reading Quiz #1**

September 1 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books XI-XII

September 6 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books XIII-XIX

September 8 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books XX-XXIV, *Reading Quiz #2*

September 13 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Books I-IV, *Reading Quiz #3*

September 15 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Books V-VI

September 20 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Books VII-X

September 22 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Books XI-XII

September 27 Dante, *The Inferno*, Canti I-XVI, **First Assignment Due**

September 29 Dante, *The Inferno*, Canti XVII-XXIV, **Reading Quiz #4**

October 4 Dante, *The Inferno*, Canti XXV-XXXIV

October 6 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Vol. 1, Ch. 1-14

October 11 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Vol.1, Ch. 15-31, **Reading Quiz #5**

October 13 **Class Cancelled**

October 18 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Vol. I, Ch. 32-36

October 20 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Vol. 1, Ch. 37-46, **Reading Quiz #6**

October 25 Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Vol. 1, Ch. 47-52; Vol. II, Ch. 1-4

October 27 Montaigne, selections from *The Essais* (handout), **Reading Quiz #7**

November 1 Diderot, *Jacques the Fatalist*, **Second Assignment Due**

November 3 Diderot, *Jacques the Fatalist*

November 8 Goethe, *Faust*, Part I

November 10 Goethe, *Faust*, Part I, **Reading Quiz #8**

November 15 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, Part One, Ch. 1-9; Part Two, Ch. 1-5 **Reading Quiz #9**

November 17 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, Part Two, Ch. 6-9

November 22-24 **Thanksgiving Recess**

November 29 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, Part Two, Ch. 10-15; Part Three, Ch. 1-5

December 1 Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, Part Three, Ch. 6-11 **Reading Quiz #10**

December 6 Kafka, *Metamorphosis*

December 8 **Conclusion**, Third Assignment Due

Textbooks:

Available from the WVU Bookstore. Please purchase all books at the beginning of the semester, for the bookstore returns the textbooks to the publisher if they remain unsold, which means that course texts will not be available to you later in the semester.

Course Description:

In Western World Literature we will analyze some of the most famous and influential works of Western literature—works that constitute a canon of narrative and reference that still pervades contemporary culture. Star Wars and the Harry Potter books owe a debt to Homer’s Odyssey, just as Spiderman and The K-Men nod to Kafka. In this course we will discuss the recurrent themes that characterize the Western canon, and use a number of critical strategies (historicist, feminist, Marxist, psychoanalytic) to analyze these texts. We will also discuss the issues of canonicity and canon formation: why are these works so famous and influential? Who determines literary value and influence, and how are such determinations made? How do cultural texts remain influential? In the process, we will begin to excavate models of cultural circulation, cultural capital, nationalism, and ideology.

Course Objectives:

- To introduce students to the academic discourse regarding canons and canon formation.
- To evaluate canonical works of Western literature in light of genre, mode, and ideology.
- To analyze the ways in which canonical works of Western literature continue to circulate in their original forms as well as well as through allusion, adaptation, and appropriation.
- To introduce a series of critical methodologies to guide students through literary and cultural texts.
- To provide practice in critical thinking and writing about literature.

Course Requirements:

Three short (four-page) essay assignments and ten reading quizzes. You will also be expected to keep up with the readings, attend class, participate in class discussion, and check your MIX e-mail account at least twice a week.

The reading quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class session, and last approximately fifteen minutes. The quizzes will focus on information regarding plot, character, imagery, and theme of the text under discussion.

You will be required to complete three different essay assignments during the course of the semester. The assignments are as follows:

- 1. A Critical Reading Essay.** You will be given a choice of passages from the texts that we have read, and you will write a short essay in which you provide a close reading of the passage. Please keep the following in mind:

Your essay must include a thesis statement regarding the passage; in other words, take a position regarding the passage. Your position could be ‘This passage is significant because. or ‘This passage is ironic...’ or This passage is typical.. ‘ etc.

- Your essay should include, and elaborate upon, at least three reasons in order to substantiate your thesis statement.
- Use the details from the passage as your evidence. The more details that you use, and the more you analyze those details, the more convincing your argument will be. You may focus on tone, character, plot, imagery, etc.
- You may (and should) use your knowledge of the rest of the text to analyze the passage at hand, but do not let contextual information lead you astray. Stay focussed on the passage.

2. A Criticism Ess. You will be given comments from scholars and critics regarding the texts that we have read. Your essay should respond to comment. Please keep the following in mind:

- Your essay must include a thesis statement regarding the critics comment; in other words, take a position regarding the critic. Your position could be “I absolutely agree with X. . . . or I disagree with X because...” or “I think X is being unfair about...” etc.
- Your essay should include, and elaborate upon, at least three reasons in order to substantiate your thesis statement.
- Use your knowledge of the course texts to substantiate your position. The detailed evidence you provide, the better.

3. A Canon/Culture Essay. You will be asked to evaluate a website that refers to one of our course texts. Please keep the following in mind:

You must have a thesis statement regarding the website. Some possibilities: ‘This website is useful for advanced scholars of Homer, but it is too complex for a general reader or ‘This website does not provide enough information about... or This website misrepresents..

- Your essay should include, and elaborate upon, at least three reasons in order to substantiate your thesis statement.
- Use your knowledge of the course texts to substantiate your position. The more detailed evidence you provide--from the text and the website--the better.
- Be sure to attach a copy of the website/web page to your essay.

Comments on Quizzes and Essays

1. Your quizzes and assignments should reflect careful reading and thinking about your subject. Do not summarize the plot of a work or rephrase your class notes in your quizzes or assignments.
2. Please bring writing implements to every class.
3. Please write legibly on quizzes.
4. I will hand out more specific instructions before each essay assignment is due. The order in which you complete the essays is up to you, but you will be required to complete all three types of essay assignments during the semester.
5. These essays do not require external research. They require knowledge of the primary course texts, clear and careful thinking, and writing.
6. Your essays should be typed, double spaced, with sufficient space in the margins for comments. One-inch margins will do.
7. It is highly recommended that you keep a photocopy or a back-up disk of your essays.
8. Hand in your assignments on time. Late submissions will receive a lower grade unless the student has a viable reason (such as illness, familial emergency) for his/her lateness. Your grade will be lowered a fraction for every day your work is late (cx. B to B- for one day late).

Grades

1. Each essay assignment counts for 20% of your final grade.
 2. Ten reading quizzes will be given during the course of the semester. The top seven quiz grades will be averaged, and constitute 40% of your final grade.
 3. If you know in advance that you cannot attend a reading quiz (for instance, because of a University excuse), please contact me at once, and a make-up quiz will be arranged. Otherwise, there are no make-ups for missed reading quizzes.
 4. Class participation will be taken into consideration for students with borderline grades.
- Grading Criteria

A (90-100) — Excellent work; the assignments for this course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments and responses on examinations are clearly organized, choose compelling evidence to substantiate the analysis, and engage with the subject at hand in a thoughtful and thought-provoking manner. Written work requires no substantive or stylistic revisions, whether it appears on an exam, a quiz, or in an essay.

B (80-89) — Good work; the assignments for the course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments and responses on examinations show substantial engagement with the subject at hand, but the analysis is either partially incomplete, involving weak evidence, or manifests some difficulty with organization. Written work, whether on a test, an essay, or a quiz, requires some substantive revisions but few or no stylistic ones.

C (70-79) — Average work; the assignments for the course have been completed, but not necessarily in a professional or timely manner. The written assignments and responses on examinations show effort by the student, but the analysis is incomplete, includes inappropriate evidence (or a lack of evidence), or shows significant difficulties with organization. Written work, whether on a test, an essay, or a quiz, requires significant substantive or stylistic revisions.

D(60-69) - Less than average work; the assignments for the course have not been Completed in a professional or timely manner, The written assignments show a lack of effort on the part of the student, and a lack of engagement with the assignment (exam, quiz, or essay). Written assignment lack analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary

F (<59) — Inadequate work; the assignments for the course have not been completed. Written assignments, when submitted, show a significant lack of effort on the part of the student, and a lack of engagement with the assignment and the subject matter of the course. Such work is marked by absence of analysis, evidence, and organization; engagement with the course materials is necessary before extensive revisions are even possible.

Plagiarism

The following definitions of Academic Dishonesty are excerpted from the West Virginia University Academic Integrity/Dishonesty Policy, available online at [cdii / dni.jp/jnterjty.html](http://cdii.dni.jp/jnterjty.html):

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined in terms of proscribed acts. Students are expected to understand that such practices constitute academic dishonesty regardless of motive. Those who deny deceitful intent, claim not to have known that the act constituted plagiarism, or maintain that what they did was inadvertent are nevertheless subject to penalties when plagiarism has been confirmed. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: submitting, without appropriate acknowledgement, a report, notebook, speech, outline, theme, thesis, dissertation, or other written, visual, or oral material that has been copied in whole or in part from the work of others, whether such source is published or not, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper.

1. Cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and projects, including but not limited to:
2. Obtaining help from another student during examinations.
3. Knowingly giving help to another student during examinations, taking an examination or doing academic work for another student, or providing one's own work for another student to copy and submit as his/her own.
4. The unauthorized use of notes, books, or other sources of information during examinations.
5. Obtaining without authorization an examination or any part thereof.
6. Forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud:
7. Forging or altering, or causing to be altered, the record of any grade in a grade book or other educational record.
8. Use of University documents or instruments of identification with intent to defraud.
9. Presenting false data or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for admission, registration, or withdrawal from the University or from a University course.
10. Knowingly presenting false data or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for personal gain.

11. Knowingly furnishing the results of research projects or experiments for the inclusion in another's work without proper citation.
12. Knowingly furnishing false statements in any University academic proceeding.
13. Cases of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" for the course and appropriate academic discipline. If you have any questions about academic dishonesty, and how to avoid it, please contact me.

Professionalism

At West Virginia University, class attendance contributes significantly to academic success. Students who attend classes regularly tend to earn higher grades and have higher passing rates in courses. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class session of English 2Z5. You are granted a maximum of three absences during the course of the semester. If this limit is exceeded without an acceptable excuse (such as illness, familial emergency), your grade will be lowered accordingly (one letter grade for each additional three unexcused absences) and/or the student will be asked to leave the course.

1. Your attendance is your responsibility.
2. Come to class on time. Arriving late distracts the members of the class, and will be detrimental to your academic experience.
3. Should you need assistance during a time of difficulty or crisis, please contact Tom Sloane, Associate Dean, in the Office of Student Life in E. Moore Hall, 304-293-5611.

Social Justice Policy

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

Editing Checklist

1. Evaluate your thesis

- is your thesis clearly stated at the beginning of your essay?
- is your thesis appropriate for the writing assignment?
- does your thesis "make sense"?

2. Evaluate your argumentative strategy

- are you using logical and rhetorical strategies that build the most convincing case for your thesis? (and remember, you may use more than one in an essay; if you choose multiple strategies, make sure that they work together)
- do you have the appropriate data to support your argument? (and if not, can you justify its absence?)
- is the data cited properly? (check the content and the form of your notes)

3. Evaluate your essay structure

- does your essay structure lead the reader through your argument clearly?
- does your essay structure work with/reinforce your argumentative strategy?
- does your introduction suggest the structure of your argument? If so, does the body of your essay follow through on the structure suggested by the introduction?
- are the transitions between the parts of your argument clear?
- does the conclusion pull your argument together? (try to avoid repetitive, summary conclusions)

4. Evaluate your paragraph structure

- does each paragraph function as a unit of your argument? (i.e. is each paragraph unified in its purpose?)
- is the topic sentence clear?
- does the body of the paragraph follow through on the subject of the topic sentence?
- are the transitions from the previous paragraph - and to the next paragraph - clear?

5. Evaluate your sentence structure

- is each sentence an independent unit of thought? (i.e. avoid repeating yourself in successive sentences)
- does one sentence lead to the next? Are the transitions between sentences clear?
- check the grammar of your sentences
- make sure that every sentence has a subject and a verb (avoid fragments!)
- check for subject- verb agreement
- check for tense consistency
- check that you are varying the grammar of your sentences (so that not every sentence begins with a prepositional phrase, for instance)

6. Check your spelling

- and remember the distinctions between their/their/they're; it's/its; are/our; etc.

7. Check your punctuation