English 1115-FDE: Foundations of Literary Study

Instructor	Dr. Scott Pound (RB 3037, 343-8298, spound@lakeheadu.ca)
GA	Sena Honke (sdhonke@lakeheadu.ca)
Office Hours	By appointment (via Zoom)

Course Website

Desire2Learn (or myCourseLInk)[1]

Description

An introduction to literary study, focusing on texts from the major genres (drama, poetry, prose fiction) within their historical and cultural contexts. Emphasis will be given to the development of skills in critical analysis, research, writing, and documentation.

Required Texts (available for purchase at Alumni Bookstore)

The Norton Introduction to Literature, Portable 13th edition (Norton)

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- understand and appreciate the significance of language and literary form in the construction of meaning,
- identify and understand the conventions of the major literary genres,
- identify literary devices and explain how they contribute to the meaning of texts,
- employ research and argumentation to engage in critical conversations about texts,
- evaluate texts in relation to their social and cultural contexts,
- employ critical thinking, close reading, and writing skills across a variety of academic and social situations, and
- document sources correctly in MLA format.

Expectations

I expect you to:

---

[1] https://mycourselink.lakeheadu.ca/d2l/home

- read all the assigned reading from the textbook and listen or view all video and audio instructional content posted to D2L each week,
- budget your time each week so that you have room in your schedule to read the assigned texts and complete the assignments **(you will need about 4-6 hours per week to complete the reading and assignments for this course)**,
- engage diligently and respectfully with the course material and your classmates in a spirit of generosity, mutual respect, and goodwill, and
- complete assignments with care and close attention to the guidelines.

Assignments and Evaluation
(Detailed guidelines for each assignment will be provided. See schedule for due dates)

Short Critical Responses (3 @ 10 each)	30
Recitation Assignments (2 @ 5 each)	10
Class Discussions (via D2L)	20
Research Essay Proposal and Outline	5
Research Essay Final Draft	15
Final Exam	20

Short Critical Responses A 750-word critical analysis of a text from the anthology chosen by the student. One for each genre studied (fiction, poetry, drama).

Recitation Assignments An audio recording of you reading a text or passage out loud with dramatic emphasis.

Research Essay Proposal and Outline A 750-1250 word description and explanation of a proposed essay including: topic, research question, problem, claim, sources, and a draft plan.

Research Essay Final Draft A carefully composed, organized, and edited final draft of the research essay (1500 words).

Class Discussions Your active and regular engagement with the course content and your peers in weekly group discussions.

Final Exam a three-hour written exam to be taken during the exam period at the end of the course.

Assignment Policies

- Assignments are designed to develop specific skills and knowledge. Students who do not prepare their assignments in accordance with the guidelines will have them returned ungraded and be asked to resubmit.

- All assignments are to be submitted via D2L by 5 pm on the due date. All assignments, excluding discussions and recitations, must be in MLA format, double spaced, with 1" margins, and in 12-point type.
- If you require an extension for a legitimate reason, you must request it before the due date.
- Unless you ask for and receive an extension, late assignments will be penalized by 2% per day (to a maximum of 20%).
- All assignments are individual assignments and must be completed individually.
- Except for Week One, the weekly group discussion forums close at 5 pm on Wednesdays

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty, including collaborating on individual assignments, will be reported and infractions penalized as required by the **Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity**.[2]

University Policies

- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour - Academic Integrity.
- Accommodations: Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code[3]. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS)[4] and register as early as possible.

---

[2] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures
[3] http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code
[4] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas

This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage[5] and/or the Desire2Learn or My Courselink[1] site for the course.

[5] https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english

Schedule

WEEK 1 (Sept. 7-10)

Introduction to the Course

Why Study Literature?

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 1-15

WEEK 2 (Sept. 13-17)

Reading Fiction, Plot

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 16-76

WEEK 3 (Sept. 20-24)

Narration and Point of View, Character

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 77-121

First Recitation Assignment Due (September 22)

WEEK 4 (Sept. 27-Oct. 1)

Setting, Symbol and Figurative Language

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 122-183

First Critical Response Due (Oct. 1)

WEEK 5 (Oct. 4-8)

Theme, Writing about Literature

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 184-224, 1066-1078, review pp. 27-47

Fall Study Break (Oct. 11-15)

WEEK 6 (Oct. 18-22)

Reading Poetry, Speaker, Situation and Setting, The Research Essay

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 398-461, 1079-1089

WEEK 7 (Oct. 25-29)

Theme and Tone, Word Choice and Word Order, Visual Imagery and Figures of Speech

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 462-502

Research Essay Proposal Due (Oct. 29)

WEEK 8 (Nov. 1-5)

Symbol, Sound

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 503-535

Second Critical Response Due (Nov. 5)

Nov. 5: Final Day to Drop Without Academic Penalty

WEEK 9 (Nov. 8-12)

Internal Stucture, External Form

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 536-566

Second Recitation Assignment Due (Nov. 12)

WEEK 10 (Nov. 15-19)

Reading Drama, Elements of Drama

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 650-786

WEEK 11 (Nov. 22-26)

Required Reading: *NIL*, pp. 856-906

Third Critical Response Due (Nov. 26)

WEEK 12 (Nov. 29-Dec. 3)

Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House*, pp. 856-906

Final Exam Prep

Final Draft of Essay Due (Dec. 3)

Guidelines for Submitting Written Work

Use white, 8½ X11 paper. Print your text in black, double-spaced 12 pt. type.

Except for page numbers (see below), leave one-inch margins all around the text of your paper. Indent paragraphs half an inch; set-off quotations should be indented an inch from the left.

Your research paper does not need a title page. At the top of the first page, at the left-hand margin, type your name, your instructor's name, the course name and number, and the date -- all on separate, double-spaced lines. Then double-space again and center the title above your text. (If your title requires more than one line, double-space between the lines.) Double-space again before beginning your text. The title should be neither underlined nor written in all capital letters. Capitalize only the first, last, and principal words of the title. Titles might end with a question mark or an exclamation mark if that is appropriate, but not in a period. Titles written in other languages are capitalized and punctuated according to different rules, and writers should consult the *MLA Guide* or their instructors.

Number your pages consecutively throughout the manuscript (including the first page) in the upper right-hand corner of each page, one-half inch from the top. Type your last name before the page number. Most word processing programs provide for a "running head," which you can set up as you create the format for the paper, at the same time you are establishing things like the one-inch margins and the double-spacing. This feature makes the appearance and consistency of the page numbering a great convenience. Make sure the page-number is always an inch from the right-hand edge of the paper (flush with the right-hand margin of your text) and that there is a double-space between the page number and the top line of text. Do not use the abbreviation *p.* or any other mark before the page number.

Writing: High School vs. University

It is possible, and perhaps even likely, the way you were taught to write in high school will not meet the expectations of your university professors. The stakes are higher in university and the standards more rigourous. That might sound forbidding, but mostly it's good news because along with higher standards comes more freedom and a greater emphasis on creativity and originality.

University writing solicits and rewards critical thinking and new ideas with the proviso that *these ideas are clearly expressed, logically sound, and supported by evidence*. Remember that the university is a community where knowledge is developed and shared through argument and research. As Janet Giltrow explains, "The knowledge that university students acquire is the kind of knowledge that comes from techniques of inquiry developed by the various academic disciplines" (8), which is to say that academic writing is discipline specific.

The primary mode of academic writing in the humanities is argumentation. That's argumentation, not in the sense of a quarrel or a squabble, but as a form of writing in which the writer presents an argument (i.e. a claim plus support for that claim). The argumentative essay is similar to the kind of essays you wrote in high school but with some important differences related to the following:

Structure – In high school, you were probably taught the standard five-paragraph essay consisting of an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. University level argumentative essays are less rigid. The typical introduction in a high-school essay goes from the general to the particular and ends with the thesis statement (the inverted pyramid). In university writing, there is more latitude in terms of where your claim/thesis appears and much more emphasis placed on the substance and specificity of the claim/thesis. In university level writing your conclusion is not a simple restatement of your thesis but rather a re-synthesis of your main idea in light of the evidence provided.

Argument – University level writing puts a much higher premium on the argument of your essay and the main idea of your argument. In high school you might have been able to get away with a thesis statement like "In this essay, I will discuss…." In university-level writing, your claim/thesis must do more than announce your intentions; it must encapsulate your argument and take a position that is *specific*, *substantial*, and *debatable*. Expect to spend a lot of time developing and refining the main idea of your argument.

Research – Claims about a literary text must be backed up with evidence from that text and other contextual or critical sources. This evidence should be *relevant*, *specific*, and *authoritative*. As a humanist, your laboratory is the archive and the library, and your method is close reading. The most authoritative evidence usually takes the form of direct quotations from the text. Other forms of evidence can be reference works (scholarly editions, biographies, dictionaries, and encyclopedias), information about the social and historical context of the text, and scholarly essays and books.

Format and Documentation – Academic writing observes discipline-specific systems of formatting and documentation to ensure that research results are standardized and verifiable. In English Studies, the Modern Language Association (MLA) makes the rules that scholars agree to follow. For a useful guide to MLA Style for formatting and citations please refer to the MLA Page at the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University (OWL).

Writing – The Basics

Words – As Mark Twain said, “Use the right word, not its second cousin.” If the right word doesn't come to you, use what is at hand and keep going, but revise it later. Here are some other tips, tried and true, from reputable sources:

> Write with nouns and verbs, not with adjectives and adverbs. (Strunk and White)
>
> Never use a long word where a short one will do. (George Orwell)
>
> Employ a simple and straightforward style. (Mark Twain)
>
> Go in fear of abstractions. (Ezra Pound)
>
> Be concrete. (Deidre McCloskey)

Big words, abstract words, and important sounding locutions (like “important sounding locutions”) are a constant temptation, especially in academic writing. Sometimes they are necessary to get your idea across, but simple language is usually just as effective, and often more efffective, at conveying complex ideas. Avoid the temptation to inflate your prose with fancy words.

Be vigilant and smart when it comes to words. If a word suggests itself but you don't know what it means, look it up. Know what the word means literally and what it connotes (or suggests). Sometimes the literal, denotative meaning is accurate, but the connotation is wrong or misleading or offensive. Above all, strive to be precise and specific so that your meaning is clear.

As important as it is to be vigilant and smart, it is just as important to have fun and take the odd risk. You don’t need to white knuckle every word. As Deidre McCloskey says, “You take words seriously by playing with them.”

Sentences – “Get the basic architecture of the English sentence right,” Richard Lanham says, “and everything else will follow.” The basic architecture of the English sentence is very simple: a subject and a predicate – a noun (or pronoun) and a verb (sometimes with an object), preferably close together and close to the front of the sentence. For the sake of clarity, focus on these two aspects as you compose sentences.

For the sake of readability, also focus on sentence variety. There are three basic sentence structures: simple, compound, and complex. Get comfortable using them all, and vary them. A **simple** sentence makes one stand-alone assertion: e.g. “Lucy drives a Volvo.” A **compound** sentence makes two or more stand-alone assertions and joins them with a comma and a coordinating conjunction: e.g. “Lucy drives a Volvo, *but* she doesn’t have a license” or “Wilma makes documentaries, *and* Sebastian edits them.” A **complex** sentence makes one stand-alone assertion and one or more dependent assertions introduced by subordination conjunctions: e.g. “*Before* we can start editing, we need all the exposed film in one place.” A fourth, the **compound complex** sentence, is a combination of the last two.

Some words of caution and a few recommendations: Don't overload your sentences. Nothing is more confounding for the reader than a sentence that tries to do too much and fails. Short sentences are a blessing; try to use at least one per paragraph. They do wonders for the rhythm of your prose. Use parallelism and antithesis to balance longer sentences and aid in comprehension. The best test of a sentence is to read it out loud. Good sentences are easy to speak.

Paragraphs – A paragraph is a group of sentences that support an idea. You want your paragraphs to be unified and coherent. A **unified** paragraph is one in which all of the sentences support the main idea in some way. Support can take the form of explanation, description, illustration, evidence, examples, comparisons, etc. (see below). A **coherent** paragraph is one that is logically organized and which develops the idea in a clear way. Make sure your paragraphs provide enough information in the proper order with the requisite amount of clarity, specificity, and simplicity.

A paragraph is like a mini-essay. The main idea is the topic sentence, which states an idea or makes a claim that the rest of the paragraph will support.

Ways to bolster your paragraphs with evidence/support:

- Use examples and illustrations
- Cite and explain textual evidence
- Cite data or information (facts, statistics, evidence, details, etc.)
- Examine testimony (what other people say such as quotes and paraphrases)
- Use an anecdote or story
- Define terms in the paragraph
- Compare and contrast
- Evaluate causes and reasons
- Examine effects and consequences
- Analyze the topic
- Describe the topic
- Offer a chronology of an event (time segments)

Revising/Rewriting – Writing is hard work. Sentences and paragraphs almost never come out right the first time. Expect to revise and rewrite your sentences and paragraphs until they work.

Revising is sometimes fixing mistakes, but more often consists of rewriting, rearranging, or replacing words and sentences so that everything flows better and makes the best possible sense. Revision also involves eliminating words and clauses that are unnecessary.