

Syllabus
ENG 500: Theory and Practice of English Studies
Fall 2016
Section 001 Monday 5:30:00-8:00, Simpkins 214
Section QC1 Monday 5:30-8:00 QC Complex 2204

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Description: English Studies is a vast, anarchic field of intellectual inquiry that includes a dizzying array of possibilities: the novel, drama, poetry, the essay, the short story, film, new media, text/image theory, composition studies, technical writing, linguistics, literary theory, cultural studies, gender studies, queer theory, postcolonial literatures and theory, publishing, the history of the book, rhetoric, and of course all the national literatures written in English anywhere in the world. Even this partial list gives only a vague idea of the possibilities, and as a graduate student in English one of the great challenges and delights is exploring these areas and defining yourself as an intellectual within them. Despite the scope of the field, all these areas of inquiry demand intense, informed, subtle reading and interpretation conveyed in precise and limpid prose. This section of English 500 will focus on the questions of reading and interpretation. We will explore fundamental philosophical and critical backgrounds including theories of the sign, structuralism, deconstruction, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and feminism. We will do so with the goal of becoming deeper, more informed, self-reflective and critical readers. We will also develop skills as researchers that will serve you throughout your intellectual life. The goal of this course is cultivating the skills and practices to read and write successfully in any area of English studies. We will develop our reading by writing throughout the semester, producing short papers, an interview, and a research project that all emphasize accurate summary, concise formulation, and the development of a critical voice.

Required texts: Please purchase all of the required texts as soon as possible. With the exception of the the Electronic Reserve readings (er), all texts are available at the WIU bookstore. **Specific editions are required;** if you wish to purchase texts online or at other bookstores, use the ISBN number given below when you order.

Daniel Chandler. *Semiotics: The Basics*. Routledge. 978-0415363754

Sigmund Freud. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Norton. 978-0-393-30451-0

Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* 8th ed. MLA. 978-1603292627

Karl Marx. *The Communist Manifesto and Other Revolutionary Writings*. Dover Thrift. 978-0486424651

Rivkin and Ryan. *Literary Theory: An Anthology* 2nd ed. Blackwell. 978-1405106962

Steve Tomasula. *The Book of Portraiture*. FC2. 978-1573661287

Assignments and grading: Assignments will include reading the required texts on time and consistent, active participation in class discussions. Your grade will be determined by using the following scale:

50% Summary and Analysis Paper Series

20% Faculty Interview

30% Final Project

Attendance: This course emphasizes class participation and interaction. To do well, consistent attendance is crucial.

- The total percentage of class you miss will be deducted from your final grade.
- Coming to class without the required texts or being unprepared for discussion will be considered an absence.

Deadlines: The course schedule includes the deadlines for every assignment. Deadlines are not negotiable, and late work will not be accepted. If you find yourself in the hands of angry gods, speak to me as soon as possible before the due date.

Workshop drafts: If you do not submit a complete draft that meets the minimum length of the paper on the day of a workshop, the highest grade you can receive for the final draft will be a D.

Participation and conduct: The success of this course depends not only on individual assignments, but also on the class working together. In order to create a productive and challenging class we must treat one another with respect at all times. A productive and interesting class emerges through our conflicts, disagreements, and debates, but in order to learn from one another we must always work within an ethic of care and mutual respect.

Academic honesty: Ethical use of others' ideas is a critical part of English studies. Plagiarism (use of another's ideas, data, and statements with little or no acknowledgment), collusion (unauthorized or undocumented collaboration), or re-submission (presenting an assignment previously completed for course credit) are not permissible. If you are unsure how to document sources or quote another writer, and your question isn't answered by your MLA Handbook, please ask me. Academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment in question, possibly a failing grade for the entire course, and will be reported in accordance with WIU's Academic Dishonesty Policy.

Students with differences: I would like to hear from anyone who has a difference that may require some modification in seating, testing, or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Please speak with me after class or make an appointment. See below for an official announcement from WIU on this topic.

Problems: If you experience any difficulties or frustrations with any aspect of the course, I urge you to speak with me either during office hours or by appointment. I always shape courses through student suggestions. To that end, I will ask you to evaluate the class at midterm and the end of the semester.

Agreement: By remaining in this section of ENG 500, you agree to accept the policies articulated in this syllabus.

WIU brings you the following announcements: In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Support Services at 298-2515 for additional services. It is the responsibility of the student to comply with the prerequisites/corequisites for a course that he/she plans to take. Instructors who place the appropriate information on the syllabus and emphasize it during the first three class periods may exclude a student from the class who does not meet the prerequisites/corequisites by sending a note to the student with a copy to the registrar within the first two weeks of the term.