

**English 299**  
**Critical Methods of Reading and Writing**  
**Spraing 2015**

Section 001, 9:30-10:45, Simpkins 020

Section 002, 12:30-1:45, Simpkins 027

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Office Hours:  
Tue, 2:00-3:00  
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**Introduction:** “Would you rather be a lover, or a creator, of funhouses?” John Barth uses this metaphor to imagine the differences between reading a story and writing one. After all, with its scares and amusements, the funhouse is designed to thrill and arouse those who pass through it. Lovers of funhouses don’t think about how they are designed and constructed to produce those excitements—if they did so, wouldn’t the funhouse have failed them? But on the other hand, might lovers of funhouses show their affection by thinking, “How was that made?”

The formal study of literature poses much the same paradox. As readers of a story or a poem, much of our pleasure is produced unconsciously, and we often read as if in a dream or some pleasurable trance produced by the text. But the study of literature demands that we wake from our dreams and examine the mechanics that make the literary experience possible. To use Barth’s terminology, we must both love our literature, and understand its hidden mechanics.

Some readers would prefer only to dream, and for them the formal study of literature can be acutely painful. Some readers become intoxicated with powers of criticism and never really return to their dreams. These technicians delight in argument and explanation, schema and paradigm, finding unexpected pleasures investigating how literature works. But the best readers are those who become something like lucid dreamers, able to indulge in the pleasures of reading, of loving literature, but also able to speak as critics, calling upon more sophisticated explanations for the dreams of literature and their effects on readers and others in the world.

ENG 299 begins with the assumption that students of literature are distinguished from ordinary readers by a profound self-consciousness. To wake ourselves from our dreams, we will develop a critical vocabulary that allows us to precisely describe how people read, write, and interpret works of literature. We will immerse ourselves in the theory of literature, develop a conscious grasp of form, and learn to use a rhetorical vocabulary to describe tropes and figures, forms and genres. Throughout the semester we will read and write critically and above all intensely. The overarching goal of this course is to transform your experiences of reading and writing, perhaps forever.

As we become readers and critics, we will take pleasure in our own writing, as well as that of others. While learning the foundational skill of English studies—close reading and effective

interpretation—we will also develop the clear and graceful prose expected of English majors. Our attention will move from words, to sentences, to paragraphs, to essays, as we practice the craft of revision every week. We will do all of this together, working through our discoveries, questions, and frustrations in stimulating class discussions.

**Required texts and materials:** Please purchase all of the required texts and materials as soon as possible. With the exception of the course pack, 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. We begin the semester with readings that provide a common vocabulary and establish guidelines for writing about literature. Most weeks which follow, we will read one or more literary texts and secondary material which will help us understand literary forms in general, or which provide specific interpretations of texts we are reading as a group. One of the semester goals is understanding standard writing practices engaged in English studies. To that end, we will read selections from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

ENG 299 Course Pack, available only at Quick Printers, 1120 E. Jackson. Ph. 309-833-5250

Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, MLA, 7th ed. (978-1-60329-024-1)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, et al, *The Communist Manifesto and Other Revolutionary Writings*, Dover Thrift ( 978-0486424651)

Sharon Olds, *Satan Says*, University of Pennsylvania (0822953145)

William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets*. Putnam/Penguin Signet (0-140-71453-7)

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Bedford Case Studies Ed. (978-0393927931)

Mary Tatar, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, Norton Critical, (9780393972771)

Steve Tomasula, *IN&OZ*, U of Chicago P, (978-0226807447)

**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:

Summary and Close Reading Paper 1 . . . . . 100 points

Summary and Close Reading Paper 2. . . . . 100 points

Summary and Close Reading Paper 3. . . . . 100 points

Summary and Close Reading Paper 4. . . . . 100 points

Theoretical Application Paper . . . . . 100 points

Research Paper .....	200 points
Midterm Exam .....	150 points
Final Exam .....	150 points
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Total Points .....	1,000 points

Note that 70% of your grade is formal writing assignments. In general, you can expect to submit at least two pages of formal polished writing each week. Class participation, includes completing the daily readings, being on time to class with your books and other materials, taking an active and conspicuous part in discussion, and contributing to group work and other activities.

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

- You can miss 3 classes without penalty. Every subsequent absence will deduct 10 points from your final grade.
- Coming to class without the required texts will be considered an absence and you may be asked to leave class.
- Texts including our primary books, course pack readings, and web readings must be printed on paper. You cannot read these on any digital device and be considered present in class. Coming to class without printed copies on paper will result in an absence for the day and you may be asked to leave class.
- Cellphones must be turned off during class. If your cellphone rings in class, it will result in an absence for the day. Anyone texting or otherwise using a cellphone in class will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for the day.

**U Grades:** During the first half of the semester only, any assignment which does not meet minimum standards for style or content may be given a grade of unsatisfactory (U) and returned to you with directions for correction and resubmission. When resubmitting you can earn only 75% of the assignment's value.

**Deadlines:** The course schedule includes the deadlines for every assignment. All papers are due in class, printed on paper. If for some reason you have to miss class on the day an assignment is due, make arrangements with another class member to turn in the printed hard copy of your work on time for you. 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.

**Workshop drafts:** For almost every paper, you will be required to create a workshop draft. If you do not submit a complete draft that meets the minimum length of the paper in class 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 class, 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.

**Agreement:** By remaining in this section of ENG 299, 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.

English 299

## Critical Methods of Reading and Writing

\*Note that readings will be added or modified throughout the semester, check back often.

Spring 2015

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Metaphors and Parables—An Invitation to Interpretation</p>	<p>Jan 20 Bradfield, from <i>The History of Luminous Motion</i></p>	<p>Jan 22 “Parable of the Sower” and Gibaldi, Ch. 4, “The Format of the Research Paper,” and Ch. 6, “Documentation: Citing Sources”</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>The Linguistic Turn</p>	<p>Jan 27 Chandler, “Rhetorical Tropes” (CP) Nietzsche, “On Truth and Falsity in their Ultra Moral Sense” (CP) Burke, “The Four Master Tropes” (CP) <b>Summary and Close Reading 1 due.</b></p>	<p>Jan 29 Nietzsche, “On Truth and Falsity in their Ultra Moral Sense” (CP) and Gibaldi 3.2.1-3.4.3</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>The Reader-Writer Dialectic</p>	<p>Feb 3 Nietzsche, “On Truth and Falsity in their Ultra Moral Sense” (CP) and Jean-Paul Sartre, “Why Write” (CP)  <b>Paper 1 U grade resubmissions due</b></p>	<p>Feb 5 Jean-Paul Sartre, “Why Write” (CP) Gibaldi, all of 3.7 “Quotations” and Ch. 5. “Documentation: Preparing the List of Works Cited.” <b>Summary and Close Reading 2 Workshop draft due</b></p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>The Poet as Nietzsche's Hero</p>	<p>Feb 10 Olds, <i>Satan Says</i> and Jean-Paul Sartre, “Why Write” (CP)  <b>Paper 1 U U Resubmissions Due</b></p>	<p>Feb 12 Olds, <i>Satan Says</i>  <b>Summary and Close Reading 2 Due.</b>  <b>Summary and Close Reading 3 workshop draft due (must be on a poem by Sharon Olds).</b></p>
<p>Week5</p> <p>The New Criticism</p>	<p>Feb 17 Shakespeare, Introduction to <i>The Sonnets</i>. (read sonnets 1-17) and Brooks from <i>The Well-Wrought Urn</i>, “The Language of Paradox” (Web) and Burke, from “The Four Master Tropes” sec. IV, 511-517 (CP)</p>	<p>Feb 19 Shakespeare, <i>The Sonnets</i> (read 18-126) and Brooks from <i>The Well-Wrought Urn</i>, “The Language of Paradox” (Web) and Burke, from “The Four Master Tropes” sec. IV, 511-517 (CP)  <b>Summary and Close Reading 3 Due</b></p>



Week 6 New Criticism Continued	Feb 24 Shakespeare, <i>The Sonnets</i> (read 126-154)  <b>Paper 1 UUU and Paper 2 U resubmissions due.</b>	Feb 26 Shakespeare, <i>The Sonnets</i>  <b>Summary and Close Reading 4 Workshop Draft Due (must be on a sonnet)</b>
Week 7 Midterm Exam	Mar 3 Tomasula <i>IN&amp;OZ</i> and Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" (CP)	Mar 5 Tomasula <i>IN&amp;OZ</i> and Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" (CP)  <b>Summary and Close Reading 4 Due (must be on a sonnet)</b>
Week 8 Formalism and Structuralism	Mar 10 <b>Midterm Exam</b>	Mar 12 Grimm, "Cinderella (in Tartar); Propp, "The Morphology of the Folktale" (Tartar).
Week 9 Spring Break	Mar 17	Mar 19
Week 10 Formalism and Structuralism	Mar 24 All in Tartar: Grimm, "Cinderella" 117; de Beaumont "Beauty and the Beast" 32; Perrault, "Blue Beard" 144;  Brooks from <i>Reading for the Plot</i> (web).  Saussure, from "Course in General Linguistics"(web).  <b>All U Revisions Due</b>	Mar 26 Saussure, from "Course in General Linguistics"(web).  <b>Extra-Credit Close Reading Paper Due</b> (must be on Tomasula's <i>IN&amp;OZ</i> )
Week 11 Psychoanalysis	Mar 31 Carter, "The Tigers Bride" and Lacan, "The Mirror Stage" (web)	Apr 2 Carter, "The Tigers Bride" and Freud, "The Uncanny" (web)

Week 12 Marxism	Apr 7 <i>Frankenstein</i> and Marx, from <i>The Communist Manifesto</i>  <b>All UU Revisions Due. Last Day to Turn In Close Reading Papers</b>	Apr 9 <i>Shelley, Frankenstein</i> , and Morretti, from <i>Signs Taken for Wonders</i> (web)
Week 13 Feminism and Postcolonialism	Apr 14 Gubar and Gilbert, “Mary Shelly's Monstrous Eve” and Mellor, “Possessing Nature: The Female in <i>Frankenstein</i> ” both in Hunter.	Apr 16 Bette London “Mary Shelly, <i>Frankenstein</i> , and the Spectacle of Masculinity” in Hunter.  <b>Theoretical Application Paper Workshop</b>
Week 14 Research Methodologies	Apr 21 Research Methodologies in class.  <b>Theoretical Application Paper Due</b>	Apr 23 Research Methodologies
Week 15 Research Paper	Apr 28 In class work on research summary	Apr 30 In class work on research
Week 16 Student Life—Reading Life	May 5 Discussion of the English Major  In-class student evaluations of the course.	May 7 Discussion of Reading Life
Week 17  <b>Final Exam Week</b>  <b>Reflective Essay due</b>  <b>Research Paper due</b>	May 12	May 14