

Course Policies and Requirements for The English Novel

Professor:

Jack Peters

Course:

English 4500, Section 001
9:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. TTh, 323 Curry Hall

Texts:

Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Norton)
Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (Norton)
Wilde, *Picture of Dorian Gray* (Norton)
Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty Four* (Dutton/Plume)

Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (Norton)
Dickens, *Hard Times* (Norton)
Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (Norton)
Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Norton)

Office:

409-E Language Building

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Office Hours:

TTh 8:30-9:30 a.m., by appointment,
and most other times I am in my office

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Course Requirements:

The requirements for this course are as follows: the completion of 1 term paper, a mid-term exam, a final exam, and reading quizzes. The mid-term exam and final exam will be worth 30% of your final grade for the class; the term paper will be worth 25% of your final grade for the class. There will also be a number of unannounced reading quizzes worth 15% of the final grade for the class. If you fail to turn in the term paper or take an exam, you will likely fail for the course. There will be 1 make-up quiz for those who miss a quiz as a result of excused absences. I will also drop the lowest quiz score.

Course Subject Matter:

This course will be a survey of the English novel, beginning with the eighteenth-century novel and ending with the contemporary (relatively speaking) novel. There will be one novel from the eighteenth century, one from the Romantic period, three from the Victorian period, one from the Modernist period, and two from the contemporary period. We will study how to read novels, and we will look at different aspects of novels and different approaches to studying them. The goal of this class is for you to gain a greater appreciation of the English novel. I assume that we will spend roughly a week and a half to two weeks per novel, but we may choose to linger over some works or move past others more quickly than originally expected.

Course Policies:

Attendance/Promptness: You are allowed 2 unexcused absence without penalty. You can use the unexcused absences for any reason, but use them wisely. Their purpose is to allow you to miss class if something important comes up that does not constitute an excused absence. Illness, family emergency (e.g., death in the family), observance of religious holidays, and university-excused absences (e.g., participation in intercollegiate athletic events, etc.) are the only reasons for excused absences; work is not an excused absence, nor are traffic, car trouble, being in a wedding, bad weather, being in jail, and so on; also, all excused absences are subject to my judgement and require proof on your part. You also must attend at least 75% of class to get credit for attending that day. If you have 3 unexcused absences, I will drop your final grade for the class by 4%, and I will drop your final grade for the class by an additional 2% for every unexcused absence after that. If you miss more than 8 classes, I will probably ask you either to drop the class or take an incomplete (only in the case of excused absences). Each case will be treated individually, though. I will send around a roll at every class. It is your

responsibility to sign the roll. If you don't sign the roll and I don't remember that you were in class, then I will assume you were absent on that day. Even though you have 2 unexcused absence to work with, you should try not to miss class unless it is absolutely necessary; it will be to your benefit to attend class, since the material discussed in class is what appears on the exams. Also, quizzes missed because of unexcused absences cannot be made up. As a result, students who chronically miss class generally don't do very well in the course. Although I have no standard tardiness policy, if you are chronically late (in my judgment), I will count a certain number of tardy days as one unexcused absence. Also, reading quizzes are usually given only at the beginning of class, so if you arrive late you would have less than the full time to complete the quiz, or you may miss the quiz entirely. Quizzes missed because of tardiness cannot be made up unless the tardiness is a result of a good, documented reason (comparable to the reasons for excused absences). In addition, whether you're present or absent, you're responsible for all material we cover in class, including any changes in due dates, policies, or reading assignments. So make sure you check the notes of other students for any classes you miss. Finally, if you miss an exam, you must have a good, documented excuse or you will probably not be allowed to make it up.

Late Term Papers: I expect term papers to be turned in on the day they are due; nevertheless, you have a grace period for the term paper. The date is in the Daily Schedule. If you turn in the paper *before* the end of the grace period, there is no penalty. If *for any reason* it comes in *any time* after the grace period ends by my watch (even a minute or two), I'll deduct 6% off the grade for the term paper. In addition, I'll deduct 6% for each day thereafter that your paper is not turned in. If you're out of town, and you want to turn in a late term paper to avoid further penalty, you can always mail me the term paper, and I'll consider it turned in as of the postmark date. The only exception to this late term paper policy is in the extremely rare case when it is impossible, because of excused absences, to turn in the term paper on the due date or during the grace period. Otherwise, there are no extensions beyond the grace period. If your term paper is late for an extended period, I may limit the penalty somewhat.

Grading Criteria for Term Papers: The primary criteria for grading term papers will be content and presentation. I weigh the content somewhat more heavily than the presentation, but both are important, and I will expect you to be responsible for the rules of grammar, punctuation, and usage you learned in Freshman English. The term papers should be about 6-7 pages long, but a *little* more or less doesn't matter to me. Just make sure you adequately cover the material if it's short or that there isn't unnecessary information if it's long. I do not scale paper grades.

Accommodations: In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for you if you qualify as a student with disabilities. Please register with ODA, and present your written request to me by the 2nd class day or so.

Term Papers, Exams, Grades, Rough Drafts, Informal Proposals, Etc.:

Texts and Readings: The texts should be on sale at the student bookstore. You are welcome to use other editions of the books, although the page numbering will likely differ and some of the material may be different. I have also placed copies of the texts (though not necessarily the same editions as used in class) on twenty-four hour reserve in the library. You should read ahead for heavier reading periods.

Informal Proposals and Rough Drafts: Informal proposals summarize what you're going to write about and should contain a brief summary and the thesis statement of your proposed term paper; that way if you're completely off track we can catch it before it's too late. These proposals may be handwritten or typed and usually run about ½ page. They are not graded but must meet minimum standards (which I will go over in class) and must be turned in by the last day to change topics or I will deduct up to 4% from the final grade of the paper.

Also, if the informal proposal is not adequate, I will require you to re-write it. Rough drafts may be handwritten or typed and should be fairly complete and must be true rough drafts—not simply a second copy of your final draft. Rough drafts are not graded but must be turned in with the final copy of the paper or I will deduct 5% from the final grade of the paper. Also, please label your rough draft, so I don't mistake it for the final draft.

Term Papers: You will be required to write 1 term paper (due on the date listed in the Daily Schedule). The topic will be of your choosing, but the term paper must deal at least 50% with works we will be reading in the course or that are listed on the Daily Schedule. You may change term paper topic after you have turned in an informal proposal, but you must then turn in a new informal proposal. You may not change topics after the dates indicated on the Daily Schedule except in unusual circumstances. Please put your name and the title of the paper on the first page of your paper and include a cover sheet with your name, date, and the title of the paper. When you turn in your paper, be sure to have me initial the cover sheet. This is your receipt that I received the paper, so don't lose it, because if you can't produce it, and I don't have a paper from you and can't remember receiving one, I will assume you didn't turn one in. I do not scale paper grades. Finally, although I do not require it, it would be helpful if you turn in your assignments in a folder.

Mid-Term and Final Exams: The mid-term exam (1 hour) will likely be made up of 10 short-answer questions that will demonstrate your understanding of the material we have covered to that point. The final exam (2 hours) will also likely be made up of 10 short-answer questions, and 1 essay question that you will choose from several alternatives. The essay is intended to demonstrate your ability to apply what you have learned in different contexts from those we discussed in class. You will need a blue book for the final exam. If necessary, I scale mid-term and/or final exam grades, either by lowering the standards for a single grade or multiple grades, by scaling the entire class, or by using a slightly sliding scale, depending on the type of scale required in a particular situation.

Final Grades: Your final class grade will be calculated based on the percentages noted earlier. I use standard percentages for grades (0%-59.4%=F; 59.5%-69.4%=D; 69.5%-79.4%=C; 79.5%-89.4%=B; 89.5%-100%=A). If necessary, I scale final grades, either by lowering the standards for a single grade or multiple grades or by scaling the entire class, depending on the type of scale required in a particular situation. There are no extra credit assignments in this course.

Reading Quizzes: Reading quizzes are unannounced and are usually given during the first 10 minutes of class. You may not have a quiz each class, but there will be a fair number of them. The purpose of reading quizzes is to determine whether you have read the material, not necessarily whether you have understood the material. As a result, if you have read the material carefully, you should do well on the quizzes, but if you have not read you will probably not do well. I do not scale quiz scores.

Make-Up Quizzes: A make-up quiz will be given once during the semester. It will cover the reading for that day and will be taken only by those who have missed quizzes as a result of an excused absence. I will then take the score for the make-up quiz and replace the zero on the missed quiz with the score on the make-up quiz.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Finally, if you plagiarize the term paper or cheat on an exam or quiz, you will receive the maximum penalty allowed to me, and I'll report you to university standards for disciplinary action, regardless of your past performance or class standing.

Daily Schedule (Tentative)

- August 26: Introduction to course.
- August 28: *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 3-60.
- September 2: *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 61-120.
- September 4: *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 121-180.
- September 9: *Robinson Crusoe*, pp. 181-220.
- September 11: *Frankenstein*, preface p. 5-6; volume 1
- September 16: *Frankenstein*, volume 2
- September 18: *Frankenstein*, volume 3
- September 23: *Jane Eyre*, Author's Preface, pp. 1-3; chapters 1-11.
- September 25: *Jane Eyre*, chapters 12-21.
- September 30: *Jane Eyre*, chapters 22-28.
- October 2: *Jane Eyre*, chapters 29-38.
- October 7: **Mid-Term Exam**
- October 9: *Hard Times*, Book 1
- October 14: *Hard Times*, Book 2
- October 16: *Hard Times*, Book 3
- October 21: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Preface, pp. 3-4; chapters 1-5.
- October 23: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; chapters 6-10; **Informal Proposal Due**
- October 30: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, chapters 11-15.
- November 4: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, chapters 12-20.
- November 6: *Heart of Darkness*, part 1
- November 11: *Heart of Darkness*, part 2
- November 13: *Heart of Darkness*, part 3; **Last Day to Turn Informal Proposal or Change Paper Topics**

November 18: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, part 1.

November 20: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, part 2.

November 25: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, part 3.

November 27: *A Clockwork Orange*, part 1.

December 2: *A Clockwork Orange*, part 2.

December 4: *A Clockwork Orange*, part 3; Course conclusion; **Essay due**

December 9: **Final Exam 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.; Grace Period for Essay Ends at 8:00 a.m. Sharp**