

Guidelines for English 3000: Introduction to Literary Analysis & Interpretation Skills

The following guidelines should help instructors design course syllabuses and produce assignments and exams appropriate to objectives of the gateway course in the UNT Department of English.

Catalog description for the course: "Prepares students to understand literature and to articulate their understanding in essays supported by carefully analyzed evidence from assigned works. Major genres of poetry, drama, prose fiction and nonfiction, and the literary terms and conventions associated with each genre. Students learn to evaluate multiple interpretations of a text."

- 1) The class should be writing intensive. Although this requirement leaves some room to maneuver, individual instructors should assign several formal essays as well as substantial in-class writing. Ideally the class should also stress revision processes. A final portfolio might be a way to address the writing-intensive component of the class.
- 2) The class should introduce students to the critical practice of close reading. Instructors are advised to begin with an extended section on poetry, as this genre best lends itself to the instruction of close reading skills.
- 3) The class should introduce students to the basic conventions of poetry, drama, and prose narrative. Every effort should be made to provide adequate coverage of these genres.
- 4) The class should introduce students to the definition and application of basic literary terms. Instructors are advised to give objective tests (exams or quizzes) to ensure that students master these definitions. Instructors might also consider assigning a handbook of literary terms to facilitate the students' acquisition of the required knowledge.
- 5) Although you are expected to cover all three major genres, you are not expected to provide coverage in any particular period / author. However, the assigned works should be significantly diverse in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and social backgrounds. Instructors are cautioned against assigning too many primary works (the class should improve the quality of students' analytical skills, not increase the quantity of works that they have read).
- 6) To help students "evaluate multiple interpretations of a text," instructors might assign a few well-chosen critical essays. These essays should model the reading and writing skills that we want students to acquire.

Updated Spring 2018