

English 215: Introduction to English Studies

215.001

Fall 2019

MW 9:30 – 10:45AM

Lubar Hall N130

Instructor: Katie Cary

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:00

Wednesdays 12:00 – 2:00

The Grind, library location

*If these times do not work, please email me to make an appointment.

Course Description

Welcome to English 215! This course is designed to be an introduction to university-level English studies. We will spend the semester reading a wide range of literature (novels, drama, poetry, short stories, essays) and learning how to analyze and think critically about these texts. We will discuss analytical methods such as close reading, critical thinking, and scholarly research while reading material drawn from a range of genres, time periods, writers, and literary movements.

The theme of this course is “The Weird”. We will explore a variety of texts that share elements of the weird, such as the fantastical, magical, surreal, and uncanny. Using the broad theme of weirdness, we will also enter into potentially unfamiliar territory. While these texts include aspects of magic or strange settings, they may also require you to analyze unfamiliar genres or concepts, learn about historical and contemporary cultural issues, and explore what it means to be Other. This course will also provide crucial counter-narratives, such as a Caribbean retelling of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, to question which stories are being told and whose voices are being heard.

Course Goals

The focus of our course is on careful, close reading and critical analysis of texts. It will rely on your thoughtful preparation and participation, so you should come to class prepared with reading notes and questions to explore with the class. This class is designed to help you

1. Think, read, view, write, and discuss texts critically.
2. Apply theories of interpretation and writing to discuss the relationships between writer and reader; language and power; context and text
3. Consider how English Studies is a global enterprise, created and consumed by many different communities worldwide.

Required Texts

The following books must be purchased from the UWM virtual bookstore or outside source such as Amazon:

1. Césaire, Aimé. *A Tempest*. (Theatre Communications Group, 2002) ISBN: 1559362103 (\$13.95)
2. Hamid, Mohsin. *Exit West*. (Riverhead Books, 2018) ISBN: 0735212201 (\$16.00)
3. Orange, Tommy. *There There*. (Vintage, 2019) ISBN: 0525436146 (\$16.00)
4. Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. (Simon & Schuster, 2004). ISBN: 9780743482837 (\$5.39)
5. Stevenson, Noelle. *Nimona*. (HarperTeen, 2015) ISBN: 0062278223 (\$14.99)

All other required and recommended texts will be available on Canvas.

Attendance

Attending class meetings is the best way to make sure that you do as well as possible in the class and that you can learn everything you need to know about research and writing. Students are allowed 4 absences for any reason without penalty. Every absence after 4 will result in a letter grade deduction in your final course grade. More than 6 absences will result in a failing grade for this course. Excessive tardiness also makes it difficult to actively participate in the day's activities. If you are more than 10 minutes late or leave 10 minutes early, you will be counted tardy. After one tardy, I will begin marking each one as an absence.

Assignments:

Participation – 15%

Quizzes (10 quizzes) – 15%

Close readings (4 close reading papers, 3-4 pages each) – 30%

Midterm paper (6-7 pages) – 15%

Final paper (8-10 pages) – 25%

Participation 15%

Participation is not the same as attendance and will be worth 15% of your semester grade. You are expected to have a positive attitude and be actively engaged during class discussion and class activities. I understand some of you might be shy, but participation can be as simple as asking a thoughtful or provocative question. You can earn up to 10 points each week for participation, for a semester total of 150 possible points. If you are absent or have an off day, you can make up participation points for that week by being extra chatty during our next meeting or coming to my office hours.

Quizzes 10%

You will have a total of 10 quizzes throughout the semester at 10 points each. Quizzes will consist of questions about the main ideas of the readings from the night before. The purpose of the quizzes is to ensure you are reading the texts closely and coming to class prepared for discussion, therefore I will not try to 'trick' you with my questions. Quizzes will begin at the start of class, so arrive on time. *You cannot make up quizzes if you are late or absent.* If you know ahead of time that you will be absent the day of a quiz, please discuss this with me so we can schedule a time for you to take the quiz in advance.

Close Readings 30%

You will write four close reading papers throughout the semester. These should be 3-4 pages each and should focus on a key passage or idea from one of the texts we are reading that week. Each paper should look at the topic material through *your* eyes – what did you really think while you were reading? You can analyze a specific scene, particular passage, or interesting quote and explain it in your own voice. You should not include any secondary sources in these close readings – only your own interpretations and quotes from the main text.

You may discuss some technical details of the piece (tone, diction, imagery, plot). You may wish to connect the part to the whole, discussing how the passage that you have selected illustrates or engages the themes of the book. In short, you will explain to a reader a passage (or key word, phrase, symbol, image, etc.) from one of our texts, showing why and how that section matters.

Midterm Paper 15%

Your midterm paper should be 6-7 pages and will be worth 15% of your overall grade. You will receive several writing prompts to choose from, and you should incorporate at least one scholarly source. You will need to include a separate works cited page using MLA citation style. We will discuss this assignment as the semester continues.

Final Paper 25%

Your final paper should be a minimum of 8-10 pages and will be worth 25% of your semester grade. This paper could be a continuation of a close reading paper or a new idea altogether. You will be responsible for choosing the topic of this paper, but you will discuss your ideas with me before deciding which topic to write about. Your writing and thinking will need to connect and analyze ideas from multiple texts and you will be required to incorporate at least two scholarly sources. You will also need to include a works cited page using MLA citation style. We will discuss this assignment as the semester continues.

Grading

Your close reading papers, midterm paper, and final paper will be graded using a letter scale of A-X. All papers should include your name, title, and be properly formatted using MLA citations. Assignments should be submitted on Canvas as Word documents (no exceptions!) in 12-point standard font with 1-inch margins. All feedback you receive on papers and participation will be posted in Canvas. Feedback on quizzes will be returned on the paper quiz you turned in during class. The letter scale for assignments is as follows:

A: You completed the assignment, fulfilled all requirements, went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights and distinguishing yourself through the use of a particularly creative or inventive approach.

B: You completed the assignment, fulfilled all the requirements, went beyond by contributing additional material or developing new insights.

C: You completed the assignment and fulfilled all requirements.

D: You attempted to fill the requirements of the assignment but missed specific details.

F: You turned in the assignment but did not attempt to fulfill the requirements.

X: You did not turn in the assignment.

Prerequisites

English 215 students must have completed their first-year English requirement by receiving a grade of C or higher in English 102 or by scoring a 637 or higher on their English Placement Test.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism Policy

Willful representation of the thoughts or words of someone else is called plagiarism, and is punishable by UWM through failure of the course, suspension, or expulsion from the university. Please be aware when you are referencing another source and cite your references accordingly. If you are unsure whether you are potentially plagiarizing, or need help citing your sources, please contact me!

Course Communication Policy

We should all be checking our UWM emails and Canvas site at least once a day. I will communicate with you through email and post important updates on Canvas. If you email me with any questions, I will do my best to reply within 48 hours.

Technology Policy

Devices are welcome in our classroom if they enable or assist in your classwork and participation. If they distract you or your classmates, I'll ask you to refrain from using technology during class.

Expected Course Workload

This class meets twice weekly for 75 minutes, for a total of 37.5 hours of required lecture time. You should expect to take at least 75 hours over the course of the semester preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, studying for quizzes, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings. You should also plan to spend at least 31.5 hours preparing for and writing major papers. It is expected that you will spend a minimum of 144 hours doing work for this class.

Please refer to this link for all other University policies: <http://uwm.edu/secu/syllabus-links/>

General Education Requirement

This course meets the criteria for General Education Requirement Humanities credit at UWM by addressing “questions, issues and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context; ... induc[ing] an organic study of letters and knowledge; [and providing] literary, aesthetic and intellectual experiences which enrich and enlighten human life,” as specified in UWM Faculty Document No. 1382. The course uses humanistic means of inquiry, including critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, judgment and expression of ideas, and organizing, analyzing and using creatively substantial bodies of knowledge drawn from both primary and secondary sources. In addition to addressing other GER Humanities criteria, the course introduces substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural and literary knowledge to illuminate human events in their complexities and varieties, and enhances appreciation of literary and other arts by thoughtful, systematic analyses of language and artifacts such as novels, stories and films.

UWM seeks Essential Learning Outcomes throughout the undergraduate curriculum in four key areas: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; Intellectual and Practical Skills; Personal and Social Responsibility; and Integrative Learning. GER courses in particular contribute to these learning outcomes. Student work in GER courses is assessed individually for course-specific outcomes and goals, and holistically as part of departmental self-assessment of learning outcomes throughout the major.

The Humanities: Definition: The academic disciplines that investigate human constructs and values, as opposed to those that investigate natural and physical processes, and those concerned with the development of basic or professional skills.

The humanistic disciplines – such as art history, history, language and literature, philosophy, religious studies, film and media studies – are concerned with questions, issues, and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context. They also provide literary, aesthetic, and intellectual experiences that enrich and enlighten human life. In these courses, students will use humanistic means of inquiry, such as: the critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, the exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, and the organization, logical analysis, and creative use of substantial bodies of knowledge in order to approach the subject of study.

Criteria: Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:

- 1. Identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge; and**
2. Respond coherently and persuasively to the materials of humanities study; this may be through logical, textual, formal, historical, or aesthetic analysis, argument and/or interpretation; or

3. Apply diverse humanistic theories or perspectives to other branches of knowledge or to issues of universal human concern.

OWC Part B Requirement:

This course also satisfies the OWC Part B requirement.

The OWC Part B is satisfied by completing an approved advanced course (at least three credits) with a significant written or oral communication component by students who have completed the Part A requirement. Courses that count toward the OWC-B requirement may be offered in a variety of disciplines and students are encouraged to choose the course that matches their interests and helps them best meet the requirements of their degrees.

GER Course Assessment

All GER courses in the Department require significant student writing, including papers of varying length. The Department samples GER courses in each semester, including primarily papers from the required ENG 215 course, evaluating them on a holistic scale, according to the following rubric:

1. Work does not meet disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of literary or cultural artifacts. Work does not meet expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose. Work does not show student awareness of conventions for analysis and expression.
2. [Work quality falls between 1 and 3]
3. Work shows some awareness of conventions for analysis and expression but may contain distracting errors. Work meets some disciplinary standards for critical analysis, evidence-based argument, and interpretation of literary or cultural artifacts, but inconsistent in doing so. Work meets some expectations for clarity of thought and language, and for edited academic prose, but is inconsistent in doing so.
4. [Work quality falls between 3 and 5]
5. Work meets most or all expectations for analysis and interpretation, argues from evidence, and is written clearly and without significant mechanical errors, showing student awareness and achievement the learning outcomes for the course.

Numeric scores are used to generate snapshots of how well GER courses meet the department's stated learning outcomes and what, if anything, needs to be altered when the course is next offered.

In English 215, students will demonstrate learning outcomes in "Knowledge of Human Cultures" and in "Intellectual and Practical Skills": by engagement with key questions in literary and other cultural artifacts, and by producing written literary or cultural analysis that reflects thoughtful, informed engagement with source material and standards of evidence and argumentation in humanistic disciplines. This outcome will be assessed through review of papers written in the course, a requirement of all English GER courses, via the rubric which appears below:

	Content	Organization	Mechanics & Editing	Other
A	Highly original. Clear thesis and argument. No factual or logical inaccuracies. Minimal summary; uses evidence, not opinion; represents secondary sources accurately.	Well-organized, even at paragraph level. Reader led through a logical sequence; paper stays on topic.	Accurate use of citation conventions. Virtually no mechanical or formatting errors.	Precise word choices; vivid, fresh language. Avoids wordiness. Informal language only when clearly appropriate. Establishes ethos strongly through knowledge of subject. Entertains, educates, and makes reader want to know more.
B	Less original; may have minor factual errors. May use secondary sources uncritically or with mild inaccuracy.	Well-organized, but structure sometimes disjointed. Goes off-topic on occasion.	Some awkwardly worded passages. Some errors, but not enough to distract the reader.	Language sometimes too general or less precise than the A writing. Enough errors to suggest the paper needs more polish and thought.
C	Relies more on summary than original interpretation or argument. Restates common or familiar arguments or interpretations uncritically. Secondary sources do not clearly contribute to or support the argument, or may be presented inaccurately.	Basically well organized, though individual paragraphs may be disunified or misplaced. Logical and apparent plan overall.	More frequent awkwardness, with distracting errors, although meaning is clear. Citations improperly formatted or absent.	Language is competent but wordy, general, imprecise, or trite.
D	No original contribution; restatement or misstatement of the ideas of others. Doesn't interpret, but just repeats or reports.	Poor organization; reader has little sense of a plan even though a thesis or main point is recognizable.	Some sentences may be so confused that their meaning does not clearly emerge.	Words may be imprecise, incorrect, trite, or vague. In general, however, the paper is understandable.
F	Lacks clear thesis or point.	Language muddled and unclear in several spots.	Highly distracting mechanical errors.	Shows little care or attention to detail on the part of the author.

Schedule

*Please note that this schedule could change. All updates will be posted in the announcement section of Canvas.

Date	In-class	What's due today?
Week 1 Wed, Sept. 4	Introductions	Introduce yourself to the class by posting in the Canvas discussion
Week 2 Mon, Sept. 9		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phillis Wheatley: "On Being Brought from Africa to America" 2. Felicia Hemans: "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England" 3. Lydia Sigourney: "The Indian's Welcome to the Pilgrim Fathers" 4. Jane Johnston Schoolcraft: "Dying Speech" & "Song for a Lover Killed in Battle"
Wed, Sept. 11	Quiz #1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jane Gallop: "The Ethics of Close Reading" 2. Pablo Neruda: "The Old Women of the Ocean" 3. Meena Alexander: "Crossing the Indian Ocean" 4. Edgar Allan Poe: "Alone"
Week 3 Mon, Sept. 16	Quiz #2	William Shakespeare: <i>The Tempest</i> , Acts 1 & 2
Wed, Sept. 18		<i>The Tempest</i> , Acts 3, 4, & 5 (end)
Week 4 Mon, Sept. 23	Close Reading #1 Due	Aime Cesaire: <i>A Tempest</i> , Introduction & pages 7-24
Wed, Sept. 25	Quiz #3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>A Tempest</i>, pg. 25-66 2. Yuehua Guo: "A Rebel against Colonization"
Week 5 Mon, Sept. 30		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michel Foucault: "Of Other Spaces" 2. Select passages from Tzvetan Todorov's <i>The Fantastic</i>

Wed, Oct. 2		Joseph Conrad: "The Secret Sharer"
Week 6 Mon, Oct. 7	Quiz #4 Close Reading #2 Due	Samuel Taylor Coleridge: <i>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i>
Wed, Oct. 9	<i>Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i> class debate	*Selected critical essay (TBD)
Week 7 Mon, Oct. 14	Quiz #5	James Joyce: "An Encounter" *Selected critical essay (TBD)
Wed, Oct. 16		Karen Russell: "Proving Up"
Week 8 Mon, Oct. 21		Robert Louis Stevenson: <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde</i> , "Story of the Door" through "Incident at the Window"
Wed, Oct. 23	Quiz #6	<i>Jekyll & Hyde</i> , "The Last Night" until end
Week 9 Mon, Oct. 28	Midterm Paper Due	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flannery O'Connor: "A Good Man is Hard to Find" 2. Julio Cortazar: "Axolotl"
Wed, Oct. 30	Quiz #7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Olympe Bhely-Quenum: "A Child in the Bush of Ghosts" 2. Michel Foucault: "Panopticism"
Week 10 Mon, Nov. 4	Quiz #8	Mohsin Hamid: <i>Exit West</i> , 1-57
Wed, Nov. 6		<i>Exit West</i> 61-118
Week 11 Mon, Nov. 11	Close Reading #3 Due	<i>Exit West</i> 121-189
Wed, Nov. 13		<i>Exit West</i> 193-231
Week 12 Mon, Nov. 18	Quiz #9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noelle Stevenson: <i>Nimona</i>, 1-128

		2. Select passages from Scott McCloud's <i>Understanding Comics</i>
Wed, Nov. 20		<i>Nimona</i> 129-256
Week 13 Mon, Nov. 25	Quiz #10	1. Tommy Orange: <i>There There</i> , 1-97 2. Watch PBS interview with Tommy Orange
Wed, Nov. 27	Thanksgiving; No class	
Week 14 Mon, Dec. 2	Close Reading #4 Due	<i>There There</i> 98-207
Wed, Dec. 4	Watch <i>Smoke Signals</i> (first half)	<i>There There</i> 208-294
Week 15 Mon, Dec. 9	Finish <i>Smoke Signals</i>	
Wed, Dec. 11	Final paper discussion	
Wed, Dec. 18		Final papers due Wednesday night at midnight (11:59pm)