

World Literature: Reading for the Plots (Critical Thinking Course)

ENGL 2120, Section 018, Spring 2016
MWF 1:25 – 2:15 pm
Daniel Hall 308

Instructor: Dr. Gabriel Hankins
E-mail: ghankin@clermson.edu
Office: Strode 317
Office Hours: MW 2:30 – 4:30 pm
Email me to schedule.

Course Description

In this course we will be reading for the plots: not for a description of what happens (the plot), but rather watching for conspiracies, cabals, gaps, mysteries, evidence of missing bodies and hidden links within the story. Our key questions will be: what other stories might be hiding beneath the surface? How might we be deceived? How might our thinking be in error? In order to ferret out the many conspiracies in our readings, we'll require some skeptical thinking about evidence, reasoning and claims. These elements of critical thinking are fundamental skills common to many college courses. This course is also a point of entry into the English major, and so we will pay close attention to the words, sentences, and paragraphs that combine to construct the imagined worlds of fiction and poetry, as well as the familial, religious, romantic, and political worlds outside the text. Through structured daily notes, discussion, the shared construction of arguments, and carefully revised essays, we will focus on the development of skills needed to present well-supported arguments about texts inside and outside the literature classroom. This is a designated Clemson Critical Thinking (CT2) course, and will include sustained engagement with critical thinking skills, practices, and writing.

Student Learning Objectives: Literary and Critical Thinking

1. Analyze (break down) literary passages into their component parts, as part of close literary reading.
2. Describe alternate readings or interpretive possibilities for a given passage of text.
3. Explore complex problems of interpretation, analysis, and comparison across world literatures.
4. Produce improved analytical writing through in-class exercises, essays, revision, and peer review.
5. Identify the premises, reasons, evidence, argumentative strategies, and rhetorical moves (i.e. "they say / I say") required for academic arguments. (These parts of argument will be the basis of my grading rubric for the essays.)
6. Identify literary evidence in a given textual passage.
7. Make reasonable, original inferences on the basis of textual evidence (also known as reasons).
8. Argue for an original point on the basis of cited evidence and valid reasons (make a claim).
9. Practice and improve critical thinking tasks (as measured by standard critical thinking tests).
10. Self-assess and critique habits of mind and reasoning in critical thinking and writing competencies.

Required Texts

Tolstoy, Leo. *Great Short Works*. Harper Perennial, 2004 [1967]. ISBN 9780060586973.
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. *Best Short Stories*. Penguin, 1992. ISBN 9780375756887.
Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. Mariner, 2005. ISBN 9780156030359.
Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Signet, 1949. ISBN 9780451524935.
Calvino, Italo. *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Harcourt, 1979. ISBN 9780156030359.
Eugenides, Jeffrey. *The Marriage Plot*. Picador, 2011. ISBN 9781250014764.
Graff, Gerald. *They Say / I Say*. 3rd edition. W. W. Norton, 2014. ISBN 9780393935844.
McCarthy, Tom. *Satin Island*. Vintage, 2016. ISBN 978-0307739629 [**available after Jan. 26th**].

Course Requirements

Citizenship: Preparation + Participation	20%
Essay 1	10%
Midterm: Writing + Critical Thinking Quiz	5%
Essay 2	20%
Essay 3	20%
(Revised Essay is optional: replaces grade for either essay 1 or 2. Due by end of classes).	
Reflective Essay / Final Critical Thinking Test	5%
Final Exam	20%

Grades are assigned on the usual Clemson scale: 90-100 = A, 80 - 80.99 = B, etc. Grades will be round to the nearest hundred place (i.e. 3.994 = B, 3.995 = A). **If you have a particular grade goal in mind**, meet with me early in the semester to develop a plan to meet that goal. Last minute grade requests will not be successful.

Critical Thinking. Before and after the class we will take a survey of critical thinking skills considered essential outcomes for college and career preparation. During class discussion, in the midterm, and the review session before the final, we will discuss particular critical thinking skills and their application to thinking and writing about literature.

Citizenship: Both preparation and participation are necessary for engaged citizenship in class, as elsewhere. Class citizenship means engaged responsibility for the learning of yourself and others. For purposes of grading, I will assess citizenship as a combination of preparation and participation. Preparation consists of careful reading and a daily response.

Daily Response questions: Use one of the following to write a daily response, or pose your own question, with notes for an answer (following the example below). You're welcome to collaborate on research, but have separate examples for your notes. Use one clean page, and start a different page for class notes. Possible questions (or pose your own):

1. Choose one sentence or paragraph in the text: what can you say about *how* it is written? What difference does that make for what it is saying (the content)? How might *how* it is written connect to the author's goals, or our questions?
2. Pick one obscure reference (not just unfamiliar word) in the text, and briefly research it: a. what does it mean, and b. how might understanding that change how we understand the text? (Need both parts!)
3. How does this reading connect to the major questions and ideas of our last class? How does it connect to one of our conspiracy theories? How does it agree, dissent, or to something you are reading in another class (or on your own)?

Sample sufficient response on *Mrs. Dalloway*:

"Though at first the timing of Big Ben's tolling might seem accidental, when we look more closely we see that the sound of the bells connects all the characters and many of the themes of the first part of *Mrs. Dalloway*. Big Ben tolls first when Mrs. Dalloway crosses Bond Street (12), a main market street of central London, and at the same time tolls for Septimus and Lucrezia Warren Smith on their walk in Regent's Park (14). Much later it tolls as Peter examines military statues at Trafalgar Square (65). These significant locations map out the book's interests in markets, politics, and spaces of leisure."

Other mentions of Big Ben:

(114) Elizabeth / Ms Kilman (why?)

(120) Mrs. Dalloway again, in Whitehall —> politics? Why are these characters all in one small part of London?

Participation in class is based on (1) a careful reading of the day's assigned material, (2) prepared notes on answers to posted discussion questions, which result in (3) informed, active contribution to class discussion. See the instructions and example below. List page numbers for reference according to our standard class text. Look up unfamiliar words in a good college dictionary or the Oxford English Dictionary. **At the beginning of class, give me your typed or clearly written notes for discussion (see example response above): include citation with page numbers from the assigned book.**

Notes and contributions that demonstrate little preparation, when prompted, earn a C; comments that demonstrate preparation and close reading will receive a B; contributing actively to class discussion, routinely and with clear preparation, responding thoughtfully to the comments of others, and respecting the class time of your classmates, earns an A. Lack of evidence of class reading, no notes, or any sustained distraction from the business of class will earn less than a C. Consult early in the semester if you are unclear about how do the notes, or why your examples are not satisfactory (NS) or passable but weak (✓-). **Note:** If you need a specific grade to retain a scholarship or have another grade-based goal, set up a meeting early in the semester to plan what you need to do to achieve that grade.

Essays: Two essays of 6-8 pages should be written on the basis of your reading of the primary texts, prompted by questions posed in class. No secondary research is required. Include a Works Cited page. The first essay will be brief (4-6 pages). Type essays using a standard 12-point font, such as Times New Roman. Double space your papers and put the page number in the header or footer of each page. Remember to give each essay a descriptive title before you turn it in. Also, follow MLA format for in-text citations and for your works cited page. [The following link provides format guidelines for MLA style: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01>.] Again, no external sources are required. Use the essays to demonstrate your grasp of the rhetorical "templates" discussed in Graff, particularly those related to summary, citation, reasoning (they say / I say), and objections ("skeptics may object").

Final Exam: The final exam has two sections. In the first section (in-class on the day of finals), you will identify significant passages from the texts we have read (title and author's first and last names), then closely read the details of the passage, discussing its significance for the larger work. In the second section (released on Blackboard during finals week), you will select two of the topics provided and write an essay that places the texts we've read this semester in conversation with each other. 85% of student evaluations must be received before the essay questions will be released. Please Note: To pass the course, all major assignments and the Final Exam must be completed.

Course Policies:

Attendance: I expect that you will attend every class, allowing for the usual few days of illness or family business. You are allowed **THREE** absences, no questions asked. If you miss more than **THREE** classes, **FIVE** points (one half of a letter grade) will be subtracted from your final grade for each additional class you miss. If you enter the class more than 15 minutes late, you will be counted tardy (1/2 absent day). If I am ever late to class, you may leave 15 minutes after the scheduled start of class. **Please Note:** If you have an excusable prolonged illness, university-sponsored trip, or family emergency that causes you to exceed two absences, you need to provide official documentation with dates and contact numbers, such as a letter of explanation from the university program/team, doctor, or parent/guardian (bills or prescriptions from Redfern are not official documents). If you are absent from a class, please arrange to receive notes from a friend. Any assignments due at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting, unless you are contacted by the instructor. Students with families: I understand that you will have unavoidable schedule complications. Please meet (or Skype) with me early on to plan for alternate assignments.

Email Etiquette: Before you hit “send,” please address your message to someone (i.e. Professor or Mr. Hankins), and use a tone and vocabulary appropriate for office or workplace correspondence. Read this useful guide at least once in your college career: <http://www.wellesley.edu/socialcomputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html> .

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones, computers, iPods, e-book readers, and any other electronic communication and/or entertainment devices before coming to class. Use of phones or other devices will result in a loss of half that day’s participation grade. E-texts are not acceptable: you need to read and cite the assigned print texts.

Plagiarism: Clemson’s official policy on plagiarism is as follows:

“As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson’s vision of this institution as a ‘high seminary of learning.’ Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.”

Plagiarism is any act of stealing the words or ideas of others and lying by claiming them as your own. Examples include copying text from a Web site, having someone else write any portion of a paper for you, or copying ideas from a secondary source without properly citing them. When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean for Curriculum in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. At the same time, the faculty member may, but is not required to, inform each involved student privately of the nature of the alleged charge. Students are not allowed to submit work from other classes for credit in this course. Students are not allowed to submit work from other classes for credit in this course. The minimum penalty for plagiarism in this course will be failure of the assignment; it may result in a failing grade for the course or even expulsion from the university. If you have questions about how to cite a source properly, or whether you might be committing plagiarism, do not hesitate to contact me for help.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who need accommodations should make an appointment with Dr. Arlene Stewart, Director of Disability Services, to discuss specific needs within the first month of classes. Students should present a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Student Disability Services when they meet with instructors. Student Disability Services is located in Suite 239 Academic Success Building (656-6848; sds-l@clemson.edu). Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive and new Faculty Accommodation Letters must be presented each semester.

Clemson Title IX statement: Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran’s status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Mr. Jerry Knighton is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator. He also is the Director of Access and Equity. His office is located at 111 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.565.0899 (TDD).

READING SCHEDULE	W 1/6 <i>No class: conference travel. Read any Tolstoy.</i>	F 1/8 <i>No class: Read more Tolstoy.</i>
M 1/11 How to read: Chapter 1, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i> ; Carr, "The Juggler's Brain"	W 1/13 Tolstoy, "Family Happiness."	F 1/15 Tolstoy, "Kreuzer Sonata." Critical Thinking Skills Test (bring laptop).
M /18 MLK Holiday	W 1/20 Tolstoy, "The Death of Ivan Ilych."	F 1/22 Tolstoy, "Alyosha the Pot." Graff, "Introduction" Short Paper 1 due
M 1/25 Dostoyevsky, <i>Notes from the Underground</i> , Part I (to p. 130)	W 1/27 Dostoyevsky, <i>Notes from the Underground</i> , Part II (from p. 130 to end)	F 1/29 From Nikolai Chernyshevsky, "What Is to Be Done?" (BB); Graff chpt. 1
M 2/1 Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (Part I)	W 2/3 <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (Part II)	F 2/5 <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (Part III); Graff chpt. 2
M 2/8 Borges: "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" (Blackboard)	W 2/10 Cortázar, "House Taken Over" (Blackboard)	F 2/12 Ballard, "The Index" (BB); Critical Thinking Exercise Graff chpt. 3
M 2/15 <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> 1-47	W 2/17 <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> 47-80	F 2/19 <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> 80-147
M 2/22 <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> 147-end	W 2/24 Jennifer Egan, "Black Box";	F 2/26 Paper 2 due: Graff ch. 4-5 / Critical Thinking
M 2/29 To end of Ch.2, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i>	W 3/2 To end of Ch.4, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i>	F 3/4 To end of Ch.6, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i>
M 3/7 To end of Ch.10, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i>	W 3/9 To end, <i>If on a winter's night a traveler</i>	F 3/11 Graff ch. 6-7 Critical Thinking Midterm
M 3/14 Spring Break	W 3/16 Spring Break	F 3/18 Spring Break
M 3/28 <i>The Marriage Plot</i> to 127	W 3/30 <i>The Marriage Plot</i> to 227	F 4/1 <i>The Marriage Plot</i> to 293
M 4/4 <i>The Marriage Plot</i> to 383	W 4/6 <i>The Marriage Plot</i> to 406	F 4/8 McCarthy, <i>Satin Island</i> 1-12 (Paper 3 due if writing on Marriage Plot)
M 4/11 McCarthy, <i>Satin Island</i> 13 to 67	W 4/13 McCarthy, <i>Satin Island</i> 13 - 67	F 4/15 McCarthy, <i>Satin Island</i> to 130 (Paper 3 due if writing on <i>Satin Is.</i>)
M 4/18 McCarthy, <i>Satin Island</i> 131 to end	W 4/20 Review for final	F 4/22 Review; Second Critical Thinking Skills Test . Revised essay due (optional).
M 4/25 Final Exam Week: Essay questions on Blackboard. One will ask you to tell the story of the development of world literature over the last century through three or more texts.	W 4/27 Optional reflection paper on critical thinking strengths and areas for improvement. (Submit via Blackboard)	F 4/29 Class Final: 3 pm - 5 pm Identify author, title, style, and significant details of central passages from our course.