



**MIDWESTERN  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

A Member of the Texas Tech University System

**Course Syllabus:  
Introduction to Reading & Writing about Culture  
Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
ENGL 1153-X20 ONLINE Spring 2025**

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. Peter Fields

Office: BeaWood 230 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of PY towards the dormitories)

Student Office hours: MW 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM; TR 2:15 PM – 4:15 PM & by appointment.

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**Course Description**

This course will provide students an opportunity to develop critical reading and cultural analysis skills in order to achieve deeper understanding of a variety of texts and artifacts. Students will explore the various factors informing the production of texts and learn how to conduct research in order to gain experience exploring different perspectives on select works and themes. The course will include several opportunities for students to articulate their interpretations and insights in essay assignments, which will be assessed for clarity, insight, and understanding.

**Course Goals**

- Read short stories, poetry, and plays and engage in close reading workshops.
- Apply literary analysis by answering questions in InQuizitive exercises.
- Engage in a writing process about short stories, poetry, and plays and demonstrates proficient use of standard written English in two comparative literary essays and a comparative literary research project.
- Utilize supporting sources from Moffett-supported databases and follow MLA in-body citing and Works Cited in two comparative literary essays and a comparative literary research project.
- Grading rubric for essays is adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) rubric for social, personal responsibility, critical thinking skills, and communications skills, including documentation and syntax and mechanics.

**THECB Core Course Objectives and Assessments**

- Critical Thinking Skills
  - To assess the student's critical thinking skills, the Research Project rubric will be applied to the Literary Research Project.
- Communication Skills
  - To assess the student's written communication skills, the Research Project rubric will be applied to the Literary Research Project.
- Personal Responsibility
  - To assess ethical use of sources as a measure of personal responsibility, the Research Project rubric will be applied to the Literary Research Project.
- Teamwork
  - To assess the student's teamwork, the Peer Review Teamwork rubric will be used to assess each student's preparation for and participation in peer review workshops.

## Textbook & Instructional Materials

Mays, Kelly ed. *The Norton Introduction to Literature* ebook. Norton, 2025. Inclusive Access.

### Links to Ebook Readings

In D2L on the navigation bar, click on Content. Then click on **The Norton Introduction to Literature, Fifteenth Edition: Links to Ebook Readings**. Finally, click on **Contents of The Norton Introduction to Literature, Fifteenth Edition**. You will see what looks like a normal table of contents. But each title and page number is actually a clickable link. Click on the title you need to read based on our list of required readings in the Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus.

### Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty may take the form cheating, collusion, or plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not produced by the individual to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#). All assignments submitted to the D2L drop box are subject to Turnitin which also has the capability to detect AI. Plagiarism will result in an F (a "0" – no points) for the assignment, which may result in an F for the semester. Offenders may be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and/or the Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Use of AI at any stage of writing in our course is prohibited. Students who need preliminary feedback prior to a due date should consider the option of GETTING EARLY HELP, which is an opportunity to get input from the instructor who will address your punctuation, word choice, phrasing, and indicate whether you are meeting the criteria of the writing assignment. Students who wish to exercise the option of GETTING EARLY HELP should not wait until the day before the due date.

### Moffett Library

Moffett Library not only provides resources in its bookstacks. It also provides relevant supporting sources on its databases. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

### Grading

The percentage/letter grading scale is as follows: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59-0%. Grades, including the semester grade (i.e., the final calculated grade), are NOT rounded up. Therefore, a 79.9, whether for a specific assignment or the final calculated grade, is a C, not a B. A 69.9 is a D, not a C. A 59.9 is an F, not a D. An 89.9 is a B, not an A. D2L gradebook does the final calculated grade. There is no individual extra credit in this course to put someone over the top.

Table 1: Percentages allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Description	Percentage
Comparative Literary Essay 1	Approx 2400 words (about 8 paragraphs)	30%
Comparative Literary Essay 2	Approximately 2400 words (about 8 paragraphs)	30%
Comparative Literary Research Project	Approximately 2400 words (about 8 paragraphs) and cites supporting sources in Moffett Library databases.	30%
Close Reading Workshops	In D2L see Norton Course Materials	5%
InQuizitive Exercises	In D2L see Norton Course Materials	5%
Total		100%

### Mid-Term Grades

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, I will provide a Midterm Progress Report through Navigate. The grades are based on Comparative Literary Essay 1 and do not include Close

Reading Workshops and InQuizitive Exercises. I will submit a grade for all students, not just those in danger of failing the course. Midterm grades will not be reported on your transcript; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students who earn below a C for Comparative Literary Essay 1 might consider getting preliminary feedback on their writing before they submit their Comparative Literary Essay 2 and Comparative Literary Research Project to the drop box. In Content, click on the module for GETTING EARLY HELP. Do so early enough so you can revise according to my suggestions. Don't wait until the day before or day of the due date. I am always happy to answer questions by email, but I also encourage you to call me if you don't understand something. I am sure to get your call because Outlook records it just like an email. Give me a time frame for calling you back. If you are on campus, we can meet in person. We can also make a ZOOM appointment.

### **Close Reading Workshops and InQuizitive Exercises**

In Content, click on the module for Norton Course Materials – InQuizitive & Close Reading Workshops. You will see submodules for InQuizitive and Close Reading Workshops. Students receive credit for the InQuizitive exercises (5 percent of semester grade) and for the Close Reading Workshops (5 percent of semester grade) simply by doing them. The grade is based on how many you do. If students do all of those indicated in the Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus, that's a 100 for a total of 10 percent of the semester grade. But these exercises and workshops are NOT extra credit. If students do not do any of them, that's an F, a "0" (no points whatsoever), for 10 percent of the semester grade.

### **Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance**

Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides free drop-in tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Check the [TASP webpage](#) for times.

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **Final Exam**

We do not have a final exam.

### **Extra Credit**

There is no individual extra credit in this course.

### **Late Work**

Late assignments (defined as work not submitted by the date and time posted in D2L) will be accepted, but they are penalized 10 points out of 100. An assignment is penalized for lateness even if it is late by less than a minute. All late work—not only essays but also Close Reading Workshops and InQuizitive exercises—must be submitted to their drop boxes before 11:59 PM Monday May 12.

### **Submission Format and Policy**

All formal assignments must be typed, double-spaced, formatted, and sources documented according to MLA style. Our anthology uses MLA for its Sample Writing models. Ch. 33 reviews MLA quotation, citation, and documentation. In Content in D2L, click on Norton Course Materials. You will see a link for MLA Citations Booklet. Purdue Owl online is also a good resource for in-body citing and Works Cited.

All essays must be submitted to the drop box in D2L in order to count and be graded, including essays that students revised after getting early help from the instructor.

By enrolling in this class, students expressly grant MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by students for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational

purposes. Please note that the D2L Dropbox folder will automatically run papers through Turnitin.com. Turnitin provides both an Originality Report and an AI Report.

\*Note: Students may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless they obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved in advance.

### **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes/late registration: **January 24**

Deadline to file for graduation: **February 17**

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" **April 20**. Check the date on the [Academic Calendar](#).

For more information, refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Students are expected to be familiar with this platform as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. Students can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU homepage or the portal. For assistance, submit a help ticket [here](#).

### **Attendance**

This is an online course. The instructor checks attendance (especially prior to the first essay due date) through login history in Class Progress in D2L. Students are well-advised to login on the first day of the semester and visit the modules and that way create login history. You are "present" if you have login history.

### **Getting Early Help—an option, not a requirement**

In CONTENT in D2L, click on the module GETTING EARLY HELP. Then click on the arrow by the relevant discussion forum. Click on View Topic. Copy and paste directly into the text box. Do not use the attachment function. I can only reply to what I see in the text box. Do not wait until the day before or the day of a due date. Getting Early Help is an OPTION, not a requirement. Students are NOT obligated in any way to let me see their writing-in-progress. Remember: getting early help is NOT the same as submitting for a grade. That revised assignment still needs to be submitted to the drop box in order to count and be graded.

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans, and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. Two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make an application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room

168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### College Policies

#### *Smoking/Tobacco Policy*

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated smoking areas at each location.

#### *Alcohol and Drug Policy*

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

#### *Campus Carry*

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License-to-carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

#### *Active Shooter*

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by the MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

### Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

### Course Schedule:

On the navigation bar, click on Content. Then click on **The Norton Introduction to Literature, Fifteenth Edition: Links to Ebook Readings**. Finally, click on **Contents of The Norton Introduction to Literature, Fifteenth Edition**. You will see a table of contents. Each title and page number is a clickable link. For InQuizitive and Close Reading Workshops, click on **Norton Course Materials - InQuizitive & Close Reading Workshops**. You will see a submodule for InQuizitive exercise and a submodule for Close Reading Workshops.

Week	Required Reading, InQuizitive Exercises, and Close Reading Workshops	Chapters, Sample Writings, & Writing Due Dates
Week 1 Jan 22-24	<p><b>Course theme: death, struggle, sacrifice, and hope</b> Do all our Close Reading Workshops and InQuizitive exercises by May 12.</p> <p>How to use InQuizitive – Assignment InQuizitive: Fiction as a Genre “And of Clay Are We Created” 28 InQuizitive “A Good Man is Hard to Find” 520 InQuizitive* “Sonny’s Blues” 695 Close Reading Workshop &amp; InQuizitive “A Pair of Tickets” 746 InQuizitive</p>	<p>Read the explanatory material of our chapters even if we are not reading all their stories or poems. Ch 1 Fiction: Reading, Responding, Writing 16 Sample Writing: Essay on “And of Clay Are We Created” 42 Ch 2 Plot 87 Ch 8 The Author’s Work as Context: Flannery O’ Connor 516 Ch 30 The Literature Essay</p>

Week	Required Reading, InQuizitive Exercises, and Close Reading Workshops	Chapters, Sample Writings, & Writing Due Dates
Week 2 January 27-31	<p>"The Shroud" 89            "Blood Child" 173 InQuizitive            "The Black Cat" 193 InQuizitive            "Lusus Naturae" 306 Close Reading Workshop            "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves" 311            "The House of Asterion" 323.            "Interpreter of Maladies" 496 InQuizitive            "Hills Like White Elephants" 735 Close Reading Workshop            "A Hunger Artist" 739 Close Reading Workshop</p>	<p>Ch 4 Character 255            Monsters: An Album 305            Ch 5 Setting 328            Ch 6 Symbolism &amp; Figurative Language 399            Ch7 Theme            Sample Writing: Comparative Essay on "The Birth-Mark" and "The Thing in the Forest" 442</p>
Week 3 February 3-7	<p>"The Thing in the Forest" 59            "Araby" 332 Workshop &amp; InQuizitive            "Meet the President!" 389 InQuizitive            "The Birth-Mark" 404 Close Reading Workshop &amp; InQuizitive            "The Yellow Wallpaper" 607 Close Reading Workshop &amp; InQuizitive            "A Jury of Her Peers" 618 Close Reading Workshop            "A Rose for Emily" 728 Close Reading Workshop &amp; InQuizitive            InQuizitive: Writing about Literature: the Literary Essay</p>	<p>Write a Comparative Literary Essay of two stories by two different authors. It is due February 21—approximately 2400 words (about 8 paragraphs). Do not write about the stories used in our book's Sample Writings.            OPTION: Submit a draft to GET EARLY HELP. But don't wait until day before or day of the due date.</p>
Week 4 February 10 - 14	<p>Option: You can submit an early draft to GET EARLY HELP. But don't wait until just before the due date.</p>	<p><b>Comparative Literary Essay 1</b>            due Friday February 14 – Valentine's Day! Submit to DROP BOX in D2L.</p>
Week 5 February 17-21	<p>InQuizitive: Poetry as a Genre: Introduction            InQuizitive: Poetry as a Genre: Close Reading            "On Being Brought from Africa to America" 783 Close Reading Workshop            "Poetry" 805 Close Reading Workshop            "I celebrate myself, and sing myself" 816 Close Reading Workshop            "The Mouse's Petition" 881, "To a Mouse" 882"            "London" 908 Close Reading Workshop            "The Red Wheelbarrow" &amp; "This Is Just to Say" 909            "One Today" 1205, "Death, be not proud" 1219, "Daddy" 1234, "The Raven" 1236, and "Goblin Market" 1239</p>	<p>Ch 11 Poetry: Reading, Responding, Writing            Ch 12 Speaker: Whose Voice do We Hear?            Ch 14 Theme and Tone            Ch 15 Language: Word Choice and Order            Ch 17 Symbol            Ch 18 The Sounds of Poetry</p>
Week 6 February 24-28	<p>"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments" 1015 Close Reading Workshop            "When I consider how my light is spent" 1015 Close Reading Workshop            "The World is Too Much With Us" 1017 Close Reading Workshop            "We Real Cool" 1036 Close Reading Workshop            "Hope is the thing with feathers—" 1081            "After great pain, a formal feeling comes" 1081            "I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—" 1082            "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—" 1082            "Tell All the Truth but tell it Slant" 1083 Close Reading Workshop            "Harlem" 1117 Close Reading Workshop            "We Wear the Mask" 1221 Close Reading Workshop            "The Second Coming" 943, "The Times They Are A-Changin'" 976, "Green Chile" 897, "The Windhover" 963.</p>	<p>Emily Dickinson: An album 1079</p> <p>Write a Comparative Literary Essay on works by two different poets. The poems should be from our reading schedule. The essay should be approximately 2400 words. Do not write about the poems used in our book's Sample Writings.</p> <p>OPTION: Submit a draft to GET EARLY HELP.</p>
Week 7 March 3-7	<p>OPTION: You can submit a rough draft to GET EARLY HELP. But don't wait until the day before or day of the due date.</p>	<p><b>Comparative Literary Essay 2</b>            Due Friday March 7. Submit to DROP BOX in D2L. Now you are free to enjoy Spring Break!</p>
March 10-14	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>	
Week 8 March 17-21	<p>"Trifles" 1283 InQuizitive            "Fences" 1318 InQuizitive            InQuizitive: Drama as a Genre            InQuizitive: Writing about Literature: Working with Sources and MLA Citation.</p>	<p>Ch. 24 Drama: Reading, Responding, Writing.            Ch. 25 Elements of Drama            See Sample Writing: Essay on <i>Trifles</i> 1304</p>
Week 9 March 24-28	<p><i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> 1427</p>	<p>Ch. 26 The Author's Work as Context: William Shakespeare</p>
Week 10 March 31-April 4	<p><i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> 1427</p>	

Week	Required Reading, InQuizitive Exercises, and Close Reading Workshops	Chapters, Sample Writings, & Writing Due Dates
Week 11 April 7-11	<i>The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice</i> 1485 InQuizitive	
Week 12 April 14-18	HOLIDAY No classes Thursday and Friday April 17-18 <i>The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice</i> 1485 InQuizitive	
Week 13 April 21-25	Purdue Owl is a good online resource for MLA formatting of in-body quotes and the Works Cited bibliography.	Ch 32 The Literature Research Essay  Write a Comparative Literary Research Project about <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and <i>Othello</i> that quotes from four different supporting sources (two for <i>Dream</i> and two for <i>Othello</i> ) from the Moffett-supported databases. It should be approximately 2400 words with MLA in-body citing and Works Cited. Due Friday May 9.  OPTION: Submit draft to GET EARLY HELP. But don't wait until just before the due date.
Week 14 April 28- May 2	OPTION: Submit draft to GET EARLY HELP. But don't wait until just before the due date.	
Week 15 May 5-9		<b>Comparative Literary Research Project</b> due Friday May 9, our last official class day.
Finals Week May 12-16	We have NO exam during Finals Week.	All Close Reading Workshops and InQuizitive Exercises must be done by Monday May 12. All late work must be in the drop box by Monday May 12.