



Introduction to Reading & Writing about Culture

Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities & Social Sciences

ENGL 1153 Section X40 (online)

Summer II 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Peter Fields

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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.

THECB Core Course Objectives

- 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.

Course Goals

- Read fiction and poetry and do InQuizitive exercises and Close Reading Workshops. See list of required reading and assignments in Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus.
- Engage in a writing process and demonstrate proficient use of standard written English in two comparative literary essays and a comparative literary research project.
- Demonstrate teamwork as part of group AI teams.
- Demonstrate proficiency in MLA in-body citing and Works Cited

Textbook

Mays, Kelly ed. *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. 15th ed. Ebook. Norton, 2025. Inclusive Access (IA) – IA means the cost of book was added to tuition. Students already own it. The book is immediately available in Content in D2L.

In D2L on the navigation bar, click on Content and then the module **Norton Introduction to Literature & InQuizitive & Close Reading Workshop**; then click on the sub-module **The Norton introduction to Literature Ebook: Contents**. In the table of contents, each item is a link to a specific story, poem, or discussion. Our pagination follows “Full” (not “portable”). The “Full” page number occurs where that page begins. In this sub-module you will also find separate titles for our required readings as well as our required **InQuizitive exercises** and **Close Reading Workshops**.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring and homework help for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Remember that you don't need an appointment to utilize these services. Check the [TASP webpage](#) for times.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and 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](#).

Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 2c Literary Research Project must be completely written by the student. The penalty for less than complete originality for these assignments—for plagiarism of any part of an essay—is an F (a “0,” no points).

The same penalty applies for the use of AI at any point in the writing of Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 2c Literary Research Project. Use of AI at any stage of these essays is prohibited.

EXCEPTION: The AI Team Report is unique. It's the one writing assignment that requires students to work in groups (as assigned by D2L) and it's the one assignment that requires the use of AI. See Instructions and Models in Content in D2L.

The AI Team Report is not complete as an assignment until team members have critiqued each other's individualized AI Team report with the AI Team Rubric.

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Percentage value for 8 assignments: 5 essays (1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c), an AI Team Report (each member adds personal comments to their copy of report before submitting; team-members critique each other's individualized AI team report with AI team rubric), InQuizitives, and Close Reading Workshops.

Assignments (see Course Schedule)	Description (see Course Schedule below pp. 6-8 for lists)	Percent
7/14 Essay 1a – pars 2, 3, 4, Works Cited	Compare 2 stories from list by different authors	10%
7/21 Essay 1b – add pars 1, 5.	Revision of Essay 1a as per instructor evaluation	20%
7/28 Essay 2a – pars 2, 3, 4, Works Cited	Compare 2 poems from list – one must be by Emily Dickinson	10%
7/31 AI team report	D2L-assigned teams examine AI to answer this question: Did Emily Dickinson have conflicts in her life? Each team member including leader contribute 2 facts, each with 3 bullet points. Team members use AI team rubric to critique each other's individualized report.	10%
8/4 Essay 2b – add pars 1, 5.	Revision of Essay 2a as per instructor evaluation	20%
8/7 Essay 2c – Literary Research Project	Add research paragraph & Works Cited item to 2b.	20%
InQuizitives – finish by Friday 8/7	In D2L Content: Norton Courseware – automatically scored	5%
Close Reading Workshops – finish by Friday 8/7	In D2L Content: Norton Courseware – automatically scored	5%
Total number of assignments: 8	D2L Final Calculated grade is the semester grade	100%

Table 2: Letter grade values. There is no rounding up of any assignment grade and no rounding up of the final calculated grade as computed by D2L: e.g., a 79.9 is a C; an 89.9 is a B; a 69.9 is a D; a 59.9 or lower is an F. The D2L final calculated grade is the semester grade.

Grade	Percent
A	90 to 100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

Assignments

Students must submit their writing assignments to their relevant drop boxes before they can be graded. Getting input from me by email about your writing-in-progress is NOT submission for grade. We have 8 assignments, 5 of which are drop box assignments. Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 2c (Literary Research Project), and the AI Team Report must be submitted to their drop boxes in D2L in order to be evaluated and graded. Any other form of submission (e.g., by email attachment) cannot be evaluated for grade. Two of our assignments are scored by Norton automatically: InQuizitives and Close Reading Workshops. Even if their score is less than perfect, students still receive full credit for completing them.

Notes

This course analyzes fiction and poetry in light of Freytag's Pyramid. Notes on how we apply the pyramid are provided in Content in D2L in the module "Notes – Fiction & Poetry w. Freytag's Pyramid." Be sure to examine all four items in this module before you read our assignments or write an essay.

Instructions for Essays

We have instructions for our essays and the AI Team Report. In Content in D2L, see the module "Instructions - Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c (Literary Research Project), and AI Team Report."

Model Essays, AI Team Report, and Literary Research Project

We have models for our five essays, including 2c (Literary Research Project) and the AI Team Report. In Content in D2L see the module "Models – Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 2c (Literary Research Project), Research Paragraph,

and AI Team Report. The AI Team Report requires team members to use the same Team Report. But each student adds personal comments to their copy of the report before submitting it to the drop box. See instructions and model in Content in D2L.

Essay 2c Literary Research Project serves as Final, Thursday Aug 6

Essay 2c Literary Research Project serves the purpose of our Final, Thursday August 6. To create 2c, we add a research paragraph to Essay 2b and adds its source to the Works Cited (see instructions and model in Content in D2L).

Extra Credit

Students may improve the grade of Essays 1b and 2b (which have significant grade value). They must have the instructor's approval which includes a plan for how they might be improved. Any late penalty is retained. Revision when complete must be submitted to the original assignment's drop box before 11:59 PM August 7.

Late Work

D2L will accept late work until 11:59 PM Friday August 7. If Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and the AI Team Report are flagged as late by D2L (even if by less than a minute), they are penalized 10 points out of 100. The same is true for 2c (Literary Research Project), but the drop box for 2c will lock and not accept work after 11:59 PM Friday August 7. There is no late penalty for InQuizitive exercises and Close Reading Workshops, but they must be finished by 11:59 PM Friday August 7.

Forgiveness of Late Penalty

Forgiveness of late penalty for Essays 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, or the AI Team Report would require medical documentation or the equivalent. Otherwise, the late penalty of 10 points applies.

Withdrawal from Course:

- Last Day to drop Summer II course with a grade of "W:" **July 22**. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact D2Lhelp@msutexas.edu. If that fails, alert your instructor.

Attendance

For an online course, attendance is by indicated by login history. Starting on the first day, create login history by reading our current news item in D2L and examining relevant modules in Content in D2L. Students who have login history are considered "present" for attendance purposes.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student

computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#) or click on D2Lhelp@msutexas.edu

Instructor Contact Policies

Students can call me any time. Outlook records the call in my email. Be sure to let me know the number and when to return your call (let's make it afternoons or evenings please). I am usually here on a weekday starting at 11:00 AM. I will make a special point of being in my office to receive your call 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. Email, of course, is a popular way to ask a question or alert me to a concern, including something wrong in our D2L. If something looks wrong, let me know. I would appreciate it. If you want me to look at what you are doing, you may copy and paste your draft directly into an email, and I will reply at my first opportunity. You may use email to make a phone appointment for times to talk other than my office hours (again, afternoons or evenings). You may also visit me at my office if you are local or on campus.

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 application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (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](#).

Other College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and 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 prohibits 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 has 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 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](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule: Assignments

Week	Here is our list of required readings including InQuizitives and Close Reading Workshops , which do not have drop boxes. They are scored automatically by Norton.	Essays and AI Team Report are drop box assignments. They cannot be graded unless students submit them to their drop boxes.
Week 1 July 6 -10	<p>Here is our list of required readings for stories; some require an InQuizitive exercise and/or Close Reading Workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch 2 Plot 87-92 (Freytag’s Pyramid) • How to use InQuizitive – not graded. • Fiction as a Genre. InQuizitive • Isabel Allende, “And of Clay Are We Created” 28-35 InQuizitive • Brothers Grimm, “The Shroud” 89-90. • Jorge Luis Borges, “The House of Asterion” 323-326. • Margaret Atwood, “Lusus Naturae” (306-311) Close Reading Workshop • Ch 4 Character 255-262. • Monsters: An Album 305. • Ch 6 Symbolism & Figurative Language 399-404. • Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birth-Mark” 404-416. Close Reading Workshop & InQuizitive • William Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” 728-735. Close Reading Workshop & InQuizitive • Octavia Butler, “Blood Child” 173-188 InQuizitive • Edgar Allan Poe, “The Black Cat” 193-200 InQuizitive • Writing about Literature: The Literary Essay InQuizitive 	<p>For Essay 1a due Monday July 13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose 2 stories from our list excluding “The Shroud,” “And of Clay Are We Created,” which serve as models only. • Applying Freytag’s pyramid, where do these two stories intersect? • Write paragraphs 2, 3, and 4. • Provide MLA Works Cited (cross reference). <p>See these modules in Content in D2L for Essay 1a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes for “The Shroud” w. Freytag’s Pyramid • Notes for “And of Clay Are We Created” w. Freytag’s Pyramid • Instructions for Essay 1a. • Model essay 1a

Week	Here is our list of required readings including InQuizitives and Close Reading Workshops , which do not have drop boxes. They are scored automatically by Norton.	Essays and AI Team Report are drop box assignments. They cannot be graded unless students submit them to their drop boxes.
Week 2 July 13 - 17	Now we finish the essay we started as 1a.	<p>For Essay 1b due Monday July 20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add pars. 1 & 5 • Revise as per instructor comments <p>In Content in D2L, see these modules for Essay 1b:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for Essay 1b • Model Essay 1b
Week 3 July 20 - 24	<p>Here is our list of required readings for poetry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry as a Genre: Introduction. InQuizitive. • Poetry as a Genre: Close Reading. InQuizitive. • Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (783) Close Reading Workshop • Ch 11 Poetry 770 -773 esp. Lydia Davis 772-773. • Ch 14 Theme and Tone 875-880, esp. Adrienne Rich and Adrienne Su 878-881. • Ch 15 Language: Word Choice and Order 901-909. • Ch 17 Symbol 933-937. • Ch 18 The Sounds of Poetry 948-951. • Poems by Emily Dickinson: 784, 922, 1080-83. • William Carlos Williams, “The Red Wheelbarrow,” “This is Just to Say” (909, either poem). • Sharon Olds, “Sex without Love” (911). • W. B. Yeats, “The Second Coming” (943). • Sylvia Plath, “Daddy” (1234-36). • Hughes, “Harlem” (1117) Close Reading Workshop 	<p>For Essay 2a due Monday July 27:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose an Emily Dickinson poem from our book excluding “‘Hope’ is the thing with feathers—” • Compare it to one of the poems in our list not written by Emily Dickinson excluding “On Being Brought to America from Africa” • Applying Freytag’s Pyramid, where do these two poems intersect? • Write paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 • Provide Works Cited (cross reference). <p>In Content in D2L, see these modules for Essay 2a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes for “‘Hope’ is the thing with feathers—” w. Freytag’s Pyramid • Notes for “On Being Brought” w. Freytag’s Pyramid • Instructions for Essay 2a • Model Essay 2a
Week 4 July 27 – Aug 3	<p>For AI team report, one student volunteers to be leader.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leader creates the document, • collects facts from the others, • and writes the preamble at the top. <p>When the document is done, each team member has the same copy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In their own copy, the team member comments on each fact. • The personal comments individualize the AI report. • Students submit their personalized AI report to the drop box. <p>Students peer evaluate each other within their team.</p> <p>The AI Team report is due Thursday July 30; the peer evaluation must be finished by the end of Friday July 31.</p>	<p>For AI team report due Thursday July 30 & peer review due Friday July 31:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate AI source. • Each student contributes two AI facts (one sentence each) about Emily Dickinson conflicts in her life • For each fact, students provide details in 3 bullet points • On their own copy of AI report, students add personal comments. • Students submit individualized (personalized) AI Team Report to the drop box. • Students also send their individualized AI Team Reports to each other in their group and peer evaluate each other’s report with the AI Team Rubric. <p>See these modules in Content in D2L:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for AI team report & Peer Evaluation • Model AI team report • Model AI Team Rubric

Week	Here is our list of required readings including InQuizitives and Close Reading Workshops , which do not have drop boxes. They are scored automatically by Norton.	Essays and AI Team Report are drop box assignments. They cannot be graded unless students submit them to their drop boxes.
Week 5 August 3 - 7	<p>For the Research Paragraph (for Essay 2c the Literary Research Project), choose one article from the list below; they are all found complete in the Moffett-supported database <i>Gale Academic OneFile</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenn Hughes, "Love, Terror, and Transcendence in Emily Dickinson's Poetry," <i>Renascence</i>. • Elsa Cajiao Cuellar, "Disentangling Emily Dickinson's Riddles and Encoded Voices in "My Life had stood—a loaded gun" and "I taste a liquor never brewed," <i>Atlantis</i>. • Jay Ladin, "Meeting her Maker: Emily Dickinson's God," <i>CrossCurrents</i>. • Seth Archer, "'I had a terror': Emily Dickinson's Demon," <i>Southwest Review</i>. <p>The last inQuizitive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing about Literature: Working with Sources and MLA. InQuizitive 	<p>For Essay 2b due Monday August 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add paragraphs 1 and 5 <p>See these modules in Content in D2L:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for Essay 2b • Model Essay 2b <p>For Essay 2c Literary Research Project due Thursday August 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are adding a research paragraph to 2b and adding citation to Works Cited. • Choose one of the articles in our list (in the left-hand column on this page) • Explain an idea from article in your own paragraph • Quote at least once from the article • Research paragraph should be next-to-last paragraph before epilogue • Provide correct citation in Works Cited • Now 2b has become 2c - the Literary Research Project. <p>See these modules in Content in D2L:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for Essay 2c • Model Research Paragraph • Model Essay 2c Literary Research Project <p>REMINDER: All InQuizitives & Close Reading Workshops must be completed before 11:59 PM Friday August 7.</p> <p>REMINDER: All late work is due before 11:59 PM Friday August 7. The late penalty is 10 points.</p>