

Introduction to Reading and Writing about Literature
English 1153 – Spring 2023

Midwestern State University
Dual Credit with Founders Classical Academy Lewisville

Semester Dates: January 10 – April 29

Instructor: Dr. Michael D Terranova
Phone: (972) 219-2370
Office Hours: TR 3:00-3:30pm; Study Hall (or by appointment)
Email: mterranova@responsivedtx.com

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to engage students with two major works of English literature, as well as a selection of lyric poetry in order to help them develop skills of close reading and criticism of both longer and shorter texts. The students will analyze these works for form (literary genre and convention) and content (themes and ideas). Writing assignments will include shorter work, as well as two longer essays, one of which will have a research component. Writing assignments will incorporate a process of peer review.

Prerequisites: None

Goals:

- Read important longer and shorter English literary works
- Practice and refine close reading skills through vigorous, mature, and careful discussion with other students
- Engage in a writing process that includes invention, drafting, and revision, as well as peer editing
- Find, evaluate, and synthesize credible sources in support of a research paper
- Use sources ethically and in contextually appropriate ways
- Follow a designated style guide (MLA)
- Demonstrate solid use of Standard Written English

Required Texts (all texts are supplied by the teacher):

- *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton (ISBN 048644287X)
- *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens (ISBN 0486406512)
- Selected Lyric Poetry (provided by professor)

Assignments and Grade Distribution:

- 20% Weekly Short Writing, Study Questions, & Participation
 - Students will answer frequent study questions aimed at helping them develop critical reading skills.
 - Students will write weekly one-page essays in class reflecting on the week's reading and discussion. These will build towards the longer essays.
- 25% Seminar
 - Seminars will be held one or two times per week. Questions will be posed in advance, and students will be expected to prepare thoroughly to lead a discussion for the duration of the class.
- 40% Tests & essays
 - Two unit tests: Tests generally consist of a section of quotation identification and short-answer questions (one sentence), a section of medium-answer questions (approx. three sentences), and a longer essay. Some exams ("essay exams") may consist of a series of short essays.
 - Essays will require students to posit and develop a significant thesis about the text. Prior to

starting an essay, students will need to have their theses approved by the instructor, and will turn in outlines and rough drafts to aid them in crafting a full, thoughtful argument. Essays will conform to the MLA style guide. Assignment sheets for the following assignments will be handed out during the semester and are considered an extension of this syllabus. Students will write two longer essays:

- Interpretive Essay *on Paradise Lost*
- Research Essay *on A Tale of Two Cities*
- 10% Quizzes
 - Students will be given brief, frequent quizzes over the daily reading homework and the literary conventions and forms discussed. Quizzes will often include quote identification questions.
- 5% Memorization
 - Students will memorize several poems and recite them from memory for a grade.

Quality of Work

All assignments (homework, classwork, tests, and papers) must be neat and legible. Ripped, torn, or scribbled-on paper will not be accepted. Paper torn out of a spiral notebook is not acceptable. Lined notebook paper/loose-leaf paper is required for all upper school assignments unless specifically directed by the teacher.

All written work needs to reflect the fundamentals of correct English grammar and syntax. In this class, any writing assignment with more than three discrete occurrences of the following errors may be returned ungraded:

1. Basic spelling errors (for example, if you misspell “where” or confuse “which” and “witch” or misspell the author’s name)
2. Capitalization errors (for example, not capitalizing the beginnings of sentences, proper names, or the titles of books, or your own name)
3. Sentence fragments
4. Comma splices and run-on sentences. Make sure independent clauses are joined by BOTH a comma and an appropriate FANBOYS. (Accomplished writers get to break these rules; you don’t.)

Students may revise the assignment by the next school day for a 20% reduction in the earned grade. If the assignment is not revised, it will receive a zero. Please note that if you are new to the school and have not had solid writing instruction, please come and see me, and I will be very happy to work with you. I want you to learn and succeed. The goal is to motivate you towards excellence, not to punish you for what you have not learned and practiced.

Late Work Policy (see section on Absences for exceptions)

Late work will be accepted for two class days only after the original due date for a reduction of 10% per class day late. Work turned in more than two days late will receive a grade of zero.

Extensions on major essays will be granted only if a request is made ahead of time via email.

Absences

Students are expected to complete and turn in assignments in good order and on time.

For a valid absence, students will be allowed one extra school day for each day missed to turn in work that was assigned while absent (for example, if a student is absent two days, the relevant work will be due two days after he or she returns). If the student feels he or she needs additional time, the student should speak with me. For the list of valid absences, see the campus handbook. Absences may not extend deadlines of work assigned when the student was present.

If a student is absent, it is always his or her responsibility to determine what was assigned by checking Jupiter and/or speaking with me. The student should check with me to obtain handouts and to find out how to make up in-class assignments. . The student is responsible for obtaining notes from fellow classmates.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating takes place when a student copies the work of another, allows someone to copy his or her own work, or when he or she uses unauthorized aids during assignments or assessments. Plagiarism occurs when a person uses someone else's words or ideas and presents them as one's own (typically on an essay or paper). Student cheating or plagiarism will result in short term consequences, a grade penalty, a meeting with parents, and a discipline consequence. Academic dishonesty will also have long term consequences related to virtue, vice, habit, and destiny. Earning a lower score on an assignment or test is preferable to degrading one's character. Refer to page five of the campus handbook for details about academic dishonesty. Turnitin.com may be used to check papers for plagiarism.

Nota bene, unless specifically given permission, students may not work together on a written assignment.

Extra Credit and Extensions

There will be no extra credit given to compensate for negligence. If a student needs an extension or help completing an assignment, he or she needs to **request it in advance via email so that there is a record of the request**. A signed note from a parent or doctor may also gain an extension.

Email Policy: I will respond to student emails in 1 to 2 business days. I may not respond to emails after 5pm or on weekends.

Disability Support Policy Statement: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees reasonable accommodation. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, (940) 397-4140.

Course Overview:

Weeks 1-8: *Paradise Lost* & Lyric Poetry

Weeks 10-15: *A Tale of Two Cities* (each week includes a short writing assignment and seminar)