Composition III: Writing About Literature

Instructor: Samuel Snoek-Brown
Office: CTR 190J
Office Hours: M-F 9-10 a.m. by appointment
E-Mail: via Canvas (or direct at ssnoek-brown@pierce.ctc.edu)

Textbooks: None—readings as assigned in class (also available on Canvas); for citation and grammar guides, refer to resources on the Writing Center website: www.pierce.ctc.edu/writing-center

Course Objectives: Writing expository and argumentative essays based upon literary readings and studies.

Prereq: ENGL 101 with grade of 2.0 or better.

Outcomes: Students will learn to:
- Appreciate value and meaning of literature
- Write unified, coherent analytical essays that develop and support a thesis statement
- Critically analyze literary works through the application of theoretical approaches
- Explicate literary works through the appropriate use of literary terminology
- Practice the skills of information competency in research
- Apply the writing process in the composition of expository and argumentative essays
- Recognize historical, social, philosophical, psychological, and cultural contexts for literature

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion forum</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short papers (8)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long papers (2+final)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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For more information on my grading policy regarding papers, see the Grading Policy handout or ask me during office hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage grade</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>GPA equivalent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.9-4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.5-3.8</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.2-3.4</td>
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<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2.9-3.1</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.5-2.8</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.2-2.4</td>
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<td>65-69</td>
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<td>60-64</td>
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<td>1.0-1.1</td>
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<td>0-59</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Presentation** Each class discussion of our selected readings will begin with a student presentation on the readings. You will only have to present once (we will determine the schedule early in the quarter), but you should count on actively participating in every discussion.

For your presentation, be prepared to spend at least five minutes introducing the reading material and providing the class with an analysis of the text. You should research a bit about the author’s background, and you are welcome to conduct any other research you like; however, your primary job is simply to offer your perspective on the material and pose a few interesting questions that will lead us into our class discussion. I will grade these presentations on the following criteria:

- **Preparedness** (based on your notes and outline for presentation, a list of questions you plan to ask, and demonstrated familiarity with the text)
- **Interaction** (based on how you engage your classmates in discussion)
- **Attendance** (being present for and participating in your classmates’ presentations is essential, so I will deduct two points for every presentation you miss)

I will begin each new genre period (poetry, fiction, and comics) by doing presentations as a way to model what I will expect from you.

**Discussion forum** In addition to our class discussions, each week I will open a discussion forum in Canvas. This will be a place to contribute additional ideas, cover material we might have missed in class, and otherwise continue the conversation we started in the classroom. You must contribute to this forum each week by writing at least 300 words; you also must respond to at least one classmate’s post with an additional 100 words. Each discussion post grade will consist of these two components: your original post and a response to a classmate. Note: Keep these discussions civil! You may certainly disagree with each other—the most engaging discussions will likely depend on a variety of perspectives on the readings—but be respectful of each other.

Your first discussion forum post will consist of reading the syllabus; I will not include instructions there because your instructions for that assignment are here: Tell us about your favorite book. Give us the title and author, and explain in detail why it’s your favorite book. This can be anything—a novel, a comic book, a work of scripture, a children’s book you still cherish. This is your first discussion forum prompt (as proof that you have read the syllabus).
Short papers

At the end of week of reading discussions, you will submit a 2- to 3-page paper analyzing the readings for that week. This paper is rooted in your own response as a reader, but you should bring to bear the critical reading skills we learn in class and present your response as an argument in favor of your particular understanding of the text.

You may choose to expand on a discussion response or (if you presented that week) your classroom presentation, or you can choose to write about a completely new topic. The choice is yours. Still, while brief, these papers should adhere strictly to MLA guidelines and should include a Works Cited page for any material you reference in your paper (you will always reference at least the text you’re analyzing).

Long papers

Twice this term (at the end of the poetry section and again at the end of the fiction section), you will write a 6- to 8-page critical analysis paper. These papers will address thematic connections among multiple texts in the relevant genre (the first paper will concern poetry; the second paper will concern fiction) and will require you to research the available scholarly criticism in order to make your case. These papers may combine and build on ideas you explore in your shorter papers, or they can engage with an entirely new topic.

Because these longer papers are more research-intensive, we will devote most of that week’s classtime to drafting, researching, and revising these papers.

Additionally, you will write a third paper at the end of the term. This final paper will address connections you made among the texts throughout the course (here, you may draw connections between all three genres: poetry, fiction, and comics) and will serve as your “final exam” for the course. On the day of the final, you will “present” your findings in a final class discussion.

Plagiarism

If you use someone else’s work without clearly acknowledging the source, you will have plagiarized it. This includes paraphrasing or directly quoting any work—published or unpublished—that another person wrote without clearly acknowledging that person as the source. If you allow someone else to do your work for you and claim that work as your own, you will have committed collusion, which is a form of plagiarism.

I will fail plagiarized stories; I may also fail you for the course and report you to the university. But I am committed to helping you work honestly, and I will help you learn to avoid these mistakes. If you have any questions about whether you might be unwittingly plagiarizing, please ask me before you turn in your assignment.
This classroom should be a learning environment that promotes the diversity of the students, including race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Additionally, we will frequently discuss readings that address controversial topics; I encourage you to respectfully share your perspectives on these topics and insist that you respect the perspectives of your classmates. If you notice discriminatory behavior in this class, please bring it to my attention during class, after class, or during office hours.

Turn off all electronic equipment not essential to class before class begins. If you need to keep your phone on for an emergency, you must tell me before class begins, and please use the silent or vibrate feature. If you need to use a laptop, tablet, or smartphone for note-taking, discuss this with me before you use your device.

You must attend class regularly. You will perform poorly in this course if you miss classes. If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made. If you must miss class, please e-mail me as soon as you are able. If you contact me as soon as possible, I can sometimes help with missed assignments, but this is your responsibility.

Submit all assignments on time. I do not accept late assignments or e-mailed assignments. If you must submit an assignment electronically, bring a printed copy with you to the next class. If you are having trouble completing an assignment, talk with me several days before the assignment is due.

Pierce College supports an integrated learning experience for students with disabilities by promoting an environment that is free from physical and attitudinal barriers. Students are encouraged to develop successful learning strategies in collaboration with faculty and staff. Students with permanent or temporary disabilities may be eligible for services. Please contact Access & Disability Services (ADS) for more information on required documentation and the process for eligibility.

**Puyallup ADS:**
Voice: (253) 840-8335  
TTY: (253) 840-8474  
PuyDSSAccess@pierce.ctc.edu  
Located in A115

**Fort Steilacoom ADS:**
Voice: (253) 964-6468  
TTY: (253) 964-6228  
dssaccess@pierce.ctc.edu  
Located in the Welcome Center
### Calendar

**Week 1: Jan. 3-5**
- **Wed:** Intro to course, syllabus
- **Thur:** Reading like a writer
- **Fri:** Reading presentations intro

**Week 2: Jan. 8-12**
- **Mon-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Poetry short paper 1 due Fri.

**Week 3: Jan. 15-19**
- **Mon:** MLK DAY – no classes
- **Tues-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Poetry short paper 2 due Fri.

**Week 4: Jan. 22-26**
- **Mon-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Poetry short paper 3 due Fri.

**Week 5: Jan. 29-Feb. 2**
- **Mon-Fri:** Research and workshopping
- **Assign:** Poetry long paper due Fri.

**Week 6: Feb. 5-9**
- **Mon-Wed:** Reading discussion
- **Thur & Fri:** Faculty in-service days – no classes
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Fiction short paper 1 due Fri.

**Week 7: Feb. 12-16**
- **Mon-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Fiction short paper 2 due Fri.

**Week 8: Feb. 19-23**
- **Mon:** President’s Day – no classes
- **Tues-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Fiction short paper 3 due Fri.

**Week 9: Feb. 26-Mar. 2**
- **Mon-Fri:** Research and workshopping
- **Assign:** Fiction long paper due Fri.

**Week 10: Mar. 5-9**
- **Mon-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Comics short paper 1 due Fri.

**Week 11: Mar. 12-16**
- **Mon-Fri:** Reading discussion
- **Assign:** Discussion forum posts and responses due Fri.; Comics short paper 2 due Fri.

**Week 12: Mar. 19**
- **Final Exam:**
  - 12 – 2 p.m.
  - Final discussion; final paper due

Exam dates and times are fixed and cannot be changed.

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This calendar is tentative and subject to change. If I must make changes to the calendar, I will discuss the changes with the class beforehand.