

Skyline College
Official Course Outline

Date: April 2007

1. **Title:** English 110—Composition, Literature, and Critical Thinking
3.0 units
3 class hours per week, plus one per week by arrangement
Prereq: ENGL 100 or 105 with grade C or better

2. COURSE CLASSIFICATION:

Credit course applicable to the Associate Degree

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Catalog Description:

Transfer-level course introduces students to major imaginative genres of poetry, drama, and fiction from diverse cultural sources and literary critical perspectives. Students will write analytical essays, employing methods of literary analysis and research and demonstrating critical thinking skills appropriate to a college-level writing class.

Schedule of Classes Description:

Prereq: ENGL 100 or 105 with grade C or better. Introduction to the major imaginative genres of poetry, drama, and fiction. Students will write analytical essays and other kinds of assignments employing methods of literary analysis and research and demonstrating skill in critical thinking. Plus one hr/wk by arrangement. Transfer: UC; CSU (A2, A3, C2) CAN ENGL ENGLISH 100 or ENGL 105 + ENGL 110=CAN ENGL SEQ A.

4. COURSE JUSTIFICATION:

Credit course applicable to the Associate Degree in three areas: 1) Specific Area/English, 2) General Education/Humanities, 3) General Education and Rationality. Transferable to CSU in General Education Areas A2, A3, and C2. Transferable to UC and IGETC applicable in area 1B.

5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO'S):

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Overall essay unity/thesis: Write coherent, well organized, and analytical essays appropriate to the second semester transfer level based on the study of various literary genres. Essays should employ advanced critical thinking strategies as well as conventions of scholarly discourse.
- Critical reading/writing/thinking: Analyze, interpret, evaluate, and distinguish between various literary genres and their elements.
- Critical reading/writing/thinking: Utilize literary critical theories and more advanced research to illuminate various literary works.

- Metacognition: Demonstrate critical awareness of their own competencies as they continue to perceive themselves as accomplished writers, thinkers and literary scholars engaged in academic discourse in cross-disciplinary contexts.

6. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

During the course, students will be asked to:

A. Develop critical reading skills as they apply to the analysis of literature and literary criticism from diverse cultural sources and perspectives:

1. Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas found in a variety of literary works.
2. Differentiate fact from opinion in critical and scholarly works.
3. Detect prejudice and recognize the tone used by an author.
4. Distinguish between and use both deductive and inductive reasoning.
5. Distinguish between and use both denotative and connotative aspects of language.
6. Draw sound inferences from data given in a variety of forms.
7. Identify common formal and informal fallacies of language and thought.
8. Identify and analyze:
 - a) structure of arguments underlying the critical materials read;
 - b) conventions of various literary genres and explain how these formal conventions help generate and limit the logic and meaning of the text;
 - c) elements of literary text—plot, character, setting, symbol, point of view, figurative language, etc.—and explain how these elements generate the meaning of the text;
 - d) historical, formalistic, reader response, psychological, cultural/sociological, gender-based, and other literary critical perspectives and how these perspectives may influence meaning;
 - e) various interpretations of texts and the development of support with specific reference to evidence in the texts;
 - f) initial assumptions and their effect on shaping interpretations and how alternative and revised assumptions can lead to alternative and revised interpretations;

B. Develop critical writing skills as they apply to the written analysis of literature and literary criticism from diverse cultural sources and perspectives:

1. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate literature, literary criticism, and related nonfiction that represent a variety of cultures and critical approaches
2. Create text-based essays which employ writing strategies such as analysis, synthesis, and summary and that emphasize writing tasks such as causal analysis, advocacy of ideas, persuasion, evaluation, refutation, interpretation, comparison/contrast, and definition. Essays should be at least 4-5 pages in length, which cumulatively add up to 8,000-10,000 words (35-40 typed pages). 20-30% of these essays should be in-class essays (such as an in-class midterm and a final essay exam).

In their essays, students will be expected to:

- a) use the various stages of the writing process to develop interpretations, analyses, and evaluations of the texts read;
 - b) establish and state clearly a unifying claim or thesis;
 - c) construct sound arguments in support of claims;
 - d) employ principles of inductive and deductive logic to support and develop ideas;
 - e) avoid logical fallacies in the presentation of arguments;
 - f) select relevant examples, details, and other evidence from the texts read to support claims;
 - g) anticipate and refute possible objections to claims and arguments;
 - h) continue to develop greater sophistication in using precise diction, writing varied and complex sentences, organizing coherent paragraphs, and writing for a specific audience.
3. Conduct research which illuminates a literary work through analysis of social, historical, political, religious, or cultural contexts.
 4. Utilize a variety of literary critical theories in analyzing literature, including historical, formalistic, reader response, psychological, cultural/sociological, and gender theories.
 5. Conduct substantial revision of essays and research papers and come to an appreciation of the techniques involved in rewriting.

C. Develop critical thinking skills as they engage in the discourse of literary critical analysis:

1. Identify and evaluate the unstated premises and hidden assumptions in literary texts and critical analysis and investigate the social, historical, cultural, psychological, aesthetic, and/or gender-based contexts from which they arise.

2. Identify and evaluate the pattern of reasoning present in literary argument and related critical evaluation, including both induction and deduction.
3. Distinguish between fact, inference, and judgment, recognizing that different reasonable inferences and judgments can be derived from the same facts present in literary works and critical commentary.
4. Analyze the similarities and differences between the intentions, biases, assumptions, and arguments of an author and his/her characters
5. Identify logical fallacies, including appeals to questionable authority, fear, and pity, in the arguments of literary works and criticism, and identify particular literary fallacies such as the intentional fallacy and the effective fallacy as well as recent criticism of these as useful criteria for evaluating literature.

7. COURSE CONTENT:

This course covers general critical thinking strategies through the study of the major literary genres and secondary sources and through the application of those critical reading and writing strategies through the practice of major written compositions.

I. Critical reading strategies through the study of fiction and secondary sources such as critical analysis

- A. Inferences and assumptions
- B. Inductive vs. deductive reasoning
- C. Fact vs. opinion
- D. Fallacies of language and thought
- E. Claims and evidence
- F. Refutation—concession and rebuttal
- G. Language as it relates to ambiguity and argument
- H. Tone and voice

II. Critical writing strategies through the practice of written compositions

- A. Inferences and assumptions
- B. Inductive vs. deductive reasoning
- C. Fact vs. opinion
- D. Fallacies of language and thought
- E. Claims and evidence
- F. Refutation—concession and rebuttal
- G. Language as it relates ambiguity and argument
- H. Tone and voice

III. The major literary genres

- A. Short Story
- B. Poetry
- C. Drama
- D. Novel

IV. Elements of literature

- A. Plot
- B. Setting
- C. Character
- D. Point of view
- E. Theme
- F. Diction, voice, tone, style
- G. Symbol
- H. Figurative language
- I. Versification

V. Literary critical theories

- A. Formalist/New Critical
- B. Reader response
- C. Gender
- D. Cultural/Sociological/Marxist
- E. Historical, biographical, new historical
- F. Psychological
- G. Deconstruction

VI. Literature as popular culture

- A. Film
- B. Theatre
- C. Music

VII. Research Methods

- A. Library research and evaluation
- B. Internet research and evaluation
- C. Documentation Styles

8. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. May include lecture, demonstration/ modeling, and discussion including small group work, individual work with the instructor, computer work, in -class writings, conferences, PowerPoint and video.
- B. Create text-based essays in which employ writing strategies such as literary analysis, synthesis, and summary and that emphasize writing tasks such as advocacy of ideas, persuasion, evaluation, refutation, interpretation, comparison/contrast, and definition. Essays should be at least 4-5 pages in length, which cumulatively add up to 8,000-10,000 words (35-40 typed pages). 20-30% of these essays should be in-class essays (such as an in-class midterm and a final essay exam).
- C. Assign other writings which are non-fiction, analytical and/or argumentative, text-based and which reflect contemporary/philosophical concerns.

9. ASSIGNMENTS:

Examples of possible assignments may include:

Reaction papers/journals which respond to analytical prompts that explore an issue (thematic or content) or literary convention in a given work:

- Choose at least 3 quotes from the story and comment in depth about each quote's meaning, significance, and/or impact on you as a reader. Be sure to indicate the page numbers of the quotes.
- On a blank sheet of unlined paper (8 ½ x 11), sketch/draw a concept, character, or scene from your reading. Then, include a typed ½ page written explanation of how that sketch/drawing represents your understanding of the reading

Essays that analyze the literature from various literary and theoretical perspectives:

- Using either the sociological, cultural, psychological, or gender literary critical theory as a basis for your analysis, write an essay that explores a specific issue in a recent short story that you have read. For example, does the story shed light on a psychological issue, a sociological issue, a cultural issue, or gender issue? What is that specific issue? What do you think is the message about that issue? And, how is that message conveyed in the story? It will be crucial that you understand your critical theory's basic principals before you formulate your thesis statement.
- Select a short story from a group of stories as indicated in the assignment. In the short story, identify a social, cultural, or political dilemma inherent in the story, articulate what the dilemma is, and show how the protagonist's decisions are motivated—at least in part—by this dilemma.
- Imagine that a friend asks you this question: *What's the value of a poem?* Your friend doesn't see any reason to read a poem, doesn't see how a poem can add anything important to his/her life. Your job in this essay is to formulate an answer to this question based on the close examination of 2-3 poems from our literature text. You may choose ANY poems in the book, in any section. You may want to choose poems that have a similar appeal to the reader, looking at factors such as theme, content, sound elements, emotional pull, wit, humor, cleverness, mood, and/or overall impact. Or you may want to choose poems that have a contrasting appeal but still illustrate your thesis: the worth of poetry. You might choose 2-3 poems on a similar topic or, conversely, 2-3 on very different topics. Most important: choose poems you like that will be fun or interesting for you to write about -- poems you can live with for a couple of weeks!
- Some students argue over who they believe best fits the classic Aristotelian definition of a tragic hero (from Aristotle's *Poetics*). Do you think Antigone (or Creon) in Sophocles' play *Antigone* makes a more convincing tragic hero(ine) than Shakespeare's character, Othello, or do you think Othello makes a more convincing tragic hero than Antigone (or Creon?) Write a comparison-contrast argumentative essay in which you use specifics from both of the plays to support your position. Keep in mind all of Aristotle's tragic hero

criteria that we have discussed in class and evaluate how well or how poorly Antigone (or Creon) and Othello meet each of those criteria as you argue your position.

10. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

Letter grade will be based on:

- Essays: Organized, coherent, unified analytical essays which will be based on assigned literature and written both in class and outside of class.
- Journals: Written responses to the assigned readings and class discussions.
- Oral Participation: Active participation in class discussions and individual and/or group oral presentations demonstrating understanding of and response to the literature.
- Quizzes/Exams: Demonstrated comprehension of material.
- Homework: Completed assignments focusing on particular English writing skills such as research preparation, citation practice, thesis writing practice, and outlining, and skills related to literary analysis such as explication, quote response logs, and character analysis.
- Final Exam: Demonstrated competence in college-level analytical writing (using standard English) about literature.

11. RECOMMENDED or REQUIRED TEXT(S):

Anthologies/Readers/Rhetorics:

Barnet, Sylvan. et al., eds. *An Introduction to Literature*, 14th ed. New York: Longman, 2006.

Barnet, Sylvan, et al., eds. *A Little Literature: Reading, Writing, Argument*. New York: Longman, 2007.

Culler, Jonathan. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford, 2000.

Hall, Donald. *Literary and Cultural Theory: From Basic Principles to Advanced Applications*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

Kennedy, X. J., et al., eds. *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, rev. ed. New York: Longman, 2006.

Novels:

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House, 2005.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 4th ed. . New York: Norton, 2006.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Random House, 2002.

Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine*. New York: Holt, 1993.

Faulkner, William. *The Sound and the Fury*. Ed. Harold Bloom. Broomall, PA: Chelsea House, 1999.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. Ed. Ruth Prigozy. New York: Oxford, 1998.

Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. Trans. Anonymous. Ed. M. A. Roberts. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House, 2005.

Kundera, Milan. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Trans. Michael Henry Heim. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Trans. Gregory Rabassa. New York: Perennial, 1998.

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Knopf, 2006.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York: Vintage, 2004.

O'Brien, Tim. *In the Lake of the Woods*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2004.

Wharton, Edith. *The House of Mirth*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003.

Plays:

Aristophanes. *Lysistrata*. Trans. Sarah Ruden. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 2003.

Hwang, David Henry. *M. Butterfly*. New York: New American Library, 1988.

Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*. Trans. Nicholas Rudall. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1999.

Shakespeare, William. *Othello*. Ed. Elizabeth Osborne. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House, 2005.

Sophocles. *Antigone*. Trans. J. E. Thomas. Ed. Elizabeth Osborne. Clayton, DE: Prestwick House, 2005.

Wilson, August. *Fences*. New York: New American Library, 1986.

Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie*. New York: New Directions, 1999.

Poetry Collections by Single Author:

Clifton, Lucille. *Quilting*. Brockport, NY: BOA Editions, 1991.

Hughes, Langston. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Ed. Arnold Rampersad. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Lee, Li Young. *Rose*. Brockport, NY: BOA Editions, 1986.

Neruda, Pablo. *Heights of Macchu Picchu*. Trans. David Young. Bandon, OR: Songs Before Zero Press, 1987.

Short Story Collections by Single Author:

Carver, Raymond. *Cathedral*. New York: Vintage, 1989.

Chekhov, Anton. *Selected Stories*. Trans. Ann Dunnigan. New York: Signet, 2003.

Hughes, Langston. *The Short Stories: Collected Works of Langston Hughes*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*. Boston: Mariner Books, 1999.

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990.

O'Connor, Flannery. *Complete Stories*. London: Faber and Faber, 2000.

Welty, Eudora. *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*. New York: Harcourt, 1982.