

Syllabus for Approaches to Literature 210

**ENG 210: Approaches to Literature—Spring 2008—Section 05—TR 8am→9:20am**

**Instructor:** Dana Andrews **Office:** Eder 212-D **Phone:** 271-5814

**Office Hours:** MWF 8am→8:50am and 11am→11:50 am (and by appt. on any day)

**Email:** [dandrews1@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:dandrews1@missouriwestern.edu)

**Text:** *The Bedford Introduction to Literature, 8<sup>th</sup> edition*, ed. Meyer

*The Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger

*The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald

*A Tiler's Afternoon*, by Lars Gustafsson

*Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, by Richard Bach

**Course Description:** If you have ever asked yourself *WHY* we read literature, then, hopefully, by the end of the semester you will “know” why it is we do so. Is it to be educated? To be entertained? To better understand oneself and the world? Perhaps it’s all of these reasons, and more.

Whether you read voraciously or occasionally pick up a magazine to browse through, by being exposed to the novels, short stories, poetry, and drama we’ll cover during this semester I feel confident there will be at least one piece of work that will “click” with you. When (or if) this happens, then be prepared to talk about it—ask any and all questions that come to mind—and at least one of the above questions will be answered, maybe even some of the deeper ones. Literature can do that.

This course will be discussion-based. **Read each assignment before coming to class.** If you expect an hour of lecture where you get “facts” and “absolute interpretations,” then this isn’t the right place for you. I don’t exactly do that. I want to hear what you think about what an author has put before the world. And you’ll not only be talking about these things, but writing about them as well.

**Quizzes and/or Reader Responses:** There will be quizzes on nearly every piece that we read. I might inform you earlier that instead of a quiz you’ll be expected to turn in a written response to the work. The responses should be no more than one page—double-spaced. Turn them in on the day we discuss the work in class. Both quizzes and responses will make up **15% of your final grade.**

**Presentations:** Every student is required to give a presentation on either A) one of the novels, B) a short story, C) a group of poems, or D) the play. We’ll talk about possible areas to cover to get you going. You’ll have the floor for at least 15 minutes. Your presentation will lead class discussion. Each student must also turn in a typed paper that details his or her presentation. If you miss your presentation day, it cannot be made up and you will receive a ZERO as a grade. Presentations are **20% of your final grade.**

**Midterm:** There will be a midterm exam that will cover all of the literature from the beginning of the semester up until the week before Spring Break. This is **20% of your grade.**

**Term Paper:** Choose one of the four novels listed at the beginning of this syllabus and write a critical essay of no more than 5 pages. We’ll discuss the different critical approaches you may use for this paper. This is **15% of your grade.**

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be on all of the literature (INCLUDING THE NOVELS) we cover from midterm through the final class day. It will be multi-choice and short answer essay. **20% of your grade.**

**Participation:** Since this is a discussion-based class, your **participation** is essential and **10% of your grade.**

**Attendance policy:** In order to improve student learning and to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100 and 200 level courses. A student will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided the student gives prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event; **however, there are no other excused absences, exceptions or “makeups” for this attendance requirement. Furthermore, the maximum number of absences allowed before the midterm report, March 19th, for this class is three (3).** Thus, when you have four (4) before March 19<sup>th</sup>, you will be reported to the Registrar’s Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class. The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate.

*Please note that I have my own attendance policy for the semester. You get three (3) absences. Those are yours. Upon your fourth (4th) absence, your overall grade will be reduced 10%. Upon a fifth (5th) absence, your grade will be reduced **an additional 10%**. Six (OR MORE) absences for the semester results in failure of the class. Frequent late arrivals are noted and weighed when final grades are calculated. For example, if you are 15 minutes late for five classes during the semester, then you are basically absent one FULL class—and will be noted as so. If you know of any circumstances likely to make this policy difficult for you this semester, you may wish to consult with your advisor to review your options. If you miss a class session, you are responsible for all material covered and assignments given during your absence.*

**IMPORTANT: Turn Cell Phones off BEFORE you walk through the door.** This means that they should not be on vibrate or silent. They should be OFF. NO TEXT MESSAGING ONCE YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM. NO MP3 PLAYERS OR OTHER MUSIC—NO HEADPHONES/EARPHONES—ONCE YOU WALK IN THE DOOR.

**Other Realities & Plagiarism:** All course work must be completed to pass this class. Academic dishonesty—plagiarism, copying or presenting another’s work as your own, etc.—will not be tolerated and will result in failure of the course. Note that I’m available during my office hours and by appointment to talk about any of your papers, etc.

**Students with Special Needs:** If you are in need of test-taking, note-taking, or other accommodation, help is available through the Disability Services Coordinator, Michael R. Ritter, at 271-4330.

**GRADING:** Mid-term exam 20%; Final exam 20%; Presentation 20%; Quizzes/Responses 15%; Term Paper 15%; Participation 10%

**Class Calendar:** Take note that the calendar is **tentative** and could change. I’ll distribute revisions as needed. BIL=*Bedford Introduction to Literature*

Jan 15<sup>th</sup> T Syllabus, class intro

17 R Sign up; READ: *BIL* pp.1-19, 47-50, 67-68, 123-128,182-184, 218-223, 270-273

22 T READ: *BIL* Chekov, “The Lady with the Pet Dog” 234-236

24 R READ: *BIL* Housman, “When I was...”990; “To An Athlete Dying Young” 1332

29 T READ: *BIL* Mansfield, “Miss Brill” 317; Kincaid, “Girl” 719

31 R READ: *BIL* Marvell “To His Coy Mistress” 843; Donne, “Death Be Not Proud” 1058; Thomas, “Do not go gentle...” 1015

- Feb. 5 T READ: BIL O'Brien, "How to Tell a True War Story" 617
- 7 R READ: BIL Langston Hughes, "Harlem" "Dream Variations" "Frederick Douglass..."
- 12 T READ: BIL Minot, "Lust" 349
- 14 R READ: BIL Mahfouz, "The Answer is No" 690
- 19 T READ: BIL O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" 445
- 21 R READ: BIL Proulx, "55 Miles to the Gas Pump" 564; Carver, "Popular Mechanics" 344
- 26 T READ: BIL Shakespeare, "Shall I compare thee..." & "My mistress' eyes..." 1010-11
- 28 R READ: BIL Olds, "Sex Without Love" 856; Song, "The Youngest Daughter" 857; Plath, "Mirror" 912
- Mar. 4 T READ: BIL Bach, *Illusions* (the novel)
- 6 R MID-TERM EXAM
- 11 T Spring Break—No Class
- 13 R Spring Break—No Class
- 18 T READ: BIL Robert Frost, "Mending Wall" "The Road Not Taken" "Birches"
- 20 R READ: BIL Paz, "The Street" 1309; Brooks, "We Real Cool" 860
- 25 T READ: Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*
- 27 R Fitzgerald cont'd.
- Apr. 1 T READ: Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*
- 3 R Salinger cont'd.
- 8 T READ: Gustafsson, *A Tiler's Afternoon*
- 10 R Gustafsson cont'd.
- 15 T READ: BIL Miller, "Death of a Salesman" 1908 **\$\$\$ TERM PAPERS DUE**
- 17 R Miller cont'd.
- 22 T FILM
- 24 R Last Day of this class (Last day to turn in extra credit)

FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME: TBA