

SYLLABUS

Course title and number ENGL 203, Sections 519, 520, 521, 522
Term (e.g., Fall 200X) Spring 2017
Meeting times and location MWF 8:00AM & 9:10AM LAAH 467; 11:30AM & 12:40PM, LAAH 262

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name Dr. Gabriel Scala
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Office hours MWF 10-11 a.m. and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES

ENGL 203, Writing About Literature, (3-0) Credit 3: Reading in literature and responding to literature with analysis of literary elements: enhancement of communication and persuasive skills through the study of literature and audience; appropriate genres, thematic issues (social, individual, ethical), and critical approaches to literature; exploration of literacy skills as these involve professional levels of command in the oral, aural, visual and written analysis and interpretation of literature.

LEARNING OUTCOMES OR COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the semester, students will be able to do the following:

- Construct clear arguments about key issues, themes, and ideas in literature through oral, visual, and written assignments
- Discuss major authors, works, and critical approaches regarding literature in an informed manner
- Communicate clearly and persuasively to demonstrate critical thinking about principle themes and ideas in literature
- Collaborate with other students in groups to improve critical thinking and writing skills
- Synthesize research, cite, and document ideas and sources ethically in all forms of presentation about literature

Core Curriculum Objectives

- *Critical Thinking Skills (CTS):* The course will enhance critical thinking skills through regular reading, class discussion, and writing assignments focused on key ideas about persuasive discourse.
- *Communication Skills (CS):* The course promotes communication skills through small and large group discussion of major ideas, issues, and questions central to course readings; through regular practice in persuasive forms of writing.
- *Teamwork (T):* The course enhances the ability to work in teams by providing students with regular opportunities in and out of class to collaborate with classmates on relevant projects employing written skills, oral presentation skills, and classroom tasks.
- *Personal Responsibility (PR):* The course teaches personal responsibility by enhancing students' understanding of how to use sources ethically while composing a persuasive argument or answer to an essay question; the course teaches personal responsibility by regular practice in teams and group discussion about ideas and issues.

Assessment of Core Objectives:

- CTS: The assessment of critical thinking skills will be based on written work, exams, oral presentations, and/or participation in class discussions.
- CS: The assessment of communication skills will be based on written work, exams, oral presentations, and/or participation in class discussions, individually and/or in teamed groups.
- T: The assessment of teamwork ability will be based on participation in collaborative learning projects making interactive, cooperative use of differing points of view in course readings, writing assignments, and/or oral presentational skills to support a shared purpose or goal.
- PR: The assessment of personal responsibility will be based on assignments in which students are expected ethically to cite another person's work in composing an oral presentation and/or written research essay.

TEXTBOOK AND/OR RESOURCE MATERIAL

- Texts and Contexts: Writing About Literature with Critical Theory, 7th edition (2017) ISBN13: 978-0-1341-1725-6
- Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace, 5th edition (2015) ISBN13: 978-0-1340-2638-1
- Prayers for the Stolen by Jennifer Clement (2014) ASIN: B00EMXBDKW
- Ecampus Course Platform access via HOWDY
- Purdue OWL <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

GRADING POLICIES

Essays:

You will write four fully developed and revised essays this semester. The major course assignments will include:

1. A **Poetry Analysis** in which you construct a clear argument about key issues, themes and/or ideas present in a single poem and through a new critical approach (750-1000 words).
2. A **Short Fiction Analysis** that continues this process by constructing a clear argument about key issues, themes and/or ideas present in a single short story and through a reader-response approach (750-1000 words);
3. A **Playwriting Analysis** in which you construct a clear argument about key issues, themes and/or ideas present in a single play and through a psychological approach (750-1000 words);
4. A **Researched Literary Analysis** of a novel AND at least one other genre of writing in which you make a connection of key issues, themes and/or ideas present in the literature, responding to existing literary criticism and apply a political criticism approach (race/class/gender) (2000-2500 words).

Overall, the Major Writing Projects will assess three core objectives: critical thinking, communication skills, and personal responsibility for original thought and ethically citing all sources. All rough drafts and final copies of essays must be typed or printed from a computer. Please follow this format for all of your essay drafts and final copies:

1. Final drafts should follow the MLA format. An example of a paper in MLA format can be found online at the Purdue OWL website (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>).
2. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and with standard one-inch margins on all sides of the page.
3. The font used for all drafts should be 12-point Times New Roman.
4. Pages must be numbered with your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner.
5. Your essays must have a title, but please do not make a separate title page.
6. When you submit a final copy of an essay, please include with it a rubric, the assignment sheet, all of your drafts, and your prewriting.

Assignments and Presentations:

We will be reading many works of literature along with various selections from our course books. You will often be required to fulfill a writing assignment in addition to our regular essay work. These assignments are designed to reinforce what you are learning in class and to help you understand the writing process.

Essay Grades:

I will collect rough drafts and final copies for each essay you write. You are required to submit rough drafts so you can receive helpful written or oral feedback on your progress, but the rough drafts will not receive a grade. I will provide you with written or oral comments and a grade for your final drafts.

An **A essay** clearly demonstrates a superior command of the subject matter and presents that information so effectively that the reader enjoys reading the essay and learns from it. The A essay shows a clear pattern of organization which captivates the audience and keeps readers involved through all stages of the essay. Moreover, the A essay reveals a sophistication in style and an original voice; sentences are appropriately varied in length and construction; transitions and metadiscourse are used to produce a smooth flow for the reader; connections between sentences and ideas are clear. In addition, individual sentences are concise, clear and highly specific. The A essay is the work of a writer who is able to deal comfortably with complex material and can present that material effectively for others. As a result of its careful organizational structure and development by example, all factors, both in content and style, combine to form a unified whole.

A **B essay** contains few mechanical errors (none of which impede communication) and it effectively delivers a substantial amount of interesting information. The specific points are logically ordered, well developed, and unified according to a clear organizing principle. The introduction and conclusion are effective, but not as engaging as in the A essay. The essay exhibits an understanding of metadiscourse, and transitions are adequately smooth and logical. Sentence structure is sufficiently varied in both length and construction, and the choice of words has been made selectively. The writing in a B essay is organized, clear, coherent and correct.

A **C essay** is generally competent and reasonably well developed and organized. The C essay demonstrates an average knowledge of the subject matter, but the presentation of that information is often vaguely stated and superficially connected. The essay may lack adequate transitions and use of metadiscourse. The sentence structure is often not varied in either length or construction. It may contain some mechanical or grammatical errors, but they do not interfere significantly with meaning. Though the C essay fulfills the assignment, it is not especially engaging or enlightening.

A **D or F essay** shows serious weakness in at least one area. The overall quality of the essay is significantly hindered because of these weaknesses. It has serious flaws in organization, development, syntax, word choice, and/or mechanics and grammar.

Incomplete Grading: A temporary grade of I (incomplete) at the end of a semester or summer term indicates that the student has completed the course with the exception of a major quiz, final examination, or single major assignment. The instructor shall give this grade only when the deficiency is due to an approved university excused absence (see Rule 7 of TAMU Student Rules). An incomplete must be removed before the last day of scheduled classes of the next long semester in which the student enrolls in the university unless the student's academic dean or designee, with the consent of the instructor, grants a time extension. Failure to complete the required work in the appropriate period of time, or registering for the course again, will result in the I being changed to an F by the Registrar (Rule 10.6). For more information: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule10>.

Withdrawing from the Course: The last day to withdraw from class and receive a grade of "W" is **April 18**. Students who need to drop or add a course after the open drop/add period should contact their academic dean's office for information on how to submit their request. In most cases students who need to drop a class will need to complete a Q-Drop Request form, which is then processed in the academic dean's office or in the student's major department. Other types of drop requests and all requests to add a

course must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for processing. Go here for more information: <http://registrar.tamu.edu/Courses,-Registration,-Scheduling/Registration-Enrollment-Information/Late-Add-Drop>

Letter Grade/Point Scale for ENGL 203: Your final grade in English 203 will be based on the following point scale. Each assignment will be worth a varied amount of points as is noted below. Once all points have been awarded, add the total together and use the following scale to determine your final grade for the course:

100-90 points = A 89-80 points = B 79-70 points = C 69-60 points = D 59 and below = F

Short Critical Responses (3)	30
Weekly eCampus Discussions (10)	30
Long Essay	30
Participation/Attendance	10

Late Work:

All work – rough drafts and final copies – must be turned in on time and during class. **I will not accept late work unless you have made a personal arrangement with me in advance. Essays turned in to my mailbox will not be accepted.** If you are unable to turn in an assignment for emergency reasons, please inform me personally as soon as possible. The decision of whether I accept late work, regardless of excuse, is solely mine.

Attendance Policy: see policies in general: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>, and policies in particular, Student Rules 7.1.6.1 and 7.1.6.2, and as announced by instructor.

Daily attendance is required for this course. If you miss class on a regular basis and therefore are not present to work with your peers, I will not be able to evaluate the essay on which you are currently working. **More than three absences will result in your final grade being lowered by one letter. More than five absences is cause for failure in the course.** If you are absent from class, it is expected that you will obtain the information you missed from your classmates.

Academic Integrity:

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

Students are expected to be aware of and to follow the Aggie Honor Code, the specific rules on plagiarism, and the Honor Council Rules and Procedures pertaining to classroom behavior and integrity at all times. Please consult the rules at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu> for policies concerning plagiarism and academic honesty. All policies and penalties for violations stated in these materials apply to our class. **The penalty for plagiarism in this course is automatic failure in the course.**

OTHER PERTINENT COURSE INFORMATION

Library and Writing Center Resources at TAMU:

The Sterling C. Evans Library has a wealth of resources available to students and houses the University Writing Center. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the resources available at the following links:

- <http://evans.library.tamu.edu>
- <http://evans.library.tamu.edu/services/index.html>
- <http://evans.library.tamu.edu/research/index.html>
- <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/Hours-Locations>
- <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/Students/Student-Splash>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services in the Student Services Bldg. at White Creek Complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>

COURSE TOPICS, CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES, MAJOR ASSIGNMENT DATES

Daily Syllabus:

Keep in mind that this is a tentative schedule, subject to change at my discretion should the need arise. This provides an outline for the direction of the course—for the most current changes and information, please check the announcements on the eCampus course platform via HOWDY.

IMPORTANT DATES

- January 17 First day of class
- January 23 Last day for adding/dropping courses
- March 6 Mid-semester grades reported
- March 13-17 Spring Break
- April 14 Reading Day – No Classes
- April 18 Last day to drop a course without penalty (Q-drop)
- May 2 Last day of classes

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO THEORY: WHY DO THIS AT ALL?

Wednesday, January 18

In Class: Discussion of syllabus, course texts and general business. Why read and study literature? An exploration.

Homework: Purchase books and materials and bring all to every class. Read Chapter 1 in *Texts and Contexts*, “An Introduction, Theoretically” (pp 3- 15) (also located on eCampus if you don’t already have your books). Answer the Week 1 Discussion on eCampus: What is the function of reading and writing about literature? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss.

Friday, January 20

In Class: Class discussion of the function of reading and writing about literature. Next up: what is literary criticism? Class discussion.

Homework: Read Chapter 2 in *Texts and Contexts*, “Critical Worlds” (pp 19-41). Come to class prepared to discuss.

WEEK 2: INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

Monday, January 23

In Class: Class discussion of the various critical approaches discussed in Ch. 2. Introduction to poetry and literary terms (handout).

Homework: Read through the Poetic Forms Handout (available on eCampus). Come to class prepared to discuss.

Wednesday, January 25

In Class: Discuss Poetic Forms Handout. Review Analyzing Poetry Handout. Practice with Dickinson’s “They Shut Me Up in Prose (445).”

Homework: Read the poems available on eCampus. Answer the Week 2 Discussion on eCampus: Which of the poems from the reading is your favorite and why? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss.

Friday, January 27

In Class: Class discussion of poems. Introduction to New Criticism.

Homework: Read the first part of Chapter 3 in *Texts and Contexts: Unifying the Work: New Criticism* (pp 45-64). Come to class ready to practice applying a New Critical approach to poetry. Bring your book to class.

WEEK 3: POETRY & NEW CRITICISM

Monday, January 30

In Class: Continued discussion of poems and discussion of New Criticism. Group practice: 64-68.

Review useful terms to New Criticism – speaker, tone, point of view, irony.

Homework: Select one poem from the course reading and begin drafting answers to the questions from the New Criticism Overview on the back cover of your textbook.

Wednesday, February 1

In Class: Introduction to the Short Critical Response to Poetry assignment (handout). Introduction to style and MLA format (handout). Group discussion / brainstorming.

Homework: Read Chapters 1-3 in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 1-33). Answer the Week 3 Discussion on eCampus: What makes writing “good”? When you read something you enjoy, what is it about the writing that makes you enjoy reading it? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your book to class.

Friday, February 3

In Class: Discuss the elements of style in Chapters 1-3. Group practice with exercises in clarity. Discuss parts of an effective essay – including introduction, summary and conclusion.

Homework: Draft a 750-1000 word critical response to the poem you selected. First draft due Monday.

WEEK 4: POETRY WRAP UP

Monday, February 6 – Poetry Response 1st Draft Due

In Class: Discussion of peer review process – peer review of poetry critical response.

Homework: Begin revising your critical response based on the feedback you received in class. Final draft due Monday, February 13. No class on Wednesday or Friday of this week. Look ahead for reading assignments.

Wednesday, February 8 – Dr. Scala at Conference / No Class

Homework: Read Chapters 4 and 5 in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 34-55). Answer the Week 4 Discussion on eCampus: complete the style exercises available in this week’s discussion.

Friday, February 10 – Dr. Scala at Conference / No Class

Homework: Complete your revisions and bring your first draft, final draft and a printed rubric to class on Monday.

WEEK 5: INTRODUCTION TO SHORT FICTION

Monday, February 13 – Poetry Response DUE

In Class: Class discussion of first critical response. Introduction to the short story form, review of literary terms.

Homework: Review the Literary Terms Handout on eCampus and read the Analyzing Novels and Short Stories Handout, also on eCampus. Come to class prepared to discuss.

Wednesday, February 15

In Class: Discuss the Analyzing Novels and Short Stories Handout – practice with a short story (Marquez).

Homework: Read the short stories available on eCampus. Answer the Week 5 Discussion on eCampus: Which of the short stories from this week is your favorite and why? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss.

Friday, February 17

In Class: Class discussion of short stories. Introduction to Reader-Response criticism.

Homework: Read the first part of Chapter 4, “Creating the Text: Reader-Response Criticism,” in *Texts and Contexts* (pp 73-97). Bring your book to class on Monday and be prepared to discuss.

WEEK 6: SHORT FICTION & READER-RESPONSE

Monday, February 20

In Class: Class discussion of reading. Group practice with exercises on pp. 98-104. Review useful terms in Reader-Response criticism: affect, effect, expectation, anticipation, implied reader, subjective response.

Homework: Select one short story from the course reading and begin drafting answers to the questions from the Reader-Response Overview on the back cover of your textbook.

Wednesday, February 22

In Class: Introduction to the Short Critical Response to Short Fiction assignment (handout). Continued discussion of style. Group discussion / brainstorming.

Homework: Read Chapters 6-7 in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 56-81). Answer the Week 6 Discussion on eCampus: What are the goals for “good” writing? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your book to class.

Friday, February 24

In Class: Discuss the elements of style in Chapters 6-7. Group practice with exercises in cohesion.

Homework: Draft a 750-1000 word critical response to the short story you selected. First draft due Monday.

WEEK 7: SHORT FICTION WRAP UP

Monday, February 27 – Short Fiction Response 1st Draft Due

In Class: Discussion of peer review process – peer review of short fiction critical response.

Homework: Begin revising your critical response based on the feedback you received in class. Final draft due Monday, March 6. Read Chapter 8, “Concision,” in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 82-93). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your book to class.

Wednesday, March 1

In Class: Discussion of concision and group practice.

Homework: Read Chapter 9, “Shape,” in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 94-113). Answer the Week 7 Discussion on eCampus: Why might it be important for a writer to be concise and to the point? Explain in 250 words. Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your book to class.

Friday, March 3

In Class: Discussion of shape and group practice.

Homework: Apply the work you’ve been doing this week on style to your short fiction critical response. Final draft due Monday. Bring a copy of your 1st draft, final draft and the rubric.

WEEK 8: STYLE WRAP UP & INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

Monday, March 6 – Short Fiction Critical Response DUE

In Class: Class discussion of critical responses thus far. Introduction to literary research: why might we read the critical responses of others? Can we disagree? What's the "right" analysis of a text?

Homework: Read Chapters 10-11 in *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace* (pp 114-150). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

Wednesday, March 8

In Class: Class discussion of the reading – especially ethics. Group practice with exercises. Continued discussion of literary research – review of "Finding Literary Criticism" handout. Overview of final essay assignment. Library meeting on Friday.

Homework: Begin considering which works you will write about in your final essay and what approach you might take in your final, long critical response. Answer the Week 8 Discussion on eCampus: Which works are you considering writing about in your final analysis and why? What approach do you think you might take? (250 words).

Friday, March 10 – CLASS MEETING IN THE LIBRARY

In Class: Class meeting in library to conduct research for final critical response.

Homework: Read through the research you pulled from the library and begin thinking about your long critical response. Have a great spring break!

WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK

Monday-Friday, March 13-17

WEEK 10: INTRODUCTION TO THE NOVEL

Monday, March 20

In Class: Review of literary terms and analyzing novels handouts. Discussion of elements of a novel – character, plot, setting, point of view, etc. Introduction to Jennifer Clement and her scheduled visit to TAMU.

Homework: Read Chapters 1-5 in *Prayers for the Stolen* (pp 4-44). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

Wednesday, March 22

In Class: Class discussion of Clement's novel. What can we determine about character, plot, setting, point of view? How is gender being portrayed/played with?

Homework: Read Chapters 6-10 in *Prayers for the Stolen* (pp 45-98). Answer the Week 10 Discussion on eCampus: What critical approaches do you think you might take if you were to write about Clement's novel based on your reading of it so far? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

Friday, March 24

In Class: Class discussion of Clement's novel.

Homework: Read Chapters 11-19 in *Prayers for the Stolen* (pp 99-145). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

WEEK 11: THE NOVEL & POLITICAL CRITICISM

Monday, March 27

In Class: Class discussion of Clement's novel.

Homework: Read Chapters 20-27 in *Prayers for the Stolen* (150-210). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

Wednesday, March 29

In Class: Class discussion of Clement's novel. Introduction to race, class and gender – political approaches to literature.

Homework: Read the first part of Chapter 8, "Gendering the Text," in *Texts and Contexts* (pp 221-244). Answer the Week 11 Discussion on eCampus: What are some political approaches you might take to Jennifer Clement's novel and why? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss. Bring your books.

Friday, March 31

In Class: Class discussion of political approaches to Clement's novel. Group practice with exercises on pp 245-251. Review of useful terms for political criticism: canon, constructed, double-voiced, exclusion, gender, Marxist, materialist, patriarchy, sex, sexist. Preparation for Clement's visit to TAMU.

Homework: Make a list of questions you'd like to ask Jennifer Clement about the novel, the writing of the novel, the research she conducted to write the novel or anything else! Be sure to bring your list with you to class on Monday.

WEEK 12: JENNIFER CLEMENT VISIT TO TAMU

Monday, April 3

In Class: Jennifer Clement class visit / Library research day

Homework:

Wednesday, April 5

In Class: Jennifer Clement class visit / Library research day

Homework: Remember: Jennifer Clement will be reading tomorrow evening, April 6 at the Annenberg Center.

Friday, April 7

In Class: Class discussion of Clement visit and brainstorming about political approaches to final essay. Discussion of outlines, theses statements, use of research, etc.

Homework: Read the Analyzing Plays Handout available on eCampus. Come to class prepared to discuss.

WEEK 13: INTRODUCTION TO PLAYWRITING

Monday, April 10

In Class: Discuss the Analyzing Plays Handout – practice with excerpt from "Scorched."

Homework: Read the plays available on eCampus. Answer the Week 13 Discussion on eCampus: Which of the plays from this week is your favorite and why? (250 words). Come to class prepared to discuss.

Wednesday, April 12

In Class: Class discussion of plays. Introduction to Psychological criticism.

Homework: Read the first part of Chapter 7, "Minding the Work: Psychological Criticism," in *Texts and Contexts* (pp 195-213). No class on Friday - bring your book to class on Monday and be prepared to discuss.

Friday, April 14 – Reading Day / No Class

WEEK 14: PLAYWRITING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CRITICISM

Monday, April 17

In Class: Class discussion of reading. Group practice with exercises on pp. 213-217. Review useful terms in Psychological criticism: denial, displacement, intellectualization, isolation, projection, repression, reversal.

Homework: Select one play from the course reading and begin drafting answers to the questions from the Psychological Criticism Overview on the back cover of your textbook.

Wednesday, April 19

In Class: Introduction to the Short Critical Response to Playwriting assignment (handout). Group discussion / brainstorming / begin drafting.

Homework: No weekly response this week – write a 750-1000 word draft of your critical response to your play of choice. Complete draft due Friday.

Friday, April 21 – Playwriting Critical Response 1st Draft Due

In Class: Peer review of playwriting critical responses. Discussion of final essay – assignment sheet review.

Homework: Make revisions to your draft based on the feedback you received today. Final draft due Monday. Make final decision on the works you will cover in your final essay. Bring your text selections and *Texts and Contexts* to class on Monday.

WEEK 15: FINAL ESSAY PREP

Monday, April 24 – Playwriting Critical Response DUE

In Class: In class time to begin drafting – outline, drafting, notetaking, etc.

Homework: Continue work on your final essay. Rough draft due Friday. No class on Wednesday.

Wednesday, April 26 – No Class

Homework: Continue work on your final essay. Rough draft due Friday.

Friday, April 28 – Final Essay Rough Draft Due

In Class: Peer review of final essay.

Homework: Make revisions to your essay based on the feedback you received today. Final draft due Monday.

WEEK 16:

Monday, May 1 – Last Day of Class / Final Draft DUE

In Class: Class wrap up.