

LIT 110
Introduction to Literature
Fall 2019

SS 254
T&Th 11-12:20

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**“She didn't read books so she didn't know that she was the world
and the heavens boiled down to a drop.”**
--Zora Neale Hurston

Course Description

LIT 110 introduces students to the study of how readers make meaning of texts and of how texts influence readers. Our focus will be on developing strategies essential to interpreting **literary texts**: close reading, critical analysis, and effective writing. Our shared inquiry will draw from poetry, short prose, the novel, and drama.

Course Goals

LIT 110 will introduce students to important aspects of our literary traditions. Students who successfully complete this course will:

- demonstrate through class discussion and written essays the ability to apply productively an essential critical vocabulary
- demonstrate through class discussion and written essays an understanding of rhetorical strategies used by literary authors
- demonstrate through class discussion and written essays the analytical skills required to be good readers of literature
- demonstrate through class discussion and written essays the essential connection between effective thinking and effective writing about literature

LIT 110 and the University-wide Program-level Writing Assessment (UPWA)

This course requires electronic submission (via Moodle) of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the university's writing program. Your paper will be stored in a database. A random selection of papers will be assessed by a group of faculty and staff using a rubric

developed from the following Writing Learning Outcomes:

- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions (largely style conventions like APA or MLA)
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

This assessment in no way affects either your course grade or your progression at the university. Here's the **rubric** that will be used to score the papers.

LIT 110 and the General Education Program

As a course that satisfies the General Education Group V: Literary and Artistic Studies (L) requirement, LIT 110 is designed to develop familiarity with significant works of literature. Through this experience, students will enhance their analytical skills and explore the historical, aesthetic, philosophical, and cultural features of these literary texts.

Upon completion of LIT 110, students will be able to:

1. analyze works of art with respect to structure and significance within literary and artistic traditions, including emergent movements and forms; and
2. develop coherent arguments that critique these works from a variety of approaches, such as historical, aesthetic, cultural, psychological, political, and philosophical.

LIT 110 Requirements

- Regular class attendance and participation, steady preparation
- Four Critical Essays
- Ten Forum Responses
- Completed Portfolio
- Completion of UPWA requirement

Grading

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|-----------------|-----|
| Essay #1 | 15% |
| Essay #2 | 25% |
| Essay #3 | 25% |
| Essay #4 | 25% |
| Forum Responses | 10% |

Course Policies and Procedures, and Unsolicited Advice

- Students who fail to attend the first two classes of the term will be dropped.
- Attendance and Participation: Because I believe you can learn the material covered in this course only by being here, your attendance and **ACTIVE** participation are required. Your final grade will be dropped one full letter grade after **four** unexcused absences; a failing grade will be assigned after **five** unexcused absences. (An **excused** absence requires a **pre-arranged** scholastic or athletic commitment or a **bona fide and substantiated** medical emergency.)
- If you miss a class, **please make arrangements with a colleague to get notes**. Also, **please check with me to see if you missed any handouts** or special instructions.
- Each class period requires up to three hours of preparation—that is, three hours of careful reading and critical thinking (and writing). **If you cannot commit to this work, LIT 110 is probably not the class for you.**
- If you get confused, or have a question, raise your hand. If your hand is not in the air, I can only assume you understand the texts and ideas under consideration **PERFECTLY**.
- Laptops and tablets may be used for note taking; **laptops and tablets (and cellphones) used for other purposes will be confiscated and given to wayward children.**
- Texts: The texts under consideration are central to our work in this class, especially during class time. You **MUST** secure the texts for this class **and you MUST bring the relevant texts to class**. No exceptions, no excuses.
- Deadlines: All work is due in class on the assigned date. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
- Presentation: Please follow the MLA citation, documentation, and presentation conventions we will be addressing in class.
- Revision: Because true revision is an essential part of serious writing, **you are required to revise your first two essays**. A final grade will only be recorded after I receive, and evaluate, your revision. Please follow the **Guidelines for Revision** that I will give you.
- Please make hard copies of all your work and keep them in a safe place.
- I do not accept work in electronic form. Recycled paper saves trees. Printing on two sides is usually fine.
- The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as needed.

Scholarship

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrase) must be properly documented. Students who plagiarize face serious consequences that may

range from receiving a failing grade on a given assignment to failing the course. Students who plagiarize also face additional University sanctions.

Accommodations

If you have a disability (physical or learning) that you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can discuss whatever accommodations may be necessary.

Required Texts

Hand to Mouth: Living in Bootstrap America by Linda Tirado
Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller
Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk by Ben Fountain
Sweat by Lynn Nottage
The Overstory by Richard Powers
The Children by Lucy Kirkwood

Poetry Packets, via Moodle
Other Handouts, via Moodle

Also, a two-pocket folder for your portfolio

Syllabus

- [M] = available on our Moodle site
- "Title" [M] = Download, read carefully, and bring to class ready to discuss
- Forum Response #X DUE [M] = Respond to Forum prompt on our Moodle site prior to class
- H/O #X [M] = Download handout from Moodle, bring to class
- Essay #X DUE = Bring completed Essay #X to class in 2-pocket portfolio
- Poetry Packet #X = Download packet, read carefully, respond to Forum prompt, bring to class

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| T | 8/27 | Introduction: Equipment for Living | |
| Th | 8/29 | "Winky" [M] | Forum Response #1 DUE [M] |
| T | 9/3 | "A Full Life" [M] | Forum Response #2 DUE [M] |
| Th | 9/5 | <i>Hand to Mouth</i> (3-101) | |
| T | 9/10 | <i>Hand to Mouth</i> (105-207) | |
| Th | 9/12 | Literary Interpretation | H/O #1 [M] Forum Response #3 DUE [M] |

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|----|-------|--|---|
| T | 9/17 | MLA Bootcamp #1: Prose | H/O #2 [M] (Begin drafting Essay #1) |
| Th | 9/19 | <i>Death of a Salesman</i> Act One | Essay #1 DUE |
| T | 9/24 | <i>Death of a Salesman</i> Act Two | |
| Th | 9/26 | Revision; MLA Bootcamp #2: Drama | H/O #3 [M] Forum Response #4 DUE [M] |
| T | 10/1 | <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (1-107) | |
| Th | 10/3 | <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (108-187) | |
| T | 10/8 | <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (188-307) | |
| Th | 10/10 | <i>Sweat</i> Act One | |
| T | 10/15 | <i>Sweat</i> Act Two | |
| Th | 10/17 | Life in Context: Environment | Forum Response #5 DUE [M] |
| T | 10/22 | <i>The Overstory</i> (1-63) | Essay #2 DUE |
| Th | 10/24 | <i>The Overstory</i> (64-152) | |
| T | 10/29 | <i>The Overstory</i> (152-252) | |
| Th | 10/31 | <i>The Overstory</i> (253-352) | |
| T | 11/5 | <i>The Overstory</i> (353-471) | |
| Th | 11/7 | <i>The Overstory</i> (473-502) | |
| T | 11/12 | <i>The Children</i> (1-79) | |
| Th | 11/14 | Poetry: Reading With Care (Poetry Packet #1) | Forum Response #6 DUE [M] |
| T | 11/19 | Poetry Packet #2 | Forum Response #7 DUE; Essay # 3 DUE |
| Th | 11/21 | Poetry Packet #3 | Forum Response #8 DUE |
| T | 11/26 | Poetry Packet #4 | Forum Response #9 DUE |
| Th | 11/28 | Thanksgiving—NO CLASS | |
| T | 12/3 | Poetry Packet #5 | Forum Response #10 DUE |
| Th | 12/5 | MLA Bootcamp #3: Poetry Evaluations | H/O #4 |

Essay #4 DUE in Completed Portfolio No Later Than Noon F, 13 December