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EN 256

Chaminade University

Poetry and Drama, EN 256

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Syllabus

Course Description (toc)

English 256, Poetry and Drama, provides students with an introduction to literature primarily through the study of poetry and drama. The course centers on reading and discussing major anthologized works.

By the end of the semester students should feel that they have a clearer and deeper sense of what they personally value in literature as well as what has been valuable to human culture.

Texts

Texts for this course are available as class handouts. A modest fee may be asked to cover the photocopy cost of longer works. Most texts are also widely available in libraries and bookstores.

George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion
William Shakespeare, Hamlet
Sophocles, Oedipus Rex

Selected poems by Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, William Butler Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sylvia Plath, William Shakespeare, Walt Whitman and others.

Films: My Fair Lady, Citizen Kane, Hamlet (Kenneth Branagh version)

note: Films are widely available via video rental outlets.

Requirements

Participation in discussions (approximately 20%)

Reading journal (approximately 10%)

Three essays (approximately 20%)

Quizzes and miscellaneous assignments (approximately 10%)

Final exam (approximately 40%)

Reading journal

Students will keep a reading journal, either in conventional pen and ink notebooks or on their computers. Journals should contain free-form responses to the required readings.

The requirement for the journal is a minimum of 30 pages for the term. Journals will be checked at the final exam.

Essays

Three essays of approximately 800 words each will be due during the term. Essays for this course will review and expand in some detail in-class discussion. While students may want to do some background research, it is not a requirement. An important element in essays for this course is quotation from required readings

In general, essays will be evaluated with regard to: 1. organization, 2. clarity, 3. correctness, 4. conciseness, and 5. creativity.

Final Exam

The final exam consists of two sections. The first section is made up of 25 or more short answer or multiple-choice questions similar to those on the quizzes. The second section consists of two essay questions which will be

distributed during the week prior to the exam. While the objective section is "closed book," the essay section is "open book."

Self-assessment and Final Grade

The final grade for the course will be determined in part by the student's self-assessment and grade estimate, which will be submitted after taking the final exam.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

All material submitted in fulfillment of course requirements must be written by the registered student.

While students are encouraged to consult sources outside the required reading of the course, they are also responsible for clearly stating the nature of their sources. Statements of "common knowledge" are generally exempt from this scholarly requirement.

Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of someone else's ideas as your own. Plagiarism in this course will result in a grade of "0" for the assignment and possible failure for the course.

Course Outline and Study Guide

Unit 1 -- Types of Literature, Types of Readers

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"
Frost, "Fire and Ice"
Frost, "Mending Wall"
Frost, "After Apple Picking"
Frost, "Out, Out --"
Frost, "Birches"

Lecture 1: "Opening up the Canon: I Have a Dream"

Quiz 1

Assignment: Write a Haiku

Unit 2 -- Poetry and Metaphor

Langston Hughes, "Cross"
Hughes, "Dream Deferred"
Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool"
Emily Dickinson, "A Word"
Dickinson, "A Syllable"
Dickinson, "Dreams"
Dickinson, "Dying"
Dickinson, "Eternity"
Sylvia Plath, "Metaphors"
Plath, "Mirror"

Lecture 2: "How Poems Mean"

Quiz 2

Unit 3 -- Shakespeare and the Sonnets

Shakespeare's Sonnets

Lecture 3: "Shakespeare and the Sonnets"

Quiz 3

Essay 1 due

Unit 4 -- What Is Modern?

Yeats, "The Wild Swans at Coole"
Yeats, "The Second Coming"
Poems by W.B. Yeats
William Carlos Williams, "The Dance"
Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow"
T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Lecture 4: "Love is a Rose. Or, What is Metaphor?"

Quiz 4

Unit 5 -- Poetry in Context

Read: "How to Read a Poem" by Edward Hirsh

Quiz 5

"On the Pulse of the Morning" by Maya Angelou

Unit 6 -- The Fusion of Reality and Illusion

George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion

Quiz 6

Film: My Fair Lady.

Essay 2 due

Progress Report

Unit 7 -- Tragedy in the Classical Sense

Sophocles, "Oedipus Rex"

Lecture 7: Tragedy 1

Quiz 7

Unit 8 -- Drama in Elizabethan England

Shakespeare, The Tragedy of Hamlet

Film: Hamlet (Kenneth Branagh version)

Lecture 8: More on Tragedy . . . and a Bit about Comedy

Quiz 8

Unit 9 -- Literature of Hawai'i:

Lecture 9: Literature of Hawai'i

Quiz 9

Essay 3 due

Final Exam

Self-Assessment