

Survey of English Literature II, English 382.700

[Syllabus as of November 15, 2015]

Spring, 2016: Web course

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IMPORTANT! Warning about Online Courses:

Students who do not understand the particular challenges of online courses often struggle and drop out. This is especially true of literature courses, in which the quantity and difficulty of the readings can be daunting. You must be self-motivated, disciplined, and good at time management to succeed in an online class. You must also have reliable access to a computer with high-speed internet on a daily basis. To evaluate whether you are a good match for online learning, check out the following:

1. Is distance learning for me?:

<https://www.wku.edu/online/orientation/for-me.php>

2. WKU's Orientation for Online Learners:

<https://www.wku.edu/online/orientation/>

Blackboard:

If you have not used Blackboard much, or if this is your first online class, you are strongly urged to complete Blackboard's Student User Training. These online modules will improve or refresh your skills. To sign up, log in to Blackboard. Click "IT Training" on the red banner (top right corner), then look for IT: Blackboard Student User Training. You will gain instant access upon signing up.

ADA Notice:

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services, Room A200 Downing University Center. Their phone number is (270) 745-5004 V/TDD. Please do not request accommodations from the instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services. Since this is a web course, you will need to mail the letter of accommodation to me or see me on campus to get it signed.

Course Aims and Organization

This course is meant to follow British Survey I (although it is alright to take them out of sequence), and with it should provide a comprehensive historical overview of the development of British literature from the early Middle Ages to the present. We pick up the story of British literature at about 1800 with the Romantics and follow some of the literary developments of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. This course is preparatory to upper division courses that typically concentrate on a particular author, genre, or period. Our approach stresses breadth rather than depth, and you should plan on attaining a general knowledge of the key literary periods and the development of narrative, dramatic, and poetic genres and forms. The criteria by which I have chosen the texts for this course are these: texts must be *representative* and *typical* of their period, but they also must have displayed an exceptional and unique *aesthetic/artistic/literary* value over time. You will be expected to learn historical facts and chronology that are basic to the study of English literature and to demonstrate your skill in the interpretation and analysis of the particular literary works that we will study. Your knowledge of this body of literature and your ability to work with it are crucial prerequisites for your continued study of literature.

The organization of this course is based around *thematic modules*. A more standard and conventional organization would be strictly chronological, by period and author; for that version of the survey you would follow a trajectory from The Romantic Period (Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Austen) through the Victorian Period (Mill, Dickens, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Hopkins, Stevenson, Wilde) and into the Twentieth Century (Conrad, Joyce, Hardy, Yeats, Eliot, Thomas, Hughes, Fowles). There are some obvious advantages to that arrangement: chronology is, after all, a familiar principle of order, as are proper names designating a specific author. However, it is also valuable to recognize the way literary works create among themselves intertextual relationships of allusion, influence, and response, with shared themes, imagery, and intellectual concerns. I'd like you to think *across* periods and authors so that the history of English literature becomes at once more cohesive and yet more complex. My categories are based on what I consider significant areas of concern during this time span: the response to the French Revolution, the relationship of nature and the imagination, the idea of poetic faith, explorations in poetic form, the novel of Romantic love, aestheticism, a developing focus on the individual self, the emergence of a modernist angst, and a post-modernist response to the literary tradition of the

Victorian novel. By the end of our time together you should be comfortable in matching these categories with the periods and authors listed above.

Required Texts in these editions

Norton Anthology of British Literature, Ninth Edition. Package two: *Volume D* (The Romantic Period); *Volume E* (The Victorian Period); *Volume F* (The Twentieth Century and After).

ISBN: 9780393913019

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*. Intro by Gillen D'Arcy Wood. Barnes & Noble Classics. 2004.

ISBN-13: 9781593081386

Austen, Jane. *Persuasion*. Barnes & Noble Classics. Intro by Susan Ostrov Weisser. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003.

ISBN: 978-1-59308-130-0

Fowles, John. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Little, Brown & Company, 1998.

ISBN-13: 9780316291163

Course objectives

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- **describe** English literary texts with specific reference to their cultural, thematic, and historic context;
- **analyze** and **interpret** English literary texts in a coherent, focused way;
- **articulate** orally and in written form the major themes, ideas, and concerns of these texts, while avoiding narrative modes of discourse;
- **demonstrate** competence in proper modes of quotation, citation, and documentation, using either MLA or Chicago style.

Notes on Reading and Writing

This course emphasizes the disciplines of reading and writing, skills that are particularly important in the study of literature, but also universally valuable. I will ask you to read *in a certain way* and also to write *in a certain way*. That is, I have very specific requirements, for both reading and writing, to which I expect you to conform.

The pleasures of reading literature are many, but I particularly want you to cultivate the intellectual pleasure of reading deeply and attentively, alert for the power of imagery, repeated motifs, conflicts, and oppositions. One way you will demonstrate that attention to the text is by using the discussion board to post your comments on a scene or quotation, explaining why it is worthy of our consideration. You should develop the

habit of checking and underlining portions of the text, or writing down page numbers for later reference. Reading literature is to read not only stories, but *composed* stories, so you should also be alert for the stylistic marks of skilled writers in the exercise of their craft.

To write about literature begins with thinking: composing your own thoughts as inspired by the words encountered in your reading of the text. I will direct you in some cases, but the best writing comes when you follow the promptings of your own mind as it pushes you into new and unanticipated mental territory in the pursuit of thoughts and ideas not yet formulated or even known. That free and open inquiry must nevertheless be controlled, so I will expect you to discipline your writing according to my very precise guidelines, as given below. These requirements are designed to foster in your writing three things: a sense of structure in the organization of an essay; a focus on clarity, brevity, and concision as compositional virtues; and a writing practice that avoids narrating and instead analyzes, interprets, argues, and speculates.

Course Assignments and Requirements

This is a reading course, and it is extremely important for you to keep up with your reading of these texts. This will require daily reading of the assigned literature; a study guide is no substitute for the text itself. We will have regular readings in the Norton anthology as well as the three novels listed above. The readings are varied, from short poems to long novels, but all of them will demand your full attention. Do not think that a short poem does not merit extended attention; poems should be read numerous times until you have achieved a familiar intimacy with the words and their arrangements—what Coleridge says is the mark of good poetry: the best words in the best order.

As is traditional in literature courses, you should be prepared to demonstrate your comprehension of these texts by discussing them (in discussion board postings) and writing about them in formal essays. Remember to observe the rules for writing listed in the Supplement to this syllabus. The commentaries and paper should demonstrate your competence in writing upper-division analytic and interpretive essays according to traditional standards of style, citation, and documentation. You will write and revise three short commentaries on our readings during the first part of the course. This will be followed by one longer paper (due on the last day of the course) that synthesizes your learning in a comprehensive way. You will also be expected to use the Blackboard discussion board to post your comments on specific passages and issues that arise from our readings. You will take a final comprehensive exam (multiple choice and true/false questions) to test your knowledge of factual material covered in the course as well as your overall knowledge of this part of British literary history. Part of the final exam will require you to write down from memory one of the assigned sonnets from our course (or another of the poems of comparable length).

Commentaries

These short, formal papers are designed to demonstrate or establish basic competency in formal writing. Commentaries are formal essays in which you discuss and explore an important aspect, idea, or theme in a work of literature. They should be focused on the text itself, not background material or historical context: what are the main ideas and viewpoints expressed in the text? What interesting and significant thematic problem does it develop? What significant imagery does it employ? What is a key quotation?

Commentaries should be double-spaced, one-inch margins, Calibri 11 or 12 font, three paragraphs, with a title and a Work Cited given in full, all on a single page. *I will not accept your commentary if any part of it extends to the back or to a second page.* The first and third paragraphs should have exactly three sentences; the middle paragraph at least four (a good paper will develop the middle paragraph with as many additional sentences as the page allows). Each commentary should quote from the text just one time, using MLA documentation. The quotation should be significant and must be embedded in the middle paragraph; i.e., not in the first or last sentence, and should be introduced by your own words, not free standing in its own sentence. Be sure to follow your quotation with an explanation, analysis, interpretation, disagreement, or other form of commentary on that specific quotation. Avoid self-referential comments, references to “the reader,” evaluative comments about a text’s “effectiveness,” the use of “seems” and “appears,” and mere summarizing. I do not want to see phrases like “throughout the work,” or introductions to quotations that begin with “It has been said” or “So-and-so says it best.” Don’t use the words “truly” as an intensifier or “utilize” when “use” will do. Don’t give agency to “society” as in these phrases: “Society tells her” and “Society made him believe.” Never refer to anyone’s “comfort zone.” Don’t use the phrase “in the novel” as though you are looking into something and then describing what you see. Avoid phrases like the novelist is “able to” or the poet “uses,” phrases that are usually unnecessary.

Elsewhere in this syllabus I supply my own sample commentary as a “template” for you to use in your own writing; you will also find a checklist for you to follow to see that your paper conforms to all the rigorous rules and requirements for the Davies Commentary ©.

Commentary Revisions must be submitted prior to writing another commentary, and within a week of having the graded, corrected original returned; revisions should be based exclusively on my corrections and suggestions (unless otherwise indicated). Your revision can be up to five points higher than your original grade, depending on how successfully you make the corrections. If you do not turn in a revision in the allotted time you will receive a zero on your revision grade.

The final paper

This should be a formal paper of literary analysis, argument, interpretation, and speculation, with a length of approximately eight pages. It should include at least two of our primary sources and two appropriate secondary sources of criticism (books and articles; not internet) that allow you to engage a critical point of view on your primary texts; secondary sources can include editorial material taken from our novels or from the *Norton Anthology*. I don't have a precise requirement for the number of sources and quotations; you should use your good judgment. Don't overwhelm your paper with other people's words, and be sure to engage with your sources. Probably between six and twelve sources is a reasonable amount.

Discussion Board Posts and Responses

I expect regular Blackboard discussion board postings, in which you respond to the assigned reading for that day with an initial post of approximately 200 words and then respond to other students' posts. I will generally offer a number of questions or approaches for you to consider; what I am looking for are statements about what you find particularly worthy of attention in the text (and why), a question that you would like to explore further, or any kind of insight you have in response to the reading.

While you should be careful to maintain good grammar, spelling, and punctuation, these postings are meant to be informal and personal expressions of immediate and spontaneous thought.

Follow these guidelines for all online posts and responses:

1. Be sure your posts are relevant, thoughtful, and to the point; don't stray off-topic.
2. Use care in writing all posts and proofread them to avoid typos and errors.
3. Read other posts before writing your response, and build on what has already been said; try to join the conversation by adding something new.
4. Avoid saying that you merely "agree" or "disagree" with others. Simply repeating others' points will earn you a zero.
5. Demonstrate your close engagement with the texts under discussion by citing evidence to support your claims. (A good rule of thumb: every post should include at least 1 quotation).
6. Avoid speaking subjectively, or relying on personal experience or anecdotes.
7. Be concrete and specific; avoid unfounded assertions and broad generalizations.
8. Give your posts informative or creative titles (i.e. not "Post #4").
9. Be respectful of others' contributions. Your goal is to participate in the open exchange of ideas. You are free to disagree with other students and with me – just be sure to do so in a way that seeks to persuade.

Initial Writing Exercise

Your first assignment for this course will be an exercise in writing and re-writing sentences. My intent is to turn your academic writing away from a narrative style to

proper textual analysis and interpretation. You will be given points on how thoroughly and completely you do the revision exercise, not on achieving the perfect “right” answer. Once you have submitted the assignment you will have access to my own revisions of the sentences with explanations. If you take this exercise seriously, and if you study the accompanying documents (“Checklist for Commentaries,” “Basic Rules for Sources,” “Davies Commentary Template”) you should avoid problems in writing for this class.

Final Exam

This will be a multiple choice, true-false exam that will be administered through Blackboard. It will test you on your factual knowledge of the works that we will have studied this semester as well as your overall knowledge of this part of British literary history.

Grades

Initial Writing Exercise: 30 points possible
Commentaries (3): 30 points each = 90 total points possible
Commentary revisions (3): 30 points each = 90 total points possible
Discussion board posts (25): 10 points each = 250 total points possible
Final paper: 200 total points possible
Final exam: 200 total points possible
Total possible points: 860

Assignment Due Dates

Initial Writing Exercise:

To be announced

Discussion board post dates:

To be announced

Commentary deadlines (you may turn in commentaries in advance)

To be announced

Final Paper and final exam deadline

To be announced

Schedule

Note on Scheduling: Our course work will be divided into nine thematically organized “Modules,” spread across our fourteen weeks of the semester. Each week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday at midnight.

Note on Texts: Page numbers for our texts are tied to the three-volume *Norton Anthology: Volume D* (The Romantic Period); *Volume E* (The Victorian Period); *Volume F* (The Twentieth Century and After). To help in organizing your reading, a list of longer works follows; these are also in bold in the schedule below.

Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities*

Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (D443)
Austen's *Persuasion*
Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes" (D911)
Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (E1733)
Joyce's *The Dead* (F2282)
Byron's *Manfred* (D638)
Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde* (E1677)
Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (F1951)
Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

Week One: January 25 - 31
Week Two: February 1 - 7
Week Three: February 8 - 14
Week Four: February 15 - 21
Week Five: February 22 - 28
Week Six: February 29 – March 6
Week of March 07 – 13: Spring Break Day
Week Seven: March 14 - 20
Week Eight: March 21 - 27
Week Nine: March 28 – April 3
Week Ten: April 4 - 10
Week Eleven: April 11 - 17
Week Twelve: April 18 - 24
Week Thirteen: April 25 – May 1
Week Fourteen: May 2 - 8

Introduction to the course:

1. Watch/Listen:

Introductory lecture: *Literary surveys*
Introductory lecture: *Writing about literature*

2. Read these documents on Blackboard:

Syllabus
Checklist for Commentaries
Basic Rules for Sources
Davies Commentary Template
Davies How To Re-write A Sentence Exercise

3. Complete:

Davies "How To Re-write A Sentence" Exercise

4. Review:

Answers to "How To Re-write A Sentence"

Module 1.

The novel, part one: Victorian Retrospective on the End of the Ancien Régime

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on Dickens for *The novel, part one: Victorian Retrospective on the End of the Ancien Régime*

2. Read and discuss:

Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*

3. Complete:

Discussion board post #1

Commentary on Module 1 (or wait and write on Module 2)

1. Continue to read and discuss:

Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*

3. Complete:

Discussion board post #2

Commentary on Module 1 (or wait and write on Module 2)

Module 2.

Nature and the Visionary Imagination

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *Nature and the Visionary Imagination*

2. Read and discuss:

Blake's "All Religions Are One" (D116); "There is No Natural Religion [a] and [b]" (D116-117); From *Songs of Innocence*: "Introduction" (D118); "The Ecchoing Green" (D119); "The Lamb" (D120); from *Songs of Experience*: "Introduction" (D125); "The Sick Rose" (D128); "The Tyger" (D129); "Ah! Sun-flower" (D131); "The Garden of Love" (D131); *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, plate 14 (D154); from Blake's Notebook: "Mock on, Mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau" (D160); "Auguries of Innocence" (internet: use Poetry Foundation)

Supplement to Blake: Allen Ginsberg on Blake (); *The Doors*: "End of the Night"; "Break on Through" (all Blackboard links)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #3

1. Read and discuss:

Wordsworth's "Lines Written in Early Spring" (D280); "Expostulation and Reply" and "The Tables Turned" (D280-281); from Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1802: "The Subject and Language of Poetry" (D293); "I wandered lonely as a cloud" (D334)

Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*: from Chapt. 4 [Mr. Wordsworth's Earlier Poems] (D488); from Chapt. 13 [On the Imagination, or Esemplastic Power] (D491);

from Chapt. 14, Occasion of the *Lyrical Ballads* (D491, first two paragraphs only).

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #4

Commentary on Module 2 (if you did not write on Module 1)

Module 3

Versions of Poetic Faith

1. Watch/Listen:

lecture on *Versions of Poetic Faith*

2. Read and discuss:

Blake's from *Milton*: "And did those feet" (D161)

Keats's "Ode to Psyche" (D925)

R. Browning's "Fra Lippo Lippi" (E1300)

Shelley's from *A Defence of Poetry* (D856)

Hopkins' "God's Grandeur" (E1548)

3. Complete:

Discussion board postings #5

1. Read and discuss:

Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" (D288);

"Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (D335)

Mill's *Autobiography, Chapter five: A Crisis in my Mental History* (E1115)

Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" (D479)

Shelley's "Mont Blanc" (D770)

Hardy's "Hap" (F1932)

Thomas's "Fern Hill" (F2702)

2. Complete:

Discussion board postings #6

1. Read and discuss:

Coleridge's "The Eolian Harp" (D439);

Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" (D791)

Hardy's "The Darkling Thrush" (F1933)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #7

Commentary on Module 3 due (or wait and write on Module 4)

Module 4.

Poetic Form

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *Poetic Form*

2. Read and discuss:

Ballad:

Coleridge's "**The Rime of the Ancient Mariner**" (D443)

Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad" (D923)

Sonnet:

Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us" (D347)

Byron's "Sonnet to Chillon" (Blackboard)

Shelley's Ozymandias (D776)

Keats's "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (D904); "When I have fears that I may cease to be" (D911); "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art" (D922)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #8

1. Read and discuss:

Ode:

Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" (D927); "Ode on Melancholy" (D931); "To Autumn" (D951)

Conversation poem:

Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight" (D477)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #9

1. Read and discuss:

Dramatic Monologue:

R. Browning's "My Last Duchess" (E1282)

Villanelle:

Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" (F2703)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #10

Commentary on Module 4 due (if you did not write on Module 3)

Module 5.

The novel, part two: Romantic Romanticism

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *Romantic Romanticism*

2. Read and discuss:

Austen's *Persuasion*

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #11

1. Continue to Discuss:

Austen's *Persuasion*

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #12

Commentary on Module 5 due (or wait and write on Module 6)

Module 6.

Aestheticism

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *Aestheticism*

2. Read and discuss:

Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes" (D911)

Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" (E1161)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #13 due

1. Read and discuss:

Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (E1733)

Joyce's *The Dead* (F2282)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #14 due

1. Read and discuss:

Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (D930)

Yeats's "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (F2087); "The Wild Swans at Coole" (F2095);

"Sailing to Byzantium" (F2102)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #15 due

Commentary on Module 6 due (if you did not write on Module 5)

Module 7.

The Descent into the Self

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *The Descent into the Self*

2. Read and discuss the Sublime of Defiance:

Wordsworth's Prospectus to the *Recluse* (Blackboard posting)

Keats's Letter to John Hamilton Reynolds [Milton, Wordsworth, and the Chambers of Human Life] (D970)

Byron's *Manfred* (D638)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #16

1. Read and discuss the Sublime of Terror:

Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde* (E1677)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #17 due

1. Read and discuss the Sublime of Horror:

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (F1951)

Eliot's "The Hollow Men" (F2543)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #18

1. Read and discuss the Sublime of the Word:

Arnold's "Dover Beach" (E1387)

Hopkins' "No Worst, There Is None" (E1555); "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" (*internet: use Bartleby.com*)

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #19

Module 8.

Modernist Angst

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *Modernist Angst*

2. The Human Dilemma: Read and discuss:

Tennyson's "The Lotos-Eaters" (E1166); "Ulysses" (E1170)

Arnold's "To Marguerite—Continued" (E1374); "Dover Beach" (E1387); "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" (E1388)

Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (F2524)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #20

1. The Return of Nature: Read and discuss:

Hardy's "The Convergence of the Twain" (F1940)

Yeats's "The Second Coming" (F2099)

Hughes' "Pike" (F2810)

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #21 due

Module 9.

The novel, part three: Post-Modernist Retrospective on the Victorian Era

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture on *The novel, part three: Post-Modernist Retrospective on the Victorian Era*

2. Read and discuss:

Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #22 due

1. Continue to read and discuss:

Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #23 due

1. Continue to read and discuss:

Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

2. Complete:

Discussion board posting #24 due

Conclusion to the course

Retrospective on Survey of English Literature II

1. Watch/Listen:

Lecture review of the course

2. discuss the sequence of texts and their thematic organization

3. Complete:

Discussion board posting #25 due

Final Exam; final paper due

Note

This syllabus and its requirements, texts, and procedures are subject to change if necessary or appropriate.

Important Dates:

Last day to add or drop a class

Last day to withdraw from a class

F/N Date¹ (60% point in the semester)

Writing Center Assistance

The Writing Center is located in Cherry Hall 123. Our writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project: they can help you brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness. But they will not revise or edit the paper for you. See instructions of the website www.wku.edu/writingcenter <<http://www.wku.edu/writingcenter>> for making online or face-to-face appointments. Or call (270) 745-5719 during our operating hours (also listed on our website) for help scheduling an appointment.

Attendance

All students are expected to be on time and to attend class at each session. If a student misses a session, that student is responsible for the work done that day. Arriving late or leaving early will count as an absence.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a student knowingly or unknowingly submits another person's published or unpublished (print or web) writing as his/her own, has another person dictate what should be written, or has another person write an assignment and submits that work as his/her own. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty on any single assignment, including short papers, reflective assignments, and drafts, will result in a course penalty up to course failure. Length or nature of the assignment will not be factors in course penalty. In other words, plagiarism in a one-page paper might result in course failure just like plagiarism in a six page paper might.

¹ *F/N date is the 60% point in the semester. Students who stop attending class *before* this date, or in online classes, students who stop participating *before* this date, are assigned a final grade of FN, not F. The grade of FN, according to the undergraduate catalog, indicates "Failure due to non-attendance (no semester hours earned and no quality points)." This grade could have implications for financial assistance.

Basic rules for using sources in your writing; Professor Davies

- A. Acknowledge your use of direct quotations with quotation marks.
- B. Never begin a sentence with a quotation.
- C. Begin with your own words leading into and announcing the quotation.
- D. Generally you should mention the author and text as you lead into the quotation.
- E. Make sure your sentence and the quotation form one grammatically correct sentence.
- F. Follow the quotation with your commentary: explain, interpret, analyze!
- G. Provide information about the precise location of your quotation so your reader can also find it (use in-text citations to give page number and author/text if not already provided in your lead-in).
- H. Never begin a paragraph with a quotation; first establish what you intend to say in your opening sentence.
- I. Don't end a paragraph with a quotation; end with your own conclusion.
- J. In a paragraph use a source to support, defend, or clarify your ideas and to help you move from the first sentence to the last.
- K. Long quotations should be block-indented.

Basic rules for organization in writing:

- A. Always think in a three-part structure: introduction, body, conclusion.
- B. The sentence is to a paragraph as the paragraph is to an essay: introductory sentence/paragraph, followed by the body of the paragraph/essay, followed by the concluding sentence/paragraph.
- C. Use paragraphs to bring order to your sentences; there should be coherence within paragraphs and development between paragraphs.
- D. An introduction should announce what you are writing about, provide some background/context, and state the purpose of the writing.
- E. The body of the writing should develop the ideas in the introduction; explain, demonstrate, argue, persuade, analyze, clarify, refute, justify!
- F. The conclusion should convey a sense of significance, accomplishment, and appropriate closure.

Check list for papers:

- I. Title
 - A. Do you reveal the core content of your paper?
 - B. Have you made it interesting?
- II. Introduction
 - A. Do you clearly present the major subject of your paper, including the author and the text that you will be writing on?
 - B. Do you explain why this subject is interesting, important, worthy of discussion, etc.?
 - C. Do you provide a strong and clear thesis: that is, the claim or assertion that you are making about the subject?
- III. Development
 - A. Do you provide any necessary background information to orient your reader?
 - B. Do you use separate paragraphs for different parts of your paper?
 - C. If you have made any references to the text, or have quoted from it or any other source, have you properly cited and documented them?
- IV. Conclusion
 - A. Have you made sure not to introduce any new ideas in your conclusion?
 - B. Do you review and summarize the significance of your views on the subject?

Checklist for Commentaries; Professor Davies

1. My paper uses Calibri 11 or 12 font throughout. _____
2. I have a title that reveals the content of my commentary. _____
3. My introduction has exactly three sentences. _____
4. I do not use a quotation in my introduction. _____
5. My introduction reveals the main subject or idea of my commentary, with the third sentence making a claim about that subject or idea. _____
6. My development paragraph is four or more sentences long. _____
7. I do not use a quotation in the first sentence of my development. _____
8. My development focuses on the main subject or idea mentioned in the introduction.

9. I have chosen a quotation that is appropriate to the subject and that says something important about it. _____
10. I lead into the quotation in my own words, rather than starting the quotation at the beginning of a sentence. _____
11. My lead-in and the quotation together form a grammatically correct sentence. _____
12. My source is quoted exactly. _____
13. I have properly cited the quotation. _____
14. I follow up the quotation with a comment, explanation, analysis, or interpretation of the content of the quotation. _____
15. My conclusion has exactly three sentences. _____
16. My conclusion does not introduce new material or ideas. _____
17. My conclusion summarizes the significance of my analysis/interpretation of the subject matter that I have covered. _____
18. My conclusion does not contain a quotation. _____
19. I have a complete citation of my sources at the bottom of the page and my citation is correct in all its details: author, title, and publishing information. _____
20. I have checked for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. _____

Lloyd Davies, English 382, Summer, 2015

The Davies Commentary: The Path to Successful Writing

Formal papers of analysis and interpretation are important modes of writing in college classes. The Davies Commentary is a very specific kind of formal paper that stresses concision, clarity, and structure. To be successful in writing these commentaries it is essential to follow all of the requirements outlined in the syllabus.

The Davies commentary is a single page, three-paragraph paper, with a title and a “work cited” entry. It should focus on a particular theme, idea, image, or conflict in a text that you would like to explore. The introductory paragraph and conclusion have to have exactly three sentences—the minimum number for a paragraph. The introduction establishes the subject matter, including the text and author under analysis, with the last, thesis sentence making an argumentative claim about the subject. The middle paragraph should develop that argument and be at least four sentences long, but, as Davies says, “a good paper will develop the middle paragraph as fully as the page allows” (2). This gives some degree of individual freedom and flexibility in sentence length. The concluding paragraph will suggest the significance of the developed claim. The full requirements are outlined in the course syllabus.

The Davies Commentary, with its detailed rules and requirements, demands extra attention and care on the part of students. Davies believes that this is not only good discipline but also a useful skill to develop for the future. The immediate benefit, however, will be a successful paper: succinct, clear, well organized, focused on its subject, and with no wasted words.

Work Cited

Davies, Lloyd. *Syllabus: English 382, Survey of English Literature II*. Bowling Green: Western Kentucky University, 2015.