

Summary

Type of Request:

Renew

Subject code

LIT

Course Number

110

Catalog Year

-

Course Title

Introduction to Literature

Department

English Department

College/School

College of Humanities and Sciences

Level

Undergraduate (U)

Campus

Mountain Campus

Semesters offered

Spring, Fall

Description & Purpose

LIT 110 has for years served as an approved University writing class, and during this interregnum -- as our Department reconsiders this course's place both in the Literature curriculum and in the trajectory of the General Education experience, generally -- we request a renewal of this status. This course is now taught almost exclusively by full-time literature faculty, with more normalization across the various sections than ever (and thus the attached syllabus is broadly representative), and with a rigorous program of writing instruction. Students in this course write in multiple registers (personal/autobiographical, analytical, etc.) and write continuously throughout the semester (formally and informally, graded and ungraded, etc.); they receive extensive feedback from their instructor and are led through the process of revision with at least one of their formal paper cycles.

Additional Information (For OCHE Database):

In which MUS Core Category, does this course fit?

Humanities/Fine Arts

Does the course include content regarding cultural heritage of American Indians?

No

Attachments

Syllabus[LIT110syllabus.doc](#)**Other**[LIT110ReadingAutobio.doc,](#)[LIT110AnalyticalPaper.doc,](#)[LIT110DeptAssessment.doc](#)

Learning Outcomes

Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts.

In addition to learning principles of argumentation and the techniques of literary analysis, students will be expected to reveal their assimilation of literary terminology, history, and critical approaches in their various papers for the course. Class lectures and discussions will be built around identifying a diverse range of questions-at-issue for the readings/course texts; students will then, via both short writings (e.g., Moodle forum posts, informal in-class writings, etc.) and their formal papers, use those questions to derive claims and lines of reasoning. In still another unique writing situation, students will complete a full class session quiz (short essays) that requires them to consolidate concepts and terminology they learned during the semester, applying them at times to some of the course texts.

Formulate and express written opinions and ideas that are developed, logical, and organized.

In four formal papers of varying lengths (and in multiple informal/in-class writing opportunities), students will conduct inquiry and argumentative reasoning related to a variety of literary texts (in multiple genres). They will receive in-class instruction on effective argumentation and writing strategies, and will receive extensive feedback and formal commentary on their formal papers. Their opinions and ideas will be formulated not only in the context of individual papers (with imagined interlocutors), but also in dialogue with and response to their classmates' ideas on online discussion forums.

Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience, purpose and context.

Aided by extensive group and one-on-one engagement with the instructor, as well as peer exchange and review, the inquiry-based writing assignments for this course will allow students opportunities for self-reflection and for joining a wider scholarly conversation (e.g., writing essays not merely for the instructor or for the discourse community of a particular class, but as if they are to appear for a wider audience in a literary journal). Students will also learn to be mindful of the different registers and rhetorical strategies required for writing for formal papers, for shorter and more informal in-class writing situations, for posts in electronic conversation forums (Moodle discussion forums, blogs, etc.).

Revise written work based on constructive comments from the instructor.

At least one (and usually two) essays for this course will be approached methodically and recursively, and will allow the students to revise in light of substantive comments on an earlier draft. In these cases, students will receive extensive comments from the instructor (and often from one or more of their peers, as well). The strategies for an effective revision will be foregrounded explicitly during one or more class sessions, and students are also typically required to reflect (in writing) on their approach to and experience of the revision process.

Find, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically.

Ever since the Mansfield Library's Research Librarian, Professor Sue Samson, was an active collaborator with the English Department's lower-division literature classes, information literacy has been an important aspect of the curriculum (both for LIT 110 and for the department's 200-level courses). The class is approached with the understanding that students will support their literary research with access to academic information resources provided by the library and will include both in-text citations and a bibliography of sources that adheres to the MLA style of documentation. In support of this information literacy outcome, and especially in conjunction with the students' final analytical paper, instructors of LIT 110 discuss and demonstrate the efficacious and ethical use of library databases and resources, online information and scholarship, etc.; they also provide explicit guidance regarding the proper citation conventions for this information.

Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions.

Students in LIT 110 (as in all LIT classes) are taught and given many occasions to perform literary close reading and to demonstrate an ability insightfully to interpret primary literary texts by thoughtfully integrating quoted passages into the larger argumentative claims of an essay. They also are expected to begin to understand themselves as joining pre-existing and wider conversations about literary texts and to cite secondary source materials in discipline-specific ways (via MLA formatting, etc.).

Demonstrate appropriate English language usage.

Writing workshops, illustrative handouts including models and examples, PowerPoint slides with examples from previous papers, and substantial instructor feedback on formal papers will consistently foreground issues related to prose style, language usage, grammar, voice, and rhetorical positioning.

Learning Outcomes

Writing Course Requirements

Is enrollment capped at 25 students?	If enrollment is not capped at 25, list maximum course enrollment	Justify the request for variance.
Yes	-	-

Which written assignments will include revision in response to instructor's feedback?

The students' first paper -- the Reading Autobiography essay (3-4 pp., see attached handout) -- will be returned to them with extensive instructor comments (and a grade). They will then have at least 1/3 of the semester to return to the paper, complete a revision of the essay, and turn it in for a fresh assignment and (typically) a new grade. In the meantime, some class time (as well as accompanying handouts) will be set aside to discuss explicitly responsible and productive approaches to revision. While the time does not allow for a full revision of the students' longest paper -- the final analytical paper (6-8 pp.) -- this endeavor is usually approached in a graduated way such that students (1) write a draft of their opening paragraphs; (2) give one copy to a classmate for peer-review and one copy to the instructor for his/her comments; and (3) revise the opening paragraph (based on those comments and their own evolved thinking) for inclusion in their final paper.

Writing Assignments

Please describe course assignments.

Students write a minimum of four formal papers/essays for assessment, comprising a minimum of 12 pages of new, previously unsubmitted content. In addition to this, there are substantial writing components in two other formal assignments: an annotated bibliography and a short-essay based mid- to late-semester quiz. 75% of a student's course grade is based on performance on writing assignments, and even more than that when one considers that informal, ungraded writing (via Moodle discussion forum posts, short in-class writings, etc.) are a factor in the remaining 25% of the grade via class participation.

Formal Graded Assignments

This course typically requires three to four short papers of 2-4 pp. each, and one final paper of 6-8 pp., and often an assortment of specialized writing assignments (e.g., short annotated bibliographies, opening paragraph exercises, a film review, paraphrases, etc.). There is also a quiz that asks the students to write between 6-8 short essays. Writing as an ongoing process is emphasized at all times, and revision always figures prominently in the methodology and in the expectations for at least one of the major papers.

In the attached syllabus, the formal graded assignments are as follows: (1) a Reading Autobiography essay (which, in 3-4 pages, asks students both to reflect on their personal histories as readers and to discuss the virtues of reading & the imaginative life, generally); (2) a response paper dealing with poetry (which, in 2-3 pages, asks students to complete a paraphrase of a short poem and write one well-developed paragraph about each of two different localized details from a poem); (3) a close reading response paper (which, in 2-3 pages, asks students to conduct a concentrated reading about an issue of their choice from one of the novels or plays that they have read); (4) a short essay quiz on terminology, concepts, and critical approaches that they've learned during the semester; (5) an 8-item annotated bibliography that asks students to build on what they've learned about information literacy and literary studies research by finding 8 secondary sources associated with the work of one of our feature writers, and then providing properly formatted citations and crisp, informative 2-3 sentence annotations; and (6) a final analytical paper (which, in 6-8 pages, asks them to identify a relevant question-at-issue/line of inquiry in one or more of the class texts and to conduct a thesis-governed response to that question).

These formal assignments represent 75% of the students' course grade (see attached syllabus for individual grading percentages).

Informal Ungraded Assignments

There are multiple occasions (perhaps a dozen, on average, depending on the instructor) for informal ungraded assignments, many of them occurring as accompaniments to in-class exercises and/or as exploratory responses -- in the form of Moodle discussion forum posts -- to the class-by-class reading assignments.

UPWA Participation

Yes

Writing Assessment Report

Assessment Plan

We do not use explicit "rubrics," per se, on an individual class basis when assessing student writing, but certainly there is always an internal/implied rubric in our instructors' minds as they assess all written work. Hopefully it will be very clear from the foregoing that the seven learning outcomes for Intermediate W classes are robustly integrated into the range of assignments for this course. For a student to do well on the annotated bibliography assignment, for example, he/she will have learned from classroom instruction on information literacy and research practices and will have demonstrated clean, properly formatted citations, and will have provided secondary sources of scholarly substance and value. For a student to do well on the analytical essay, he/she will necessarily have to (1) show a strong sense for purpose and audience, (2) express ideas in an articulate and well-organized way, (3) demonstrate the proper academic conventions for literary studies, and (4) demonstrate a strong command of English language usage. Students know that doing the bare minimum to meet requirements relative to these outcomes (i.e., showing adequate though perhaps not clear/strong awareness of purpose, or an adequate organization and deployment of ideas though perhaps not strong/exceptional, etc.) equates with a grade of C+ (which, in a rubric, would like suggest a score of 2.5-3 on a 1-5 pt. range). Receiving higher than a C+ involves, obviously, a stronger attentiveness to audience, more advanced and conscientious argumentation, more evidence of attentive editing and more writerly cleanliness (relative to grammar, usage, mechanics), etc.

Assessment of revision involves not only a "clean" writing of the revised work (as if it's a new piece that stands on its own), but also an attentive comparison of the revised version and the original version: instructors in LIT 110 look for evidence of re-visioning, of changes to the argument and/or structure that transcend mere localized "fixes" based on marginal comments. This assessment is aided by the fact that students are asked to reflect on their revision processes, and often to write a single page cover letter in which they describe how they went about the revision (what they addressed, what challenges they faced, what they feel they improved, where they still feel blocked/unsatisfied, etc.).

Further, apart from assessment on an individual class basis, the English Department periodically conducts formal assessments of its classes on a rotating basis (e.g., during one cycle the focus will be on our lower-division curriculum like LIT 110 and our 200-level classes, followed by a cycle on our 300-level electives, followed by a cycle involving our 400-level capstone class). While these assessment endeavors are more geared towards measuring the success of the class relative to its expected role in our curricular sequence, there is always significant overlap between the course outcomes that are assessed and the outcomes for Intermediate Writing courses. Please see the attached LIT110DeptAssessment document. These assessment projects typically involve 18-24 papers being read blindly by a team of three Literature faculty members, such that each paper is read at least twice (and sometimes three times). After scoring all of the papers, the assessment team meets to discuss the

results, noting those papers & categories for which there was close agreement, as well as the opposite. We use these meetings to make curricular and pedagogical adjustments accordingly. Given LIT 110's strong orientation towards student writing (with anywhere from 65-85% of the course grade derived from writing), this inevitably means that better student writing is at the heart of the assessment enterprise.

Achievement Targets

We would always hope that a majority of students (55-65%) in our LIT 110 sections would be achieving a final course grade of B- or higher, which would indicate to us that the writing curriculum and experience has been profitable and that we are making appreciable strides towards meeting the various outcomes in a satisfactory way.

It's a challenging course in a pedagogical sense in that the demographic of a particular section is always very diverse, with a mixture of students from all years (FR, SO, JR, SR), and a blend of English majors (perhaps on average 15-25%) and high percentage of non-majors. Especially given that this course is now taught almost exclusively by tenure-track/permanent faculty and that it is therefore easier to produce standardization (of curriculum, types of assignments, quality, etc.) across sections, we are confident of its rigor and value in terms of writing instruction (belying its 100-level designation, which we know has been a vexing issue in terms of how the University and Writing Committee have ideally envisioned the trajectory).

Assessment Findings

It may be that this set of questions and text box will be more easily and more substantively filled after we do our next round of departmental assessment for this course. We do continue to have active and ongoing conversations as a faculty about this course in particular, especially as it increasingly carries the pedagogical challenges associated with being split (sometimes nearly quite evenly) between English majors and non-majors. Regarding individual assignments, the reading autobiography essay may actually be the one that has been most challenging for students, even though it may initially present itself as more welcoming to them because of its focus on a first-person, testimonial posture; the challenge involves bringing a sense of artfulness and even implied argument to a writing task that asks students not only to consider the role of reading in their own lives, but also to jump off from that to think of the wider possibilities and virtues of the reading life. The dexterity required to make this jump makes this an ideal assignment to feature for revision discussions and opportunities. Argumentative writing -- which is featured in later papers, and especially in the final analytical paper -- presents tremendous challenges as well, of course, and is always going to be an ongoing process for students, but our assessment discussions and informal testimonies as a faculty typically leave us confident that students are exiting LIT 110 with more skill in being able to identify and pose pertinent questions-at-issue for diverse kinds of texts, and with the ability to craft more specific and arguable central claims around which to build a line of reasoning.

Credits

Credit Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Contact Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Billing Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Lecture Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Lab Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Other Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Academic Progress Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Financial Aid Hours	
Min	Max
-	-
Value	Operator
-	-

Course Count

-

Repeatable

No

Number Of Repeats

-

Number Of Credits

-

Topics

-

Requisites

No Requisites

Components

-