Introduction to Literary Research, Fall 2014

LITT 2123: 001

TR 2:30-4:20, C-103

Dr. Deborah Gussman

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**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to the evaluation and use of scholarly literary resources,

electronic as well as traditional library materials. Students conduct directed research in order to understand selected primary works within critical and cultural contexts.

Prerequisite: Open only to LITT majors and minors. One Literary interpretation course (may be taken as a co-requisite).

This course has two essential goals. Students should:

• **Learn to apply course material** (e.g., produce writing that demonstrates your ability to

integrate effectively literary research methods, tools and texts)

• **Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas** (e.g., critically evaluate a range of

literary research methods, tools and texts)

Other important goals for this course include:

• **Developing skill in expressing yourself in writing** (e.g., sharpening your critical writing and analysis skills, particularly in regard to your writing about literature and

incorporating scholarly sources)

• **Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals**

**in the field** (e.g., this course provides foundational knowledge for careers related to

literary studies)

**Required Texts:**

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin.* Ed. Jean Fagan Yellin. Oxford UP (2008).

ISBN 978-0-19-953803-4

NOTE: You must have this edition of the book!

*Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin: A Casebook.* Ed. Elizabeth Ammons. Oxford UP (2007). ISBN 978-0-19-516696-5-90000

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic*

*Writing*. 2nd ed. W.W. Norton (2009). ISBN: 978-0393933611

An up-to-date writer’s handbook that includes the most recent MLA style guidelines.

Recommended: Diana Hacker. *A Writer's Reference*. 7th ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s. (2010) ISBN: 9780312601430

**Accommodation for Students with Special Needs:** Stockton College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations should contact the Learning Access Program located in J-204, or by calling 652-4988. Additionalinformation on the program may be obtained from Stockton web site: http://www2.stockton.edu/wellness/lap.html.

**Academic Dishonesty**: Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and risk failing the course. Other sanctions may also apply and all cases will be reported to Academic Affairs. You are responsible for knowing this college policy: <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=209&pageID=17>

Contact your instructor if you have questions.

**Expectations and Policies:**

“Literary Research” is one of the most demanding courses in the Literature program. Unlike a

typical literature class where the bulk of the work consists of reading books outside of class and

discussing them in class, much of the work of this course will require substantial time spent in the library and on-line conducting research. You cannot complete this class successfully without

spending many hours in Stockton’s library. You will also be asked to attend at least one event

outside of class, and to make connections between literature, literary research, and the “real”

world. You will need to plan your schedule accordingly to allow time to complete this work in the campus library, especially during the first half of the semester.

You are expected to:

1) **Attend class**: Regular attendance is necessary and it counts. More than 4 absences and your

grade will drop one mark; more than 5 and it will drop two marks; more than 7 and you will not

pass. Lateness disrupts the learning experience of other students (and distracts me), so make

every effort to arrive on time. Two instances of lateness (or leaving before the end of class) will

count as one absence. Any exception to this policy requires documentation for all absences and

approval for special accommodations with the Wellness Center. I will not give incompletes at

the end of the semester unless arrangements are made well in advance and you have appropriate

reasons and qualify according to College policy;

2) **Prepare for class**: this means bring the appropriate text(s) and DO THE READING WITH GUSTO; this is a discussion-based class and if you haven't done the reading, thought a little about it, and have ready access to it, you will not be able to contribute and the class (as well as your grade) suffers accordingly.

3) **Participate** in large and small group discussions and assignments: this course is what you

make of it and will work only if everyone actively contributes;

4) **Complete all assignments**: passing the course requires timely completion of ALL

assignments, long and short, in-class and out-of-class. You risk failing the course if you do not

complete all assignments. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have handed in all

assignments, not mine. No late/incomplete assignments will be accepted after the last day of

class;

5) **Check Blackboard** regularly. Most assignments, changes to the schedule, class cancellations and important announcements will be posted on Blackboard;

6) **Unplug** and Single Task: silence cell phones before entering class, cease text messaging, and

do not surf the web or check email during class. An inability to unplug will negatively impact

your final grade. This and other disruptive behavior (e.g., sleeping in class, inappropriate

language directed at students/instructor, perpetual lateness, leaving class frequently, etc.)

constitutes grounds for grade reduction and/or dismissal from class.

**Assignments:**

• Reference Resources (10%)

• Recognizing Scholarship Assessment (15%)

• Research Questions (15%)

• *They Say, I Say* Literature Review (10%)

• Powerpoint or Prezi Presentation (10%)

• *They Say, I Say* thesis proposal and draft, 5-source preliminary bibliography (10%)

• Final Paper: annotated bibliography & essay (20%)

• Attendance, class participation, & Stockton arts event review (10 %)

Grading Scale:

100-94: A 82.9-80: B- 69.9-67: D+

93.9-90: A- 79.9-77: C+ 66.9-63: D

89.9-87: B+ 76.9-73: C 62.9-60: D-

86.9-83: B 72.9-70: C- 59.9 & below: F

**Description of Major Assignments:**

**Class Participation**: Class participation—both verbal contributions and silent active listening to your peers and instructor—is a required element of the course. You may also post messages to our Blackboard discussion board and/or visit instructor office hours as part of your class participation. Students who miss a class are encouraged to post a response to the missed day’s reading prior to the next class period. **Coming to class with questions and passages to discuss raises your class participation**.

**Stockton Arts Event Review**: As part of your class participation, you will attend a Visiting Writers Series reading or a Stockton Performing Arts Center play and post a brief review, following the specific instructions posted on Blackboard. This assignment must be posted to Blackboard no later than 2 weeks after the event or by the last day of class, whichever comes first. Be sure to sign in for Ultra Credit if you attend a Visiting Writers reading or submit your ticket stub. Approved events will be posted in syllabus. Arrange an alternative assignment no later than November 1 if your work/family schedule does not allow you to attend one of the pre-approved events. (Various dates)

**Reference Resources**: The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize you with the Stockton

Library and the wide variety of reference materials available to you. Successful completion of

this assignment will also help to prepare you for the Individual Research Questions you will

be given later in the semester. You will download this document in Blackboard, and then locate those sources in the library and online and record information about them for your own

future use. Fill in the information for the wide variety of reference resources and then print

the document and submit it to your instructor. (Due 9/25)

**Recognizing Scholarship**: You will read the opening pages (or complete texts) of a number

secondary sources on a selected primary text. Using intrinsic clues (such as information about

the author, publisher or journal as well as the quality of writing and research itself) discuss

the merits of the texts as scholarship. Discuss in what ways these sources may or may not be

considered scholarly. The essay you write should have a title, an introductory paragraph and

conclusion, 1-2 paragraphs of discussion per source, and a list of works cited.(Due 10/9)

**Research Questions (aka “The Treasure Hunt”):** You will receive and complete up to 7

distinct research questions. Answering the questions requires extensive time in Stockton's

library, including but not limited to on-line databases. Most of the questions cannot be

adequately researched using the web. If you do find answers using the web, you are

required to verify the answer using the resources of the Stockton library. Failure to

verify web answers with print/database sources will result in points being deducted. You will

submit answers and a thoughtful description of your research process in a well-written format.

Students frequently ask whether this research can be completed at local town libraries. The short answer is no. Other college libraries will provide many of these answers, but most local libraries do not have the reference sources or academic focus needed to complete this level and type of

research. (Due 10/21)

***They Say, I Say* Literature Review**: This project focuses on the “they say” part of the

They Say, I Say equation. You will read five scholarly essays that together form a “conversation” on an issue (or issues) raised in Stowe’s novel and write a 1200-word paper (4-5 pages) that summarizes the important points and positions in that conversation. Citations in the paper and bibliography should follow 2009 MLA guidelines. I will be providing assistance in

identifying appropriate essays, but the *Casebook* on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* should be your starting point. (Due 11/6)

**PowerPoint presentation***:*

The edition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* we are using locates the novel and Stowe in

relation to the critical conversations the novel engaged and engendered about slavery and representation. Another lens for examining this book is the influence of other writers and literary movements, particularly first hand accounts of slavery, abolitionist literature and pro-slavery literature. To that end, you will complete research on an author of one of these types of texts (to be assigned) and present your knowledge to the class. Individual presentations will take 8-

10 minutes; specific instructions for the presentation can be found on Blackboard.

(12/2, 12/4, & 12/9 – individual dates will be assigned)

***They Say, I Say* Thesis Proposal/Draft** **(2-3 pages) with Preliminary Annotated Bibliography**: This project focuses on both sides of the *They Say, I Say* equation. It asks

you to introduce what you have to say by situating it in what “they say.” You’ll write the

opening pages for your final critical research essay. This opening should establish your topic

(chosen from a list of possibilities I have provided) and your thesis in the context of the

critical conversation on the issue it addresses. Additionally, you will turn in a preliminary

annotated bibliography of at least 5 appropriate scholarly sources. Citations in the paper and

bibliography should follow 2009 MLA guidelines. We will “workshop” this draft in class.

(Due 11/20)

**Final paper: research, annotated bibliography & essay:** You will write a research

essay of 6-8 pages on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that engages with one of the critical conversations presented in the *Casebook* (your previous assignments should help you to come up with ideas for this project). In addition, you will include an annotated bibliography with at least 10 appropriate scholarly sources. Articles from websites will not be accepted as scholarly sources. The essay itself must incorporate the work of at least five of these scholarly sources. This is the culmination of the course; it should be a work of substance. (Due 12/9)I need to clarify that the paper should include the student’s own close reading or analysis of key passages, scenes, characters in the novel and not just review the criticism. Also that there should be a works cited and an annotated bibliography?

**Email Policy:** Please keep the following in mind when communicating with me outside of class: I check my email frequently during the day, but rarely after 10 pm. Please plan your email questions accordingly and, while I often respond immediately, allow a twenty-four hour time frame for my reply. If you were absent, contact a classmate with questions about missed material and then visit office hours if you still have questions. Visit instructor office hours to discuss grades. This includes final grades. Grades should be discussed in person during office hours or other arranged meetings.

**Office Hours Policy:** Think of my office as an extension of the classroom and use my office

hours to discuss any aspect of the reading and material covered during class: come chat with me

about your class projects, writing, questions about the reading, quizzes, lecture or discussion,

ideas you wish to develop, reading and interpretive strategies you’d like to try, and so on.

**Late Assignment Policy:** I understand that life is full of surprises and sometimes those surprises

influence your coursework and your ability to complete assignments. As a community of learners, we also recognize that we have a responsibility to the group, to our instructor, and to ourselves. We understand that every action has a consequence—even when circumstance may limit our power to act. To balance individual and community needs, we have the following guidelines for late assignments.

• Papers are due at the beginning of class, or at the time specified on Blackboard if I require electronic submissions.

• Late papers will be docked 5 percentage points per day late. So, if a B (85%) paper due

on Monday were passed in on Tuesday, the recorded grade would be B- (80%). If it were

passed in on Wednesday, the paper would earn a 75%. And so on and so forth.

**Paper Extension Policy:** Any student who asks the instructor prior to the due date may receive a

2-day extension from the due date listed on the syllabus. After 2 days the late paper penalty will

go into effect. No exceptions. Of course, the extension policy will only help students who have

drafted a paper and follow the expected practice of backing up documents. Back up all your files

and you will be a much happier and successful individual. You may not be happy when your

computer explodes or your flash drive crashes, but at least you will not be despondent. I also

strongly encourage all students to keep a personal copy of every assignment and to keep all

returned assignments with my feedback until the end of the term. Reminder, no assignments will

be accepted after the last class meeting.

**Paper Revision Policy:** This course is based on the principle that revisions take place before the

instructor evaluates a paper for a grade. To this end, consider dropping in during office hours or

other arranged meetings to discuss your papers in advance of due dates. Drop in at any stage of

the writing process: from your initial brainstorming to nailing down those final brass tacks. I will

happily read and comment on thesis statements (usually between 1-3 sentences) via email. If you

wish me to look at longer drafts, drop by my office hours. Additionally, I encourage you to use

your peer resources during the draft and revision process, including Stockton’s Writing Center:

http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=70&pageID=2. All writing submitted as a

final draft should be error-free. You are expected to proofread for typographical, spelling,

mechanical, and grammatical errors. I will mark down for mechanical and grammatical errors.

Want to keep up-to-date with the Literature Program? “Like” our Facebook page:

http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-LITT-Program-at-RSCNJ/245341072249.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Note: This syllabus is a work-in-progress and subject to change. If you are late or miss class, you

are responsible for finding out what you missed and/or what changes were made to the syllabus or schedule. All changes will be posted to Blackboard.

**September**

TH 9/4 Class overview. **Reference Resources assignment** posted on Blackboard for

downloading and printing.

T 9/9 Scholarly vs. non-scholarly sources: Read handouts on evaluating sources and Wikipedia

(posted on Blackboard).

9/10: End of drop/add period

TH 9/11 Introduction to Stowe and *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Read “Introduction” in Ammons 3-14, and in Stowe vii-xxvii. Introduction to resources and research strategies at Stockton.

T 9/16 Begin reading and discussion of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Preface-Ch X (3-108). **Recognizing Scholarship Assessment** assigned.

TH 9/18 Continue reading and discussion of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin,* CH XI-XV (108-174)

T 9/23 Evaluating sources (review sample packet) and MLA format: Review guidelines on MLA format (Blackboard). Read *UTC*, Chs. XVI-XIX (174-245).

TH 9/25 **Reference Resources assignment due in class**. Review of citation mechanics and

plagiarism issues. Short film: Crediting Your Sources (call #: VH LB CYS). **Research Questions assigned**.

T 9/30 Strategies for approaching research questions. Evaluating research materials; how to

discover trends or focus in criticism, strategies for approaching questions. Read *UTC*, Chs. XX- XXVI (245-304).

**October**

TH 10/2 Evaluating research materials: how to identify standard/authoritative editions and biographies, strategies for approaching research questions. Read *UTC,* Chs. XXVII-XXXIV (304-377). Your answer to one of your research questions (your choice) with citation due on Blackboard by 5:00 pm.

T 10/7 Read *UTC*, Chs. XXXVI-XLV (377-456). Class will attend the 11th Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Human and Civil Rights Symposium @ 2:30 in the PAC.

\*\*\* Visiting Writers Series, with poet Terrance Hayes for the Ravenswood Reading in Alton Auditorium at 8PM. Info: http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/terrance-hayes \*\*\*

TH 10/9 Discussion of *UTC*. **Recognizing Scholarship Assessment due**.

T 10/14 Read *TSIS*, 1-73 next time stop at 51 – just focus on “They Say”. Read Ammons, 49-88. Discussion of using secondary sources in your own work. ***They Say, I Say* Literature Review assigned – moved from previous Th.**

TH 10/16 Read Ammons, 89-166.

T 10/21 **Research Questions due in class**. Read TSIS 101-132.

\*\*\* Visiting Writers Series double-header with the poet Ching-In Chen and our own Judy Copeland in L-0112 at 8PM. Info: <http://www.chinginchen.com/> and <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/extaffairs/content/docs/stocktimes/StocktonTimesAugust42011.pdf>

TH 10/23 Read Ammons 167-205.

T 10/28 Preceptorial Advising Day – no class

Th 10/30 Read Ammons 207-245.

**November**

T 11/4 Introduction to Zotero. Peer review of literature review (bring 2 copies of draft, 2 pages minimum).

[11/5 Preceptorial Advising Day]

TH 11/6 ***They Say, I Say* Literature Review due on Blackboard. Thesis Proposal/Draft with Annotated Bibliography assigned**. Do’s and Don’ts of writing an annotated bibliography and review of sample bibliographies. Brainstorm/discussion of topics for final essays (In-class writing.)

T 11/11 PowerPoint assignment introduced. Review of topics and theses.

\*\*\* Arts and Humanities Presents: *Crumble (Lay Me Down Justin Timberlake)*

by Sheila Callaghan. Wednesday, November 12 – Saturday, November 15 • 7:30 pm  
Sunday, November 16 • 2:00 pm \*\*\*

TH 11/13 First impressions: Sample theses and paper openings.

\*\*\* Monday 11/17 Visiting Writers Series with poet Sadek R. Mohammed at 8 PM in the Campus Center Boardroom. Info: <https://blogs.stockton.edu/ingeneral/2014/06/04/international-writer-in-residence-2014/> \*\*\*

T 11/18 Lasting impressions: sample papers

TH 11/20 **They Say, I Say Thesis Proposal/Draft and Preliminary Annotated Bibliography due**. Draft workshop: bring 2 copies of paper to class.

T 11/25 Draft Workshop. Bring 2 copies of paper to class.

TH 11/27 Thanksgiving Holiday: no class

**December**

T 12/2 **Powerpoint presentations**

TH 12/4 **Powerpoint presentations**

T 12/9 **Powerpoint Presentations**.

**Final papers with complete annotated bibliographies due**. Class post-mortem.

TH 12/11 Senior Grades due

12/14 Commencement

12/24 Grades due for non-graduating students