

LITT 2001 Spring 2010

Engagement Seminar

Fridays 10-11am, B105

Instructor: Dr. Kristin Jacobson (a.k.a. Dr. J)

Office phone: (609) 626-5581

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15-2:15pm; Fridays 11:15-12:15 & by appointment

Office Location: J-236

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Course Description: This 1-credit seminar for Literature majors or minors facilitates hands-on learning opportunities related to the study and teaching of literature. Students will have the opportunity to earn college credit for civic engagement, research, or instruction projects related to their major. The course involves mandatory one-hour weekly class meetings, a minimum of 20 hours of project related work, and a reflective journal of approximately 15-20 typed pages. All students will be required to complete a minimum of 20 hours in the field working on one of the following projects:

Option A: Civic Project

Students meet weekly as a class (1 hour) and work in teams or individually in and outside of class to complete a campus or community civic project related to the field of Literature. The instructor will select the project based on current community needs. The group, for example, may do community literacy work, reading tutoring in local school district, or a campus project promoting the arts at Stockton and aimed to increase student attendance.

Option B: Research Assistant (RA)

Students meet weekly as a class (1 hour) and work individually or in small teams as research assistants for Literature program faculty. Research positions are contingent on faculty demand and require approval from both the course instructor and the faculty member seeking the RA.

Option C: Teaching Assistant in Lower Level Literature Course (TA)

Students meet weekly as a class (1 hour) and work individually or in small teams as teaching assistants in a lower level (1000 or 2000) Literature course. Students will tutor and mentor students and assist with the professor's instructional duties. Teaching Assistant positions are contingent on faculty demand and require approval from both the course instructor and the faculty member seeking the TA.

In particular, this course has two essential goals. Students will:

- **Develop skill in expressing yourself in writing** (e.g., sharpen critical writing, reflection and analysis skills)
- **Develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field** (e.g., this course provides foundational knowledge and experience for careers related to literary studies)

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 the West Quad Building, Suite 110 or by call 652-4988. Additional information on the program may be obtained from <http://www2.stockton.edu/wellness/lap.html>.

Academic Honesty: 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=14&pageID=62>. Contact your instructor if you have questions.

Required Texts:

- **Blackboard:** If you have questions about using Blackboard, consult a computer lab assistant or your instructor. Log in via goStockton or <https://skimmer.stockton.edu/>.
- **Facebook:** Become a fan of "The LITT Engagement Seminar at RSCNJ." If you are not already a member of Facebook, you will need to create an account to become a fan: www.facebook.com.

Email Policy: Please keep the following in mind when communicating with me outside of class:

- (1) Use Blackboard email for all course-related correspondence.
- (2) I usually check my email each day in the morning. Please plan your email questions accordingly and, while I often respond immediately, allow a twenty-four hour time frame for my reply.
- (3) Check your Blackboard email before asking me if I have responded to your note.
- (4) Always try to visit my office hours with specific questions about course material. If you were absent, contact a classmate with questions about missed material and then visit office hours if you still have questions.
- (5) Visit instructor office hours to discuss grades. This includes final grades. Grades should be discussed in person during office hours or other arranged meetings. I will not discuss grades via email.

Office Hours: 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. Students who visit office hours tend to perform better.

Course Requirements:

You will be expected to:

- (1) **Attend class:** you are allotted 2 absences for fatigue, illness, cocktail flu, personal reasons, malfunctioning alarm clocks, doctor's appointments, etc. **Students entering class after the instructor records attendance or who leave before class ends will be considered absent.** For each absence after your first two, your final grade **will be reduced 50 points per additional absence**, down to and including "F." (Note I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. If you miss two days and then get the flu and miss another day, you will lose 50 points for the third absence.) Regular, spirited class attendance is a crucial component to passing this course. I will not give incompletes at the end of the semester unless arrangements are made well in advance and you have appropriate reasons;
 - (2) **Attend class meetings prepared:** this means DO THE WRITING WITH GUSTO; this is a discussion-based class and if you haven't completed the writing assignment, you won't 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. No late/incomplete assignments will be accepted after the last day of class;
 - (5) **Unplug:** silence cell phones, cease text messaging, and do not surf the web or check email during class. An inability to unplug will negatively impact your final grade: **You will lose five points every time I tell you to cease text messaging and/or cease other inappropriate uses of technology during class.**
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Assignment Descriptions:

- **Class Participation and Presentations** (300 points): Class participation—both *verbal* contributions and silent *active listening* to your peers and instructor—is a required element of the course. Students should also be prepared to lead discussion periodically and regularly share their reflective writing with the class.
 - **Reflection Journal** (15-20 typed pages, 500 points) All students will complete a series of weekly reflective journal entries of 1-2 typed pages. Some entries will also ask students to prepare documents related to their future careers. At least five of the entries will be published on our course Facebook page: “The LITT Engagement Seminar at RSCNJ.” See Blackboard for the grading rubric.
 - **Evaluation by Project Supervisor** (200 points): Your project supervisor will complete a rubric that evaluates your work. See Blackboard for a sample rubric.
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Grading Scale

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|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 100-95: A | 89.9-87: B+ | 79.9-77: C+ | 69.9-67: D+ |
| 94.9-90: A- | 86.9-83: B | 76.9-73: C | 66.9-63: D |
| | 82.9-80: B- | 72.9-70: C- | 62.9-60: D- |
| | | | 59.9 & below: F |

Grades

- Class Participation and Presentations **300**
- Reflection Journal **500**
- Evaluation by Project Supervisor **200**

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|---------------|-------------|
| Total— | 1000 |
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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.

Written Assignments: *Reflection papers are due at the beginning of class.* Late papers will be docked 5 percentage points per day late. So, if a B (85%) paper due on Friday were passed in on Saturday, the recorded grade would be B- (80%). If it were passed in on Sunday, the paper would earn a 75%. And so on and so forth.

Paper Extensions: 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. *Due to the College's grade submission deadline, no student may receive an extension for the final journal entry.*

Of course, the extension policy will best help students who have drafted the assignment 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* an assignment is evaluated by the instructor 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. If you wish the instructor to read entire drafts, drop by her office hours. Additionally, Dr. J encourages 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>.

Syllabus—LITT 2001—Spring 2010¹

Week 1: Introductions

Jan 22: **Introductions:** to course, Blackboard, Facebook page, assignments, students and instructor.

Week 2: Engagement Reflections: Academic

Jan 29: Journal Topic 1: **Reflect on your academic engagement.** Consider, for example, how often you meet or are encouraged to meet one-on-one with your professors, special research or creative projects you've completed, and/or speakers or lectures you've attended. What encourages you to engage academically? What discourages or prevents you from engaging academically?

Week 3: Engagement Reflections: Social and Co-Curricular

Feb 5: Journal Topic 2: **Reflect on your social and co-curricular engagement at Stockton.** Consider, for example, how often you attend sporting or art events and your involvement in Stockton clubs and/or fraternities/sororities. What encourages you to engage in organized social and/or co-curricular activities? What discourages or prevents you from engaging in organized social and/or co-curricular activities?

Week 4: Project Goals

Feb 12: Journal Topic 3: **Outline your project's goals and schedule.** What work will you complete? How will you schedule your time to make sure the work is completed on time? How will you update your faculty supervisors on the project's progress?

Week 5: Engagement Reflections: Civic

Feb 19: Journal Topic 4: **Reflect on your civic engagement at Stockton.** For our purposes, civic engagement involves partnerships or work with communities and groups beyond Stockton. Consider, for example, describing what type(s) of civic engagement you participated in as a member of the Stockton community (e.g., Stockton's Day of Service, service learning coursework, volunteering as a part of a club or other Stockton organization, etc.) and how often. What encourages you to engage in civic work? What discourages or prevents you from engaging in civic activities with communities beyond Stockton? Would you be more or less likely to enroll in Stockton if it required a certain number of hours of civic engagement for graduation?

Week 6: Resume/Cover Letter or Resume/Graduate School Essay

Feb 26: Journal Topic 5: **Draft a copy of your resume and cover letter or resume and graduate school essay.** Draft a copy of these two documents for a job you wish to apply for after graduation or for a specific school and graduate program you wish to apply to after graduation. Be sure to incorporate details about your engagement project's relevancy to your career/educational goals.

Week 7: Midterm Progress Report

Mar 5: Journal Topic 6: **Reflect on your project's progress.** What have you accomplished thus far? What do you still need to accomplish? Do you need to reassess your goals? Why? Why not? What is working and what might require change and/or intervention?

¹ Class Schedule subject to changes with notice. Journal entries are listed on the day they are due.

Week 8: Midterm Reflection

Mar 12: Journal Topic 7: **Reflect on your attitude toward engagement.** Do you think academic, civic, and/or co-curricular engagement is more or less important than when you began this course? Why? Why not? How is engagement important or not so significant to your educational and career goals?

Spring Break

Spring Break

Spring Break

Week 9: Volunteer Experiences

Mar 26: Journal Topic 8: **Reflect on your volunteer experiences not connected to Stockton.** Consider, for example: Have you ever volunteered? When? Why? Do you currently volunteer? Why? Why not? Do you plan to volunteer in the future? When? In what capacity? Why not?

Week 10: Stress Management

Apr 2: Journal Topic 9: **Reflect on your stress management skills.** Consider, for example: What are the causes of stress in your life? What tools/strategies do you use to manage stress? How effective are these methods? If you do not know any or do not currently use what might broadly be considered healthy stress management, research methods and share what you find.

Week 11: Preparing for the Future

Apr 9: Journal Topic 10: **Reflect on your education's predicted or anticipated outcomes.** What do you anticipate as being the primary challenges you will face in the next five, ten, twenty or fifty years? How do you see your education at Stockton preparing you (or perhaps not preparing you) to face these challenges? How will or could the arts generally or literature specifically help us face these challenges?

Week 12: Open Topic

Apr 16: Journal Topic 11: **Revisit a previous topic or create your own.** Not sure what to write about? Here are two ideas:

- 1) **Consider the environmental impact of your project.** What is the environmental impact of your project? (You might try using a carbon footprint tool on the Internet, for example, to estimate impact.) Are there ways to make your project more environmentally friendly? How so? Why not?
- 2) **Consider your project's and/or your education's contribution to society.** Will or does your project have an impact on others? Who? How so? Why not? In what ways will your education and/or career impact others' lives? How do you see yourself contributing to society?

Week 13: Project Outcomes and Assessment

Apr 23: Journal Topic 12: **Reflect on what you did and learned.** Briefly describe what you produced or accomplished. Reflect on what you learned from your project? What were your outcomes and what is your final assessment of the project's success?

Week 14: Final Reflection

Apr 30: Journal Topic 13: **Reflect on how you would or would not change this course.** What aspects were most helpful? Why? What aspects require change? Why? How?