

LITT 1101 Spring 2009

Literary Methodologies—A Literary Toolbox

T/TH 6pm-7:50pm, B11

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

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:45-2:15pm & by appointment

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Course Description: This course introduces you to the study of literature. Its goal is to provide you with a toolbox of skills and approaches to literature—a set of tools applicable not only to this course but to the critical analysis of the texts you encounter in other classes at Stockton and beyond. This course builds the contents of your literary toolbox, increasing your knowledge of the tools available for interpreting literature, and it also helps you understand how and when to use these tools. A key skill you will practice in this course is how to produce close readings of texts. Your close reading skills will be enhanced through an introduction to contemporary literary theory and methods—such as psychoanalytic, Marxist, and feminist criticism. We will also enhance your electronic literacy through the production and use of a variety of electronic texts and tools. Students should come ready to read and re-read, write and re-write, think and re-think intensively.

In particular, this course has three essential goals. Students should:

- **Learn fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories** (e.g. the basics of close reading and critical literary analysis methods and theories)
- **Learn to apply course material** (e.g., produce writing that demonstrates your ability to apply close reading skills and basic critical reading methods)
- **Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas** (e.g., critically evaluate a range of literary texts, genres, and appropriate methods for reading primary texts)

Other important goals for this course include:

- **Gaining factual knowledge** (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) (e.g., building your vocabulary of literary terms, genres, and methods)
- **Developing skill in expressing yourself in writing** (e.g., sharpening your critical writing and analysis skills, particularly in regard to your writing about literature)
- **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)
- **Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of literature** (e.g., the aim of this course is to learn to appreciate a range of poetry, fiction, and drama)

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:

- **Norton Introduction to Literature**, (Booth, Hunter, Mays, eds.) Shorter Edition
- **Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice**, (Bressler) 4th Edition
- **MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th Edition**
- **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/>.

Recommended Texts (suggested readings listed below):

- **Poetic Meter and Poetic Form** (Fussell)
- **How to Read Literature Like a Professor** (Foster)
- **Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms** (Murfin)

Additional Resources on the Web (See also "Course Links" in Blackboard):

- **Literary Methodologies Spring 2009 Weblog**: <http://titania.stockton.edu/jacobson/>
 - **Stockton Libraries**: <http://library.stockton.edu/>
 - **Norton Anthology Webpage**: www.norton.com/literature
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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) 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.
- (4) 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 4 absences for fatigue, illness, cocktail flu, personal reasons, malfunctioning alarm clocks, doctor's appointments, etc. (Note I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. If you miss four days and then get the flu and miss another day, you will lose 50 points for the fifth absence.) **Students entering class after the instructor records attendance or who leave before class ends will be considered absent.** For each absence after your first four, your final grade **will be reduced 50 points per additional absence**, down to and including "F." 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 READING WITH GUSTO; this is a discussion-based class and if you haven't done the reading and thought a little about it, 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.**

Assignment Descriptions:

- **Class Participation** (100 points): Class participation—both *verbal* contributions and silent *active listening* to your peers and instructor—is a required element of the course. **To receive a “C” or better participation grade you are also required to attend at least one of the Visiting Writers readings or a Stockton Performing Arts Center play.** You will write a short (about 2-3 full paragraphs or 1-1.5 typed pages) reaction paper to the reading or play and post this reaction paper to your weblog within one week of the reading or play. See Syllabus for event dates and times. Arrange an alternative assignment no later than April 22 with Dr. J if your work/family schedule does not allow you to attend one of these events.
- **Weblog** (100 points): To develop and demonstrate technological literacy you will set up and maintain a personal weblog. Some in-class time in the computer lab will be provided for instruction and development; however, expect to conduct much of the work for this assignment outside of class. Your weblog may include a variety of elements and serve a variety of purposes. Required elements for the weblog include:
 - (1) *Introduction to the site*: what’s in the site, who are you, etc. Your site should have a clear theme (e.g. professional portfolio; creative writing portfolio; favorite writers/novels site); attitude (e.g. I’m an awesome LITT major; I’m an aspiring educator or writer or librarian); **or** it may be content filtered less aggressively through theme or personality, but distinct and focused nonetheless.
 - (2) *Collection of helpful links*: find at least 5 links to sites that you would recommend to the Stockton community. Briefly explain each link. Why should we visit it? What will we find there? If not obvious, explain how your list connects to your blog’s distinct theme/purpose.
 - (3) *Visiting Writers Series or PAC Play Reaction Paper*: You will write a brief reaction paper (about 3-5 full paragraphs or 1-2 typed pages) to one of the scheduled readings or plays and post this reaction paper to your weblog within one week of the reading/play. Papers should include the following:
 - **Title & Detailed description of the event (about 1-2 paragraphs)**: Describe what was it, where did it occur, and when you attended. Consider describing what happened at the event, what was said or done, describe what the environment was like, and what the other people who attended were like and how they reacted. Summarize the entire event in vivid, carefully chosen language.
 - **Analysis of the event (about 2 paragraphs)**: Now that you’ve described the event, explain how the event relates to some aspect we’ve studied in this course. For example, does it remind you of a reading we did? How so? Did you notice any examples of the terms we’ve studied? Which ones? How can this knowledge enhance understanding of the event?
 - **Ticket stub**. Give your PAC ticket stub to your instructor. If you attend a Visiting Writers Series Event, be sure to sign in with your instructor at the event. See Syllabus for event dates and times. Arrange an alternative assignment no later than April 22 with Dr. J if your work/family schedule does not allow you to attend one of these events.
 - (4) *Self-Critique*: at the end of the semester you will pass in a brief self-critique of your weblog. Do not post the self-critique to your blog. This short assignment should be typed and answer the questions in the self-critique worksheet (available in Blackboard). It will analyze the experience of creating the weblog, your blog’s merits, and outline any future plans for the site. You will also compare your blog with those created by your peers in this class.
- **OED Paper**: (2-3 typed pages; 100 points) This paper utilizes the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* in order to examine the role of words—and their historically specific meanings—in a literary text. You will look up every word in the assigned text and then write a short paper about the role of these words in interpreting and understanding the piece of literature.
- **Poetry and Fiction Papers** (4 typed pages, 200 points each) These papers conduct close readings of two assigned texts. One paper will conduct a close reading of a poem and another a piece of fiction. See assignment description for more information.
- **Analysis Paper** (6-8 typed pages, 300 points): This paper analyzes an assigned text, utilizing the various skills practiced this semester. It should clearly use one of the theoretical approaches we studied this semester. This paper serves as the capstone assignment of the course and provides the basis for almost every other paper you will write in the Literature program. See assignment description for more information.

Grading Scale

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 **100**
- Weblog **100**
- OED Paper **100**
- Poetry Paper **200**
- Fiction Paper **200**
- Analysis Paper **300**

Total— **1000**

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.

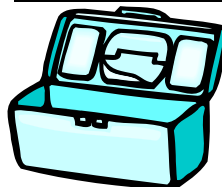
Written Assignments: *Papers are due at the beginning of class.* Late papers will be docked 5 percentage points per day late. So, if a B (85%) paper due on Tuesday were passed in on Wednesday, the recorded grade would be B- (80%). If it were passed in on Thursday, the paper would earn a 75%. And so on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

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* a paper 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. The instructor will happily read and comment on thesis statements (usually between 1-3 sentences) via Blackboard email. If you wish the instructor to read longer 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>.

LITMETH TOOLBOX

Syllabus—LITT 1101—Spring 2009¹

Week 1: Introductions, Taking Stock of Your Toolbox, and Questions

Jan 20: **Introductions:** to course, Blackboard, assignments, students and instructor.

Jan 22: **Entering the Conversation—New Criticism:** Bressler 1-19; 50-71.

Week 2: Poetry—Words, Phrases, Sentences—& Introduction to New Criticism

Jan 27: **Words:** Norton (Chapter 11 “Language: Precision and Ambiguity” 465-480). Introduction to the *OED* Paper.
Recommended Reading: Fussell 3-16.

Jan 29: **Phrases & Sentences:** Norton (Chapter 14 “External Form” 540-559). In-class instruction in *OED* and poetry MLA citation.
Recommended Reading: Fussell 17-29; 30-61.
MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103

Week 3: Poetry—Setting—& Introduction to Reader-Oriented Criticism

Feb 3: **Setting:** Norton (Chapter 14 “Situation and Setting” 446-464).
Recommended Reading: Foster (Chapters 10 & 11). Fussell 76-89.

Feb 5: **Blogs & Reader-Oriented Criticism:** Bressler 72-92. Norton (Chapter 18 “Writing about Literature: Paraphrase, Summary, Description” 1116-1119). Introduction to Close Reading Papers.
Recommended Reading: Fussell 90-105.
OED Paper Due. MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103.

Week 4: Poetry—Tone—& Introduction to Structuralism and Deconstruction

Feb 10: **Tone:** Norton (“Reading” & “Responding” to Poetry 398-410; Chapter 12 “Understanding the Text: Tone” 416-430).
Recommended Reading: Fussell 109-126.

Feb 11: PAC Play: *Chastity, Destruction, and Doors*, Feb 11-14, 7:30pm; Feb 15, 3pm. Tickets required.

Feb 12: **Blogs & Modernity & Postmodernism:** Bressler 96-135. In-class time to develop blog.
Recommended Reading: Fussell 127-153. **Due: Event Selection for Visiting Writer/PAC Reaction Paper**
MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103.

Feb 12: Visiting Writers Series: Peter Murphy and Barbara Daniels, 8 pm, F111 (Dr J's teaching schedule does not allow her to attend this reading.)

Week 5: Poetry—Point of View, Sound, Internal Structure

Feb 17: **Point of View:** Norton (Chapter 13 “Speaker: Whose Voice Do We Hear” 431-445).
Recommended Reading: Fussell 154-172.

Feb 19: **Poetry's Point of View, Sound, & Internal Structure:** Norton (Chapter 12 “The Sounds of Poetry” 501-13; Chapter 13 “Internal Structure” 520-31; “Writing about Poems” 410-415). **MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103.**

¹ Class Schedule subject to changes with notice. Readings and assignments are listed on the day they are due.

Week 6: Poetry—Symbols

Feb 24: **Symbols:** Norton (Chapter 15 “Metaphor and Simile” & “Symbol” 481-500).
Recommended Reading: Foster (Chapters 12-24)

Feb 26: **Blog Work Day and Poetry Rough Draft Workshop:** Students will meet in the lab to work on blogs and workshop poetry papers. Bring two copies of your rough draft. **MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103.**

Week 7: Fiction—Words, Phrases, Sentences—& Introduction to Psychoanalytic Criticism

Mar 2: Visiting Writers Series: Stephen Dunn, TRLC tentative, 8pm

Mar 3: **Psychoanalytic Criticism:** Norton (“Fiction” 12-21). Bressler 303-315; 142-166.

Mar 5: **Words, Phrases, Sentences:** Norton (O’Connor “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” 369-380). Bressler 91-95.
Poetry Paper Due. MEET IN COMPUTER LAB CC103.

Week 8: Fiction—Character & Setting—& Introduction to Feminism

Mar 10: **Character & Feminism:** Norton (Chapter 3 “Character” 119-123; Bambara “Gorilla, My Love” 380-385).
 Bressler 167-190.
Recommended Reading: Foster (Chapters 5-9).

Mar 12: **Setting:** Norton (Chapter 4 “Setting” 165-66; Tan “A Pair of Tickets” 166-181).
Recommended Reading: Foster (Chapters 10-11).

Spring Break Spring Break Spring Break

Week 9: Fiction—Plot & Point of View

Mar 24: **Plot:** Norton (Chapter 1 “Plot” 57-62; Baldwin “Sonny’s Blues” 81-105).
Recommended Reading: Foster (Chapters 1-3).

Mar 26: **Point of View:** Norton (Chapter 2 “Narration and Point of View” 106-108; Hemingway “Hills Like White Elephants” 114-118).

Week 10: Fiction—Rough Draft Workshop

Mar 31: **Preceptorial Advising—No Classes.**

Apr 2 **Fiction Rough Draft Workshop:** Workshop fiction papers with at least two peers. Bring two copies of your rough draft to class.

Week 11: Fiction & Drama—Symbols, Marxism, Words, Phrases, Sentences & Introduction to New Historicism

Apr 7: **Symbols & Marxism:** Norton (Chapter 5 “Symbol” 195-197; Hawthorne “Young Goodman Brown” 197-207).
 Bressler 191-211.

Apr 9: **Words, Phrases, Sentences & New Historicism:** Norton (“Drama: Reading, Responding, Writing” 650-652; Glaspell *Trifles* 653-666). Bressler 212-228. **Fiction Paper Due**

Week 12: Drama—Setting

Apr 14: **Character:** Norton (Chapter 16 “Elements of Drama--Character” 667-670; Glaspell *Triffles* 653-666).

Apr 15: PAC Play: *Measure for Measure*, Apr 15-18, 7:30pm; April 19, 3pm. Tickets required

Apr 16: **Setting:** Norton (Chapter 16 “Elements of Drama: Stages, Sets, and Setting” 672-74; Wilson *The Piano Lesson*, Act I 716-747).

Week 13: Drama—Plot Structure and Symbols—& Introduction to Cultural Studies

Apr 21: **Plot Structure:** Norton (Chapter 16 “Elements of Drama: Plot and Structure” 670-72; Wilson *The Piano Lesson*, Act II 747-778).

Apr 23: **Symbols and Cultural Studies:** Norton (Chapter 16 “Elements of Drama: Tone, Style, and Imagery and Theme” 674-675; Wilson *The Piano Lesson*). Bressler 233-65.

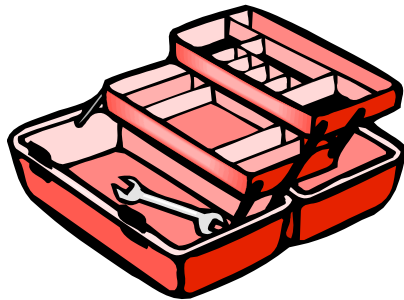
Week 14: Analysis Paper

Apr 28: **Analysis Paper & Looking Ahead to Literary Research:** Drafting an Analytical Thesis. Norton (Chapter 19 “The Elements of the Essay” 1120-1129; Chapter 20 “The Writing Process” 1130-1143; Chapter 21 “The Research Essay” 1144-1160; Chapter 22 “Quotation, Citation, and Documentation 1161-1174).

Apr 30: **Analysis Paper Rough Draft Workshop:** Bring two copies of your rough draft to class. Norton (Chapter 23, “Sample Research Paper” 1175-1186).

Week 15: Taking Stock of the Toolbox

May 5: **A Sense of an Ending: Analysis Paper, Weblog, & Weblog Self-Critique Due**



What's in your LitMeth toolbox?