

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN LITERATURE

LITT 2123 SPRING 2023

MWF 12:45PM-2:00PM, ROOM C002 (AN UGLY ROOM)

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I am on campus quite a bit; send me an email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This W2 course introduces students to the evaluation and use of scholarly electronic and print resources as well as archival materials preserved in Special Collections. Students will conduct directed research to understand *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* within critical and cultural contexts. Students will review the 100+ collections preserved in Stockton's Special Collections, within the Bjork Library, and choose one collection for further, detailed study and commentary. An overarching point of discussion throughout the semester will be "What can and should a 21st-century university library be?" Developing your writing ability, particularly in the use and incorporation of sources, is an important course goal. Prerequisite: *Open only to LITT majors and minors who have completed Literary Interpretation with a grade of "C" or better.*

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

- **Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas** (e.g., critically evaluate a range of literary research methods, tools and texts)
- **Learn to apply course material** (e.g., produce writing that demonstrates your ability to integrate effectively 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)
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REQUIRED TEXTS

- Still, James. *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still*. South Jersey Culture & History Center, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-9888731-6-2
- Literary Research Blog: <https://blogs.stockton.edu/littresearch/>
- We will **NOT** be using Blackboard

RECOMMENDED AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 9th Edition (2021) ISBN: 9781603293518
- Murfin, Ross and Supryia M. Ray. *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. 4th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018. ISBN: 9781319035396
- Stockton Library: <http://library.stockton.edu/>
 - Literature Subject Guide: <https://library.stockton.edu/literature>
 - Special Collections: <https://library.stockton.edu/aboutspecialcollections>

- Purdue Online Writing Lab (MLA Style):
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: Stockton University 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 (J-204 or call 652-4988). Additional program information is available on the website <http://www2.stockton.edu/wellness/lap.html>. Aim to submit your accommodations letter during the first week of classes. Note that accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Dishonesty of any kind is, well, dishonest and will not be tolerated in this course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, using AiChat, 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. Per university policy, all cases will be reported to Academic Affairs. You are responsible for knowing this university policy: <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=14&pageID=62>. Contact me if you have questions.

EMAIL: Please use my Stockton email (see above) for all course-related correspondence. While I often respond immediately, allow twenty-four hours for my reply. Email is best for questions that require a short response (no more than a paragraph).

OFFICE HOURS: I will be on campus quite a bit, including holding in-person office hours directly before our class meetings. If you would like to meet at another time, or to meet via Zoom, just check with me through email and we'll find a convenient time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Introduction to Literary Research is a demanding course. Unlike typical literature classes where the bulk of the work consists of reading literature outside of class and discussing the literature in class, much of the work of this course will require substantial time spent in the library and/or using the library's digital assets to conduct research. *You cannot complete this class successfully without spending time in both Stockton's physical and virtual library.* Plan your schedule accordingly to allow time to complete this work on and off campus, especially during the first half of the semester. You are expected to:

- (1) **COMPLETE COURSE READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:** passing the course requires timely and accurate completion of ALL assignments by the assigned deadlines. You risk failing the course if you do not complete all assignments. *It is not the instructor's duty to make sure you have completed all assignments; this is your responsibility.* I cannot give incompletes at the end of the semester unless arrangements are made in advance, and you have the appropriate reasons outlined by university policy.

Because this is a text-based, reading, research, and writing intensive class, you must have access to the assigned texts and complete the assigned reading before undertaking class assignments and discussion. If you have not 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) will suffer accordingly. This course is what you make of it and works best when everyone actively prepares. Here are a few suggestions for how to complete the reading to prepare for class activities and assignments:

- a. Skim the reading first: note its organization and how that organization helps you identify the author's main point(s);
- b. Take notes on the reading's content: identify possible themes or main ideas, conflicts, and important people/events/words;
- c. Mark up the text to note key or confusing passages and/or connections with other texts or class concepts;
- d. Look up words or references you don't know;
- e. Consider how the assigned reading addresses the day's topic (outlined in daily course schedule);
- f. Compose questions about the assigned reading and bring them to our discussion.

(2) **ENGAGE IN ACTIVE, RESPECTFUL LISTENING AND DISCUSSION:** please silence cell phones before entering class, cease text messaging, and do not surf the web or check email during class. Engage in constructive feedback and discourse when participating in asynchronous or face-to-face discussions: our aim is to educate each other in a respectful manner, which recognizes diverse views and interpretations of the course material.

(3) Emergency closings and course cancellations/modifications may occur for a variety of reasons, including inclement weather, virus outbreak, public hysteria, and other unforeseen events. If we have an emergency and cannot use our typical course communication methods, I will communicate via your Stockton email account. The email will contain instructions about continuing our learning during the emergency.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY: 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 papers and assignments.

Avoid the stress frequently caused by attempting to prepare and submit an assignment during the final minutes before the deadline. Complete the assignment and carefully review it well before it is due.

EXTENSION POLICY: For most assignments, any student who asks the instructor via email **prior to** the due date may receive a 1-week extension from the due date listed on the syllabus. After 1 week the late assignment penalty will go into effect. Extensions cannot be granted for presentations.

The extension policy best helps students who have drafted a paper or assignment and follow the expected practice of backing up documents. Back up all your files, if you don't already: you may not be thrilled when your computer dies or your flash drive crashes, but at least you will not have lost all your work. Consider using Dropbox (<https://db.tt/WG1vfhy>) or GoogleDrive (<https://www.google.com/drive/>) (both free services) to back up your work. Using a cloud-based service and autosave will also help assure that you do not lose your carefully written research because of a malfunctioning device.

REVISION POLICY: This course is based on the principle that revisions take place *before* a paper or 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 assignments in advance of due dates. Drop in at any stage of the writing process: from your initial brainstorming to nailing down those final polished sentences. I will happily read and comment on thesis statements (usually between 1 – 3 sentences) via email. If you would like me to read a longer draft, drop by my office hours or schedule an appointment. Additionally, I encourage you to use peer resources during the draft and revision process, including Stockton's Writing Center, located in J-105: <https://stockton.edu/tutoring-center/writing-center/index.html>.

NOTE ABOUT KEEPING ASSIGNMENTS: Students are encouraged to keep a copy of every assignment and to keep all returned assignments with instructor feedback until the end of the term.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION: Assignments are submitted in paper or digital format depending upon the assignment. See details on each assignment below. Digital work must be submitted via email as Word or PDF documents. Students have access to Office 365 for free: <https://stockton.edu/information-technology/office365.html>.

GRADING SCALE

100-93: A	89.9-87: B+	79.9-77: C+	69.9-67: D+
92.9-90: 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

ASSIGNMENTS

- What is a Library: Initial Thoughts (10%)
- Recognizing Scholarship (10%)
- Research Questions (10%)
- Literature Review: *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (10%)
- Annotated Bibliography (10%)
- Thesis proposal and draft, 5-source preliminary bibliography (10%)
- Special Collection Research Presentation (20%)
- Literary Research Paper (20%)

MY GRADES

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

WHAT IS A LIBRARY: INITIAL THOUGHTS: (1 – 2, single-spaced typed pages) Please write a brief position paper describing your current thoughts on the purpose and usefulness of a university library in the twenty-first century. *Due February 6*

RECOGNIZING SCHOLARSHIP: To be read and thoroughly discussed in class. Be prepared for a quiz on this material. *Due February 13*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: (typed double-spaced responses, no set length) The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize you with the Stockton Library and the wide variety of research materials available to you. You will receive and answer 6 distinct research questions. Answering the questions requires extensive research time in Stockton's library, including but not limited to online databases. You will need to use university library databases, ILL, and academic print resources. *If you find answers using non-academic methods (such as a Google search or wikipedia), you are required to verify the answer using Stockton library's resources.* Failure to verify web answers with scholarly print/database sources will result in points being deducted. Each question requires: 1) the question retyped at the head of your answer; 2) a well-written, documented answer; 3) a list of your sources in correct MLA citation format; and 4) a thoughtful description of your research process. NOTE: This research cannot be completed at local libraries. Other college libraries may provide the necessary research tools, but most local public libraries do not have the scholarly reference sources or academic focus needed to complete this level and type of research. *Due Mar 8 (see syllabus below)*

LITERATURE REVIEW: (2 – 3 typed double-spaced pages) You will identify and read four to five scholarly essays that together form a conversation on an issue (or issues) raised in the scholarship about James Still's *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* and write a 800-word paper (about 2 – 3 pages) that summarizes the important points and positions in that conversation. Citations in the paper and works cited should follow current MLA guidelines. This essay outlines the scholarly conversation you will engage in your literary research paper. *There are two general approaches to this assignment: 1) find scholarly resources that pertain to your expected topic; 2) create your topic based on the related resources you can find.* *Due March 29; submitted via email.*

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: (6 to 8 scholarly, at least; 2 unrestricted annotated sources) You will select and write an annotated bibliography of 6 to 8 scholarly and 2 unrestricted (scholarly or non-scholarly) sources related to James Still, his family, the African American experience in nineteenth-century South Jersey, or some other topic arising from your reading of *Early Recollections*. Your bibliography, with correct MLA formatting, should be submitted to me via email. Articles from websites, book reviews, as well as non-peer reviewed articles and books will not be considered as scholarly sources, but will be accepted as unrestricted sources. The sources and your annotations (about 2 – 4 sentences per source) will be included in a shared class Google drive. *Due April 10; submitted via email.*

THESIS PROPOSAL/DRAFT (2 – 3 typed pages) **WITH PRELIMINARY ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:** This assignment prepares you for the Literary Research Paper. It asks you to introduce what you have to say by situating your argument in what "critics say." You will draft the opening pages for your Literary Research Paper. This opening should establish your topic and your thesis in the context of the critical conversation on the issue it addresses (conversations presumably described in your *Literature Review* above). Additionally, you will submit a preliminary annotated bibliography of at least 6 to 8 sources (see *Annotated Bibliography* above). Citations in the paper and bibliography should follow current MLA guidelines. We will workshop this draft in class. *Due April 10; bring to class in printed form, please.*

SPECIAL COLLECTION RESEARCH PRESENTATION: You will complete focused review, analysis, and research on a collection available in Special Collections and then present your findings to the class. *The presentation must have a visual component (e.g. handout or PowerPoint with appropriate phone pics).* Plan and practice your individual presentation with an 8 – 10 minute limit. There is the possibility that some (or all) of you complete a review of materials on camera for future use in a podcast of one sort or another. More details as the presentations approach. *Due April 19 – 26; we will schedule presentations as we approach these dates.*

LITERARY RESEARCH PAPER: (6 – 7 double-spaced typed pages) You will write a researched close reading essay on a focused aspect related to James Still's memoir. Your previous assignments provide the foundation for this research paper. The essay focuses on your original close reading of the autobiography in the context of the scholarly conversation. The paper must incorporate the work of at least five scholarly sources. This is one culmination of the course; it should be a work of substance by contributing to the on-going scholarly conversation. Put your smart cap on. *Due April 26; submitted via email or in printed form.*

Syllabus—LITT 2123

WEEK 1: COURSE OVERVIEW

- Jan 18 **Overview:** Introduction to course. Special Collections. Introductions to one another. Introduction to assignments—lots of introductions, including **What is a Library: Initial Thoughts** assignment, Due February 6. Overview of required course technology: Course Blog, Stockton library page. How to get to JSTOR.
- Jan 20 **What is a Library?** READ Rachael Dreyer's "Refworld: Future Frontiers for Special Collections Libraries" (available through JSTOR). Initial discussion of Libraries/Learning Commons. **Who or Whom?**

WEEK 2: READING A PRIMARY TEXT

- Jan 23 **Reading a Primary Text:** Bring your copy of *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* to class. **Introduction to Digital Resources:** Review of library layout and of some Digital Resources available through Stockton's library. **What is a Library?** Additional thoughts.
- Jan 25 **Reading a Primary Text:** Read *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (vii – 51). Discussion of *Early Recollections*; research approaches? **Digital Resources:** searching for Dr. James on-line. **Active vs. Passive voice.** See https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/active_and_passive_voice/index.html
- Jan 27 **What is a Library:** READ Paul T. Jaeger et al "Libraries, Policy, and Politics in a Democracy: Four Historical Epochs" (available through JSTOR). Written thoughts due Feb 6 (1 to 2 pages). **Scholarly vs. Non-scholarly Sources:** Hand out Recognizing Scholarship materials (to be read and considered by February 13). First discussion of Research Questions (due Mar 8), and Annotated Bibliography (April 10). Read handouts/links on evaluating sources and Wikipedia.

WEEK 3: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES WITHIN A LIBRARY

- Jan 30 **Archives Workshop:** Guest facilitator, Heather Perez (half the class meetings in Special Collections, lower level of the library).
- Feb 1 **Archives Workshop:** Guest facilitator, Heather Perez (the other half of the class meetings in Special Collections, lower level of the library).

- Feb 3 **Research Day. We do not meet. What is a Library:** READ Zack Lischer-Katz and Matt Cook's "Virtual Reality and the Academic Library of the Future" (available through JSTOR). **What is a Library: Additional Thoughts** due February 6.

WEEK 4: SCHOLARLY VS. NON-SCHOLARLY SOURCES AND LITERARY INTERPRETATION REVIEW AND ARCHIVES

- Feb 6 **Reading a Primary Text:** Read *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (52 – 103). Review of Recognizing Scholarship assignment. **What is a Library: Initial Thoughts** due before class today (sent to Kinsella via email).
- Feb 8 **Reading a Primary Text:** Read *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (104 – 157).
- Feb 10 **Discussion of 100+ Special Collections: Finding your collection; finding its stories.** Capturing our ideas for the future of Stockton's library. Use of commas: See pp. 9 – 20: <https://blogs.stockton.edu/freestuff/files/2020/01/Brief-Guide-to-Punctuation-2020-1Jan20-FINAL.pdf>.

WEEK 5: EVALUATING SOURCES AND MLA FORMAT AND CITATION

- Feb 13 **Evaluating Sources:** **Recognizing Scholarship Assignment Due.** Review Recognizing Scholarship assignment in class. Introduce Research Questions assignment. Research Questions assigned (due Feb 22 and Mar 8). Provide first Research Question.
- Feb 15 **Reading a Primary Text:** Read *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (158 – 203). **ILL:** Introduction to Interlibrary Loan (ILL).
- Feb 17 **MLA Format, Citation, and Plagiarism:** Review MLA research paper format and citation mechanics. See MLA Formatting and Style Guide (Purdue OWL, link on blog): review "MLA General Format," "MLA Formatting and Style Guide," "MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics."

WEEK 6: RESEARCH, WRITING STRATEGIES, MORE MLA FORMAT AND CITATION

- Feb 20 **Research Questions Strategies:** Discussion: discovering and identifying trends in criticism and strategies for approaching research questions. See "Introduction to Modern Literary Theory": <http://www.kristisiegel.com/theory.htm>
- Feb 22 **Evaluating Research Materials:** How to identify standard/authoritative editions and biographies. **Due: Answer to 1 of your research questions with citation.**
- Feb 24 **MLA Format, Citation, and Plagiarism:** See MLA Formatting and Style Guide (Purdue OWL, link on blog): "MLA Formatting Quotations," "MLA Endnotes and Footnotes," "MLA Works Cited Page."

WEEK 7: RESEARCH: BROAD STROKES AND POSSIBILITIES

Feb 27 Discussion of research questions.

Mar 1 **Patricia Chappine on digital humanities projects.**

Mar 3 **Reading a Primary Text:** Read *Early Recollections and Life of Dr. James Still* (158 – 203).

WEEK 8: INCORPORATING RESEARCH AND WRITING ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Mar 6 **Using Secondary Sources:** In-class discussion of using secondary sources in your own work. Overview of final Research Essay with Annotated Bibliography (including discussion of Critics Say Literature Review).

Mar 8 **Annotated Bibliographies:** Do's and Don'ts of writing an annotated bibliography and review of sample bibliographies. **Internships:** On campus and off campus internship opportunities. Discussion of various Special Collections and Special Collections Presentation project. **Due: Research Questions**

Mar 10 **Research Day. We do not meet.**

Mar 12 Lines on the Pines (10:30 am to 4:30pm, Campus Center)

WEEK 9: SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & UNDERSTANDING LITERARY CRITICISM, IDENTIFYING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS

Mar 20 **Research in Special Collections Day:** **No formal class meeting.**

Mar 22 **Still family Criticism.** Progress: What have you found? Further discussion of "Literature Review," Annotated bibliography, and final Research Essay.

Mar 24 **Research in Special Collections Day:** **No formal class meeting.**

WEEK 10: ENTERING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS

Mar 27 **Still Criticism:** What articles have you found? What do they say? How might you use them?

Mar 29 Precepting class. **No formal class meeting.**

Mar 31 **Due: Literature Review. Drafting your Essays:** Discussion of research essay outline, thesis statement, and introductory paragraph.

WEEK 11: RESEARCH PAPER THESIS STATEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Apr 3 **Drafting your Essays:** Bring to class two copies of an outline for your research essay (including draft introductory paragraph).

Apr 4 Second Precepting day.

Apr 5 **Honing a Topic and Thesis:** Review of topics and thesis statements. **Due: Sign up for final class presentation.**

Apr 7 Discussion of Research in Special Collection. Writing.

WEEK 12: CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS

Apr 10 **First Impressions:** Sample thesis statements and introductions. Bring final paper draft introduction and thesis to class. **Due: Thesis Proposal/Draft and Preliminary Annotated Bibliography.**

Apr 12 **Paul W. Schopp on local history digital research.**

Apr 14 More work on Essays.

WEEK 13: CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Apr 17 **No Class. Sorry, but Kinsella is leading a Bus Tour this day.**

Apr 19 **Class presentations 1:** Special Collections

Apr 21 **Class presentations 2:** Special Collections.

WEEK 14: CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Apr 24 **Class presentations 3:** Special Collections.

Apr 26 **Class presentations 4:** Special Collections. **Due: Literary Research Paper.**

Apr 28 Class Postmortem.

WEEK 15: FINALS WEEK

May 1-5

Finals Week: This course does not have a final exam. Have a great summer.

Note: Portions of this syllabus were based on previous course syllabi written by other Literature Professors. This course is a program-wide effort. The text in most of this document is set in 11-point Calibri.