

English 275: Gender in Literature

LITERATURE BY WOMEN

COURSE SYLLABUS



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Course Description

This introductory literature course deals with the role of gender in literature. The specific topic/theme of the course varies from quarter to quarter. Students will analyze, discuss, and write about selected literary works, highlighting a variety of themes, styles, and perspectives. Satisfies humanities distribution area D requirement or specified elective for the AA degree. 5 credits. *Prerequisite: C- or better in English 101*

During the spring quarter of 2008, this class will focus on English-language literature written by women, which is a specific area of the broad topic "gender in literature. Attention will be devoted primarily, but not exclusively, to literature written during the 20th/21st century literature. Students will read, discuss, and write about fiction, poetry, and essays by women authors from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Several films which supplement the reading assignments may also be shown throughout the quarter.

Course Goals

Specific goals of this version of English 275 (i.e., "Literature by Women") include improving students' demonstrated abilities in the following areas (letters cited after the individual outcomes refer to Grays Harbor College's five desired student abilities. D-Disciplinary Learning; L-Literacy; C-Critical Thinking; S-Social & Personal Responsibility; I-Information Use):

- Developing an appreciation for the contributions of women to the body of English-language literature (**D, L, I**)
- Increasing awareness of issues related to gender and the ways in which those issues are represented in English-language literature (**D, L, C**)

- Improving analytical and interpretive skills (D, C)
- Refining critical, analytical, and argumentative writing skills (D, C, I)
- Placing literature by women in theoretical and historical contexts (D, L, C, I)
- Engaging in dialogues about literature by women (D, L, C, S, I)
- Developing an appreciation for diverse cultures (D, S, I)

Required Texts

- 📖 *The Longman Anthology of Women's Literature*, ed. Mary K. DeShazer
- 📖 Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*
- 📖 Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*

Assignments

In-class participation (see details below)	200 points
Two 3-5 page essays	400 points (200 points each)
Midterm exam	200 points
Final exam	200 points

What is in-class participation?

As you see above, in-class participation is one of your assignments this quarter. This means that you will need to take reading assignments, attendance, and class discussions as seriously as you take your essays and exams in this course. In doing so, you will not only have the opportunity to earn 200 points (out of a possible 1000 for the course) by simply doing the reading assignments and contributing to discussions in class, but you will also enjoy the class a lot more and have less trouble with the essays and exams.

Unlike any of your other assignments in this course, participation is entirely effort-based. This means that if you try, you are guaranteed to succeed. You don't need to completely understand the reading assignments or say the most brilliant things in class in order to receive full credit for participation; all you need to do is read the material, remember what you have read, and contribute regularly to our class discussions. A class like this is enriched by the voicing of multiple perspectives, and I hope that, even if sharing your thoughts in class is normally something that is outside of your comfort zone, you will feel comfortable enough in this class to speak up this quarter.

In order to receive full credit for participation in this class, here is what you must do every day this quarter:

- ✓ Attend class every day. Don't arrive late or leave early.
- ✓ Come to class prepared every day by completing all reading assignments on time (i.e., by the time class begins on the day when they are listed in the syllabus).
- ✓ Participate in all class discussions and activities.
- ✓ I will hand out a list of discussion questions for each reading assignment at least one day prior to our discussion of it. Your participation grade will depend in part on the quality and frequency of your responses to these questions in class.
- ✓ Do not dominate the class discussions. Allow other students to speak and listen to their perspectives, even if you disagree with what they have to say.
- ✓ Be attentive and respectful when the instructor or another student is speaking.
- ✓ Avoid rude or disruptive behavior (see description below).

Course Expectations

Attendance

Obviously, attendance is a prerequisite for in-class participation (for an explanation of participation and what it entails, see above). Regardless of the reason for your absence, missed days will have a significant and negative impact on this portion of your final grade for the course.

Disruptive Behavior

If you cannot give this class your undivided attention, then do not attend. Coming to class only to text message, whisper to the student next to you, or do that whole writing-notes-on-the-paper thing is a complete waste of your time, not to mention a distraction to everyone else in the class, including the instructor. Therefore, students who disrupt the class in any of the ways just mentioned (or in any of the multitude of other ways not mentioned), will be asked to leave class immediately. **Additionally, students whose phones are seen or heard (yes, that vibrating noise counts; just turn it off) will lose 50 points.**

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are against the rules of this course and of Grays Harbor College. Students who are unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty are responsible for asking the instructor for clarification. Instances of academic dishonesty will be dealt with severely.

Disabilities

Students who have documented disabilities that require accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Disability Support Services coordinator as well as the instructor of the course in order to ensure that together we create an optimal environment for educational achievement.