

ENGL 205: THE ART OF LITERATURE

Aims and Tasks

- AIM I** To introduce at least the genres of poetry, prose fiction, non-fiction prose, and drama using works that span several centuries and two or more cultural contexts.
- AIM II** To explore genre as a literary category, with careful attention to historical and cultural development of genre conventions and the concept of genre itself.
- AIM III** To recognize the roles of the reader, the surrounding culture, and the language of the text.
- AIM IV** To encourage close reading and facilitate the exchange of ideas.
- AIM V** To practice literary analysis of the genres through oral and written forms. All sections of English 205 must be ***WRITING INTENSIVE***.

SOME SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What is “literary art”?
 - What does it mean to interpret a literary text?
 - What is a literary canon?
 - What are the politics of canon formation?
 - How has evaluation and interpretation of literature changed over time?
 - What cultural and social forces are at work?
 - Examine the ethics of literary expression and the pleasures of reading.
- How do historical, cultural, ethnic, sexual, gender, geographic, and class concerns affect the reading and evaluation of a literary text?
- How do extra-literary texts such as song lyrics, speeches, films, etc. challenge and expand traditional genre definitions?

SOME SUGGESTED WRITING TASKS:

Students could complete one or more papers that proceed through the stages of idea formation, outlining, rough drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading, with feedback at each stage. The topic of one paper might be, “What is literary art?”

The teacher might require regular written student responses to the reading in the form of individual journals, listservs, and/or in-class group writing, with as many of these responses as possible shared among class members.

Students could complete an exercise defining literary, critical, analytical, and historical terminology.

OTHER SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Small group discussions, oral presentations, performances.