

English 170 Fall 2012 Schacht



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- [Class time and place](#)
- [Office hours](#)
- [Learning outcomes](#)
 - [Individual learning outcomes](#)
 - [Community learning outcomes](#)
- [Requirements](#)
 - [Texts](#)
 - [Films](#)
 - [Papers, exams, other assignments](#)
 - [Tools](#)
 - [Online writing](#)
 - [Optional project](#)
 - [Students with disabilities](#)
 - [Exam and paper details](#)
- [Schedule](#)
- [The Fine Print](#)
 - [Office hours](#)
 - [Email](#)
 - [Attendance](#)
 - [Laptops in the Classroom](#)
 - [Cellphones in the Classroom](#)
 - [Papers](#)
 - [Plagiarism](#)
 - [Exams](#)
 - [Grades](#)

Class time and place

MWF, 11:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m., Milne 105

Office hours

MTF, 1-2, and by appointment. Invite me to a meeting in Google calendar.

Learning outcomes

Individual learning outcomes

Students who have completed English 170 will:

- be able to interpret and analyze works of literature in accordance with the major conventions of literary criticism;
- be able to produce short essays in literary criticism that adhere to the conventions of critical writing;
- have a rudimentary understanding of how literary theory shapes the practice of criticism.

Community learning outcomes

The Engl 170-01 (Fall 2012) community will:

- produce new knowledge (new for this community) about the nature of literature and literary criticism;
- share knowledge about literature and literary criticism in accordance with scholarly conventions;
- discuss and debate ideas about individual literary works and about the nature of literature and literary criticism in ways that respect the diversity of the community.

Requirements

Note: You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.

Texts

- M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 9th ed.
- L. Carroll, *The Annotated Alice*
- C. Dickens, *The Annotated Christmas Carol*
- G. Graff and C. Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*
- O. Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (online)
- Other readings as indicated on the course schedule.

Films

- *Alice in Wonderland* (Tim Burton version)
- *Alice in Wonderland* (1903 silent version)
- *It's a Wonderful Life*

Papers, exams, other assignments

- Two papers (4-5 pages) - 35% each (details [below](#))
- [Engl 170-01 F12 Final Exam](#) (Friday, December 14, 12 p.m. - 3 p.m.) - 15%
- [Online writing](#) - 15%

Tools

Some activities for this course will require the use of Geneseo's subscription to [Google Apps for Education](#). If you haven't yet set up your Google Apps account, follow the link and do that now.

Other activities will take place inside the wiki, for example collaborative writing on such pages as

- [The Dictionary of Literary Terms](#)
- [Genetically Modified Literature](#)
- [Annotated Literary Texts](#)
- The [Poems](#) pages in [Practicing Criticism](#)

To participate in the wiki activities, the first thing you'll need to do is set up your personal space in the wiki. To do that, follow [these instructions in the Confluence User Guide](#). (Confluence is the name of the software that powers the Geneseo wiki. The user guide is inside a wiki that looks a lot like the Geneseo wiki because it's running on the same Confluence software.)

Once you've set up your personal space, you should play in it! Try doing these things first:

- [Add a blogpost](#) inside your personal space.
- [Add a page](#) to your personal space and try out some of the formatting options available to you, such as changing font colors, making text bold, etc.
- [Attach a file](#) to a page you've created.

Confluence takes a little getting used to, but it's really pretty easy to use, and you can contact me by email or IM (see my profile information at right) any time you run into trouble with it.

Online writing

You are required to participate in online discussion for this class.

In addition, you are required to participate in collaborative writing on the SUNY Geneseo wiki. To fulfill this requirement, you may annotate a passage from one or more of the novels on the syllabus; contribute to a collaborative essay or article; help develop genetically modified literature; or propose another collaborative project.

Your online writing will be evaluated using [this matrix](#).

Optional project

You *may* permit 50% of your [final exam](#) exam grade (i.e., 10% of your course grade) to be determined by an optional project that explores, examines, or illuminates one or more of the semester's texts using means other than the conventional literary essay. Examples of such a project might be:

- a contribution to [Genetically Modified Literature](#);
- a video trailer for a film version of one of the novels;
- a musical interpretation of a character, situation, or theme from one of the novels;
- voice-over narration for a segment of an existing film or video version of one of the novels;
- an audio or video interview with a character from one of the novels.

This is not an exhaustive list; you are welcome to propose other kinds of unconventional project. However, bear in mind the following constraints:

- The project will be judged by the degree to which it genuinely sheds light or offers meaningful commentary on the text(s) in question. (You may, if you like, provide a written explanation of how it does so.)
- The project must be approved by me in advance.
So that others in the class may view the project, the project must be submitted no later than **November 30**.
- To facilitate sharing, you must submit a digital version of any project not created in a digital medium. For example, if you paint in oils, you must submit a high quality photo of your painting together with the original.
- For team projects, all team members must be listed in the original proposal. Each individual's contribution to a group project must be clear and distinguishable from those of others in the group.

Students with disabilities

SUNY Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Contact [Tabitha Buggie-Hunt](#), Director of [Disability Services](#) to discuss needed accommodations as early as possible in the semester.

Exam and paper details

A make-up exam will be administered for medical reasons only. You must supply documentation of all illnesses and accidents. (A note indicating merely that you were seen at the infirmary won't suffice.) Please do not request special arrangements to alleviate any of the following: a crowded exam schedule; a heavy workload; conflicts with employment, extra-curricular responsibilities, or job-hunting; familial celebrations (e.g., weddings or graduations); crises in other people's lives (e.g., severe depression of best friend's roommate); crises in your own life that are a normal and inevitable part of the collegiate experience (e.g., demise of relationship with boyfriend or girlfriend.) Fairness dictates that such accommodations cannot be made for one without being offered to all.

For help writing exam essays, consult [Writing Essays Exams](#) in the [SUNY Geneseo Writing Guide](#).

The "due-date" for each of the papers in this class is not a single date but a one-week range during which you may submit your finished work. I grade and return papers in the order in which I receive them, so the earlier you submit, the sooner your work will be returned. Looking at [this rubric](#) will give you a good idea of the qualities I'll be looking for in your essays.

The [first paper](#) is due 9/17 - 9/24 (no later than 11:59 p.m. on 9/24). Target length: 4-5 double-spaced pages.

The [second paper](#) is due ~~11/12-11/19~~ 11/16 - 11/28 (no later than 11:59 p.m. on 11/28). Target length: 4-5 double-spaced pages.

Be sure to keep a copy of your work.

Schedule

Date	Assignment
What is the Practice of Criticism?	
8/27	Introduction: A course, a practice, criticism
8/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abrams, "Criticism," "New Criticism" Cambridge University Introduction to Practical Criticism Introduction to Practical Criticism, Class 1
8/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sontag, "Against Interpretation" (in Readings) Graff and Birkenstein, "Preface" through Part 1 (up to p. 53) Chasin, The Word Plum Reed, "beware, do not read this poem" (scroll down to find it) MacLeish (manuscript here)
What is Literature?	
9/3	Labor Day - No Class
9/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frye, from "The Educated Imagination" (in Readings) Graff and Birkenstein, Part 2 (pp. 53-103) Shakespeare (here and here) Blake, "A Divine Image," "A Poison Tree," "Earth's Answer," "Holy Thursday" (both), "I Saw a Chapel," "Infant Joy," "Infant Sorrow," "London," "The Chimney Sweeper" (both), "The Divine Image," "The Garden of Love," "The Sick Rose," "The Lamb," "The Tyger" Auden
9/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eagleton, "The Rise of English" (in Readings) Shelley McKay Angelou, "Africa" (see video here as well) Abrams: Sonnet, Convention
9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piercy (here and here) Abrams: Meter, Rhyme Frost (here, here, and here), Chasin (see video here as well)

9/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McGann, "How to Read a Book" (in Readings) • Yeats, "Mona Lisa" • Rizzuto (in Readings) • Kearns • Herbert, "Easter Wings"
9/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McGann, "Deformance and Interpretation" (in Readings) • Dickinson poems here
What is Narrative?	
9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" • First paper due 9/17 - 9/24
9/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolstoy, "The Death of Ivan Ilyich" • Abrams: Narrative and Narratology • Labov
9/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MacIntyre (in Readings) • Hardy (in Readings)
What is Drama?	
9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Importance of Being Earnest • Abrams: Comedy, Tragedy, Irony, Paradox
9/26	The Importance of Being Earnest
9/28	The Importance of Being Earnest
10/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Importance of Being Earnest • The Trials of Oscar Wilde: An Account
10/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Importance of Being Earnest • Abrams: Queer Theory • Sontag: "Notes on Camp" (in Readings)
10/5	The Importance of Being Earnest
What is Culture?	
10/8	Fall Break
10/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessig, Free Culture, "Preface" (download pdf) • Free Culture flash presentation
10/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helprin, "A Great Idea Lives Forever. Shouldn't its Copyright?" • Turow "Would the Bard Have Survived the Web?" • Abrams, Allusion, Intertextuality, New Historicism
Two Culture Texts	
10/15	Carroll, <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>

10/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> • Abrams: Psychological and Psychoanalytic Criticism
10/19	<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>
10/22	Carroll, <i>Through the Looking-Glass</i>
10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Through the Looking-Glass</i> • Gilbert and Gubar, "The Female Swerve" (in Readings) • Abrams: Feminist Criticism
10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carroll, <i>Through the Looking-Glass</i> • Alice resources
10/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrigan, "Writing about the Movies" and "Glossary of Film Terms" (in Readings) • 1903 silent film Alice
10/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burton, <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (film) • Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" • <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (film)
11/2	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (film)
11/5	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/7	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/9	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/12	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/14	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i> • Second paper due 11/16 - 11/28
11/19	Dickens, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
11/20-11/23	Thanksgiving Break
11/26	Capra, <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>
11/28	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>
11/30	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>
12/3	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i>
12/5	Share optional projects
12/7	Share optional projects

The End	
12/10	What have we learned?
12/14, 12-3 p.m.	Final Exam

The Fine Print

Office hours

No need to make an appointment for an office hour; just drop in. I encourage you to come. I get to know you; you learn more from me. If you cannot make it to any of the scheduled office hours, we can set up a time to meet. Add me in your [Google calendar](#) and invite me to a meeting, or call 245-5273 to make an appointment.

Email

From time to time I will need to communicate with the class as a whole or with you individually by means of email. When communicating with the class as a whole, I will use the class listserv address. Since emails sent to this address will come to students' Geneseo email accounts, it is absolutely imperative that you either regularly check your Geneseo email or have it automatically forwarded to the account you prefer to use. To set up automatic forwarding, go to <http://webmail.geneseo.edu> from any internet-connected computer, on campus or off. Log in with your Geneseo username and email password. In the left-navigation bar, click "forward account" and carefully follow instructions.

Feel free to email me at schacht AT geneseo DOT edu on any matter related to the class or to academics generally. I will reply to whatever email address you send from; if the email comes back to me as undeliverable, I will reply to your Geneseo address.

Attendance

Attendance is your responsibility. Please do not phone or email just to explain why you weren't in or won't be in class on a particular day. On the other hand, if sickness or genuine crisis keeps you from the classroom for any length of time, of course I want to know. Conflicts with other classes or your personal life (weddings, friends who've just broken up with boyfriends/girlfriends, etc.) must be resolved by you. I regret that I cannot make special arrangements to accommodate them.

Laptops in the Classroom

Bring 'em.

Cellphones in the Classroom

Just be nice, okay?

Papers

Be sure to proofread your paper closely for faulty grammar or usage, spelling errors, and typos; you are being graded partly on your ability to produce presentable work, an ability that matters both in the classroom and in the world beyond it.

Papers must be submitted electronically. I will grade papers in the order that I receive them and return them electronically.

Plagiarism

Though committed with alarming frequency and dispiriting casualness by people in high places, plagiarism is still a serious academic offense. You are committing plagiarism any time you borrow another writer's words without using quotation marks or providing appropriate documentation; borrow another writer's ideas without citing the source in which you found them.

If it is discovered that you have plagiarized on an assignment for this class, you will certainly fail the assignment and probably fail the class. In addition, the Dean of the College will be notified that you have committed an act of academic dishonesty, and you may face disciplinary measures from the administration. No excuses. No second chances. Not even for graduating seniors.

Examples of plagiarism:

- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find in another student's paper—for example, a paper in the files of a fraternity or sorority, or a paper available on the Internet.
- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find on a website.
- An essay that uses, without proper documentation, words or ideas that you find in any secondary source, including Cliff's Notes, Sparks Notes, Classic Comics, or other guides of comparable scholarly respectability.

There is no such thing as accidental plagiarism. If you are unsure of the proper conventions for documentation, see me and I will tell you how to find the information you need. Better yet, consult the reference librarian at Milne.

If you think for yourself and use sources properly, you will not run into trouble. But remember, in questionable cases you are unlikely to receive the benefit of the doubt. If you err, be sure it is on the side of caution.

Exams

For help writing exam essays, consult Writing Essays Exams in the [SUNY Geneseo Writing Guide](#).

Grades

Must we? Well then...

Your grade reflects my honest and considered evaluation of your work. You have the right to question it. I have the right to stick by it, and that is what I invariably do (with certain obvious exceptions, such as miscalculation of an exam score). Total objectivity is no more possible in grading writing than in making any other judgment of value, but I do my best to maintain consistency and adhere to clearly defined standards. I base my grade on my opinion of your work, not on my opinion of you. If you have a question about your grade on an assignment, I encourage you to see me during office hours or schedule an appointment. I welcome the opportunity to explain to you why you got what you did. In grading papers and exams, my reference point is the "B."

- A **B** paper or exam fulfills the terms of the assignment and is, in general, a competent performance. It is lucid, intelligent, and grammatical. If you receive a "B" on written work for this class, don't ask yourself, "What did I do wrong?" However, you may well want to ask yourself — and I encourage you to ask me — "What more could I have done right?"
- An **A** paper or exam, then, is obviously better than competent. It not only fulfills the terms of the assignment but does so with unusual grace, wit, insight, imagination, originality, or clarity. It shows special and impressive care in the arrangement of ideas and the construction of sentences. Its organization is not only logical but interesting, its language not simply grammatical but striking. "A" work is extraordinary, outstanding, superior, distinguished. By definition, then, it is also rare.
- A **C** paper or exam usually contains one or more serious defects in logic, organization, or grammar. If it contains none of these, it has probably failed in some way to fulfill the basic terms of the assignment. Perhaps it is 3 or 8 pages long rather than the required 5, or perhaps it discusses two texts without fulfilling the requirement to "compare and contrast" them. Be sure to read assignments carefully — at least twice — and ask questions, if you have them, well before the due date. Do not risk modifying assignments without permission — e.g., writing on a different text or submitting a poem or dialogue in place of an essay. Such gross failures to comply with an assignment may result in an "E."
- A **D** paper or exam has the faults of a "C" paper to a larger extent or a greater degree. It has very few virtues.
- An **E** paper or exam has completely missed the boat. "E" work is even rarer than "A" work, though naturally much easier to produce. Bear in mind, however, that an otherwise good or even excellent piece of writing may receive an "E" for fraud or flagrant negligence. Included here are, among other things, plagiarism, collaborative work presented as that of a single author, failure to quote from texts, and blatant disregard of an assignment's basic terms (see above under "C").