Writing and Literary Studies II (English 201):

Major Literary Works from the Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Periods

“Howe greatly are we beholden unto the great and famous writers, who being conversant many hundreds yeeres before us here upon the earth, in their divine wittes, and most godly ordinances, doo yet lyve, dwel, and talke with us.”

---Petrarch, Phisicke against Fortune (tr. 1579)

Course Goals: This course will provide an introduction to highly influential texts and writers of the Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance periods. Together we will analyze and discuss recurrent themes in the literature and how these themes relate to our own experiences. We will consider how each era viewed the self, society, nature, and the divine/god. The literature will also serve as stimuli for the development of argumentative, persuasive, analytical, and research essays. This is a writing emphasis course! Ultimately, I hope that each student will cultivate an appreciation of the literature that, though very often challenging and difficult, is also unparalleled in its excellence and variety. As we explore each period, I would like you to take away not only knowledge of the texts but also an interest in and ability to approach intelligently other works of literature.

SLO’s (desired Student Learning Outcomes):

Objective #1: Building on English 101 writing skills, students will be able to write an original argument synthesizing two or more primary texts.

Objective #2: Students in English 201 will learn basic literary vocabulary.

Objective #3: In English 201, students will be able to read a literary passage closely and carefully.

Objective #4: Students in English 201 will understand the basic historical and cultural background of literary works and authors from ancient times up to the Renaissance.

Objective #5: A student completing English 201 will learn and use the principles of MLA documentation.
Objective #6: A student completing English 201 will be able to construct and properly identify the components of a Toulmin System (enthymeme, claim, stated reason, warrant and backing, and grounds).

Objective #7: A student completing English 201 will demonstrate competency in the library research needed to construct a college-level research paper.

Required Texts:


Millsaps, Ellen. Writing at Carson-Newman College

Course Policies:

I. Attendance: Yes, you are expected to attend each class. If you must miss class, you are responsible for all material covered. Absence is no excuse for ignorance. If you know you will miss, please call me before your absence. I will work with those students who must miss class for school sponsored responsibilities, documented illness, or death of a family member.

From Carson-Newman Catalog:

Attendance at all class meetings is required and a student is responsible for all the work, including tests and written assignments of all class meetings. Each individual faculty member will establish the consequences for absences to their students and arrange to obtain assignments for work missed. Students will be allowed to make up class work missed with no penalty if the absence was caused by documented illness, death of immediate family member, or participation in College sponsored activities. Otherwise, the instructor has no obligation to allow students to make up work.

Attendance will be taken for all students. Any student who does not attend class during the first 2 weeks of the semester will be administratively dropped from the class for non-attendance. Enrollment status (full-time/part-time/etc.) may be affected by this withdrawal which may impact billing and financial aid eligibility. Refer to the Refund Section of the catalog for more detailed information.

A student who quits (desists) attending class and does not withdraw by the last day to withdraw from the course with a W will be assigned a grade of VF. A grade of VF carries hours attempted and 0 quality points. Students who fail all courses due to non-attendance will be administratively withdrawn from the college for the semester. The last date of class attendance will be used to determine the date of the administrative withdrawal from the college. Financial Assistance recalculation will be processed for students who are administratively withdrawn from the
college within 45 days of the date of determination. If a student is administratively withdrawn from the college, financial assistance eligibility may be impacted. Class attendance is limited to the instructor(s) of the course, registered students and official guests of the College.

Because this is a workshop-oriented class, each student's presence is vital to the success of the class. After the sixth absence (2 weeks), the student will receive a warning from the School of Humanities. After the twelfth absence the student will receive an “F” as a final grade in accordance with C-N’s School of Humanities’ policy. Excessive tardiness can also lower your final grade, along with being disruptive and inconsiderate to the class. Three tardies of more than 10 minutes will equal one absence. If you are late, it is your job to notify the instructor after class, or you will be marked absent. As reading and writing assignments will often be given in class, it is your responsibility to contact your classmates when you miss a class to find out if an assignment was given.

II. Tardiness: Tardiness is unacceptable. If you miss roll call, it is your responsibility to stay after class to request credit for attendance.

III. Class Conduct: Respect your fellow scholars, your reputation, and me. Do not sleep during class, eat your breakfast/lunch, text-message or talk on the cell phone. If visible or audible, any cell phone, blackberry, or other “techie device” will become the possession of the professor until after class. Use your common-sense! Please follow the rules of etiquette and decorum that you would use in any professional/career setting.

IV. Late Papers: Simply put, late papers will not be accepted. The grade will be zero and the paper is not revisable. In case of a legitimate problem, contact me as soon as possible before the due date. Note: Even if you choose to earn a zero on a paper, you must still write an acceptable essay (i.e. minimum D level) and place it in your portfolio. You must complete all essays in order to be considered for a passing grade in the course.

V. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: All work submitted must be your own work, generated exclusively for this class. The use of sources (ideas, quotes, paraphrases) must be properly documented. If plagiarism or academic dishonesty is established, the student will be dismissed from the course with the grade of F. Please note that a second offense in any course can result in dismissal from the college. All students will be required to sign an Academic Honesty statement.
Course Requirements:

I. Attendance and Participation: Attendance and active participation are vital to making this course work for you and for your classmates. Preparation and participation will comprise a large part of your final grade. We will meet for class discussions about 40 times this term. Each session will be worth 2.5 points. The total of these points will comprise the “Participation/Preparation” portion of your final grade. If you arrive on time and participate fully in class discussion and debate, you will receive the full day’s credit. A good rule of thumb to earn maximum points is to make at least two pertinent comments or ask two pertinent questions during each class period. Deductions will be made for tardiness and failure to participate in our class forum. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to see me after class to request attendance/participation credit for the day’s work. Students may make up assignments and participation credit when they are absent for documented illness, death of a family member/family emergency, and college-sponsored events. To retain participation credit, students who miss class must submit a 2-page typed essay summarizing and analyzing the material covered in class that day. This essay must be submitted within one week of the absence.

II. 3 Essays (2 essays without research and 1 research paper): Please note, essays that fail to meet the minimum requirement will not earn a passing grade.

Step 1: You will work outside class to create drafts of your essays. During this time, you may bring drafts to my office or to the tutors in the Writing Lab to discuss any concerns that arise during the writing process.

Step 2: Quality Team Workshop: Your complete, typed, and well-written draft will next be edited and discussed in class by your Quality Team. You must come to class on workshop days with a typed copy of your completed essay for each member of your team. You will then read your essay to your team members who will offer constructive advice for improvement. Essays without workshop response will drop one full grade. If you do not participate by offering your team members constructive advice, your own grade will be penalized.

Step 3: Submitting Essays: At the beginning of class on due dates, you will submit the following materials in a pocket folder: final draft (in MLA format), all rough drafts (minimum of 3), all notes, prewriting exercises, workshop responses, and any other relevant work.

III. Midterm and Final Exams: Part of each exam will be in the form of an essay and/or short paragraphs of analysis. The other part of the exams will be questions selected from your “Knowledge
Goals” handout. You should review the Knowledge Goals weekly so that you will be well-prepared for this portion of the exam.

IV. Portfolio: At the end of the semester, you must submit a writing portfolio in which you have secured all 3 essays (so do not throw them away). I must have this complete portfolio before assigning your course grade.

V. Quizzes and short writing responses: The literature with which you will engage this term is never without reward, but it can be very challenging. In order to achieve the knowledge and appreciation for which you are striving, you must be very disciplined in your commitment to reading carefully each assignment before the class period. In order to keep you honest about your reading, daily quizzes and in-class writing assignments will be given. These quizzes count for a large percentage of your grade, will be given at the beginning of class, and cannot be made up. I will drop a few quiz scores to accommodate those who must miss quizzes for legitimate reasons. If you must miss class for a documented illness, death in the immediate family, or participation in college sponsored activities, you may make an appointment to make-up the quiz before the next class period.

VI. Library Training: You must participate in a hands-on workshop with Ms. Kelli Williams and/or Ms. Alison Jones (Reference Librarians) on April 1 in the Library Computer Lab.

Course Grading: To receive course credit you must complete all assignments.

I. Quizzes and short writings =20%

II. Attendance and Participation =10% Grading Scale:

III. Essay 1 =10% 93-100=A

Essay 2 =15% 85-92=B

Essay 3 (Research Project) =20% 75-84=C

70-74=D

IV. Midterm =10% 69 and below=F

Final (Knowledge Goals and Essay) =15%
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Any student with a special documented disability (learning, sight, hearing, mobility, etc.) which may affect class activities should contact David Humphrey, ext. 3268, in Kathleen Manley Wellness Center. Students will have to provide appropriate documentation.

Course Schedule

Jan. 14 Course Introduction

Ancients/Classical Period

Jan. 17 MLK Holiday

Jan. 19 Read pages iv-v, Introduction (1-3), Genesis (133-38 in our textbook or in your own bible: Genesis 1:1-2:3; Genesis 2:4-3:24; Genesis 4:1-5:5; and Genesis 6:1-9:29)
Due: Signed and dated Academic Honesty Statement indicating you understand the definition of and consequences of plagiarism (Posted on Blackboard)

Jan. 21: Bring to class a Psalm as an example of Hebrew poetry and Read Job (139-65)

Jan. 24: The Odyssey, Book 1 (5-8) and Book 9 (9-22)

Jan. 26: The Odyssey, Book 12 (23-34)

Jan. 28: The Odyssey, Books 21-22 (35-50)

Jan. 31: The Odyssey, Book 23 (51-6)
*View and analyze scenes from O Brother, Where Art Thou?

Feb. 2: Sophocles, Oedipus Rex (61-76 through line 540)

Feb. 4: Sophocles, OR (76-91 through line 1150)

Feb. 7: Finish Oedipus Rex

Feb. 9: Enthymeme for Essay 1 Due (email to Dr. Hall by class time).

Read Josephus, Seneca, Cicero, and Tacitus (Blackboard)

Feb. 11: Toulmin Due (email to Dr. Hall by class time).
Read Aeneid (103-113)

Feb. 14: Aeneid, Book 6 (113-32)

Feb. 16: Workshop Essay 1: Bring 3 copies of your typed, complete essay. Failure to attend or participate will penalize the paper a full letter grade

Medieval Period

Feb. 18: Essay 1 Due: Read Intro. (167), Luke 4:1-12 (bible/translation of your choice), and Saint Augustine’s Confessions (169-75).

Feb. 21: Read Beowulf (177-200 through line 1711)

Feb. 23: Beowulf (200-end)

Feb. 25: Read Intro and Dante’s Inferno, Canto I

Feb. 28: Inferno, Cantos 5 and 9

Mar. 2: Inferno, Cantos 33-34

Mar. 4: Canterbury Tales, Prologue. Reading Guide Handout due (20 points!) (241-61)

Mar. 7: Wife of Bath’s Tale (you do not have to read her prologue. I will cover that reading in class; however, be prepared for a quiz on the tale itself) (280-88)

Mar. 9: Midterm

Mar. 11: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Books 1 and 2 (313-28)

Mar. 14: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Books 3 and 4 (328-52)

Mar. 16: Workshop on Essay 2

Mar. 18: Essay 2 Due

March 21-25: Spring Break

Mar. 28: Introduction to Final Research Project

Read Julian of Norwich (1289-97)

Mar. 30: Margery Kempe (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 28, and 52)
April 1: Library Training with Ms. Kelli Williams and/or Ms. Alison Jones. Meet in library and be on time! By end of library session, you must have one biographical article on your chosen author (10 points for library training & 10 points for biographical article).

April 4: Due: Primary Source Worksheet

The Renaissance

April 6: Read introduction to Renaissance (353-54) and Queen Elizabeth (355-56)

April 8: Read Aemilia Lanyer (357-60)

Due: Scholarly Journal article (bring to class)

April 11: King Lear, Act 1

April 13: Act 2.

Due: Secondary Sources Worksheet

April 15: Act 3

April 18: Act 4

Due: Toulmin (email to Dr. Hall by classtime)

April 20: Act 5.

April 22-25: Easter Holiday (“He is Risen; He is Risen Indeed!”)

April 27: View King Lear

April 29: Research Paper Due.

Discuss Areopagitica in class

May 2: Paradise Lost, Book 1

May 4 John Donne (all selections) (453-56)

*View/discuss scene from Wit

Final Exam: Friday, May 6, 9:00-11:00