

# INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH STUDIES

English 281  
Fall 2009  
229 Radford  
Phone: 424-7275

Dr. Paul Klemp  
Office Hours:  
MW 11:30-1:00;  
Th 11:15-1:00;  
by appointment

<[www.english.uwosh.edu](http://www.english.uwosh.edu)>

**TEXTS:** Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*, ed. Peter G. Beidler, 2nd edition  
Milorad Pavic, *Dictionary of the Khazars* (male or female edition)  
Charles E. Bressler, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*,  
4th edition  
M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 9th edition  
Readings available from Polk Library's e-reserve

**GOALS:** To introduce you to various reading strategies and to the multifaceted discipline called English; to refine your skills as a reader, writer, and critical thinker; to promote listening and discussion skills.

**REQUIREMENTS:** You are expected to attend class regularly, to contribute to discussions, and to do the following assignments (all written work except notebooks and responses must be typed double spaced):

Paper #1: Self-Reflective Essay (3 pages)	10%
Paper #2: Analysis (5 pages)	20%
Paper #3: Short Story (5 pages)	20%
Paper #4: Self-Reflective Essay (5 pages)	20%
Oral Reports	10%
Participation	10%
Informal Writing (including notebook and responses)	10%

**LATE WORK:** Late papers will be penalized one-half of a letter grade (five points) for each weekday they are late. Responses may not be handed in late or through a classmate; because oral reports are carefully scheduled for specific days, if you miss yours you may not present it late. No work may be submitted by e-mail.

**PLAGIARISM:** If your paper reflects the organization, phrasing, or content of another's work without proper identification of the source, the paper is considered plagiarized. Plagiarism is a serious offense, punished by penalties ranging up to dismissal from the course. I will enforce the university's policy on plagiarism as stated in the *Student Handbook*, which you should consult for a full explanation.

**GRADING SCALE:** A+=97-100; A=94-96; A-=90-93; B+=87-89; B=84-86; B-=80-83;  
C+=77-79; C=74-76; C-=70-73; D+=67-69; D=64-66; D-=60-63; F=<60

# SYLLABUS

<b>DATE</b>	<b>READING/WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
W 9 September	Introduction to Introduction to English Studies; McCormick, "Reading Texts" (e-reserve)
F 11	McCormick, "Reading Texts" (e-reserve); Musgrove, "Metaphors" (e-reserve); Abrams, "Criticism" 61-64; Bressler, "Defining Criticism" 1-19
M *14	<b>PAPER #1 DUE: SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY</b> ; Eagleton, "Introduction: What is Literature?" (e-reserve)
W 16	Guillory, "Canon" (e-reserve); Abrams, "Canon of Literature" 38-41 and "Affective Fallacy" 5-6
F 18	James, <i>Turn</i> 22-29; Abrams, "Frame Story" 332; Bressler "New Criticism" 54-67; Abrams, "New Criticism" 216-18 and "Tension" 363
M 21	James, <i>Turn</i> 29-55; Abrams, "Setting" 330, "Point of View" 271-76, and "Persona, Tone, and Voice" 257-60
W 23	James, <i>Turn</i> 55-86; Abrams, "Character and Characterization" 42-44, "Atmosphere" 17-18, and "Style" 349-52
F 25	James, <i>Turn</i> 86-120; Abrams, "Imagery" 150-52, "Symbol" 358-61, "Ambiguity" 12-13, and "Tragedy" 370-74
M 28	<i>Turn</i> , Reactions, 1898 172-75; Henry James Responds 176-78, Preface 179-86; Abrams, "Gothic Romance" 137-38 and "Prose Romance" 228-29; <i>Turn</i> Introduction 3-21, A Critical History 189-222; Abrams, "Intentional Fallacy" 157 and "Reception Theory" 305-06
W 30	<i>Turn</i> , "What is Psychoanalytic Criticism?" 254-71; Barry, "What Freudian Psychoanalytic Critics Do" (e-reserve)
F 2 October	<i>Turn</i> , Renner, "Red hair" 271-89
M 5	"What is Feminist Criticism?" (e-reserve); 290-305; Barry, "What Feminist Critics Do" (e-reserve)
W 7	Walton, "What then on earth was I?" (e-reserve)
F 9	<i>Turn</i> , "What is Marxist Criticism?" 317-32; Barry, "What Marxist Critics Do" (e-reserve)
M 12	<i>Turn</i> , Robbins, "They don't much count" 333-46
W 14	<b>SIGNATURE ON THESIS APPROVAL FORM FOR PAPER #2 DUE</b> ; "What is Deconstruction?" (e-reserve)
F 16	Felman, "The grasp with which I recovered him" (e-reserve)
M 19	<b>ROUGH DRAFT WORKSHOP FOR PAPER #2</b>
W *21	<b>PAPER #2 DUE: ANALYSIS</b> ; Barry, "Some Recurrent Ideas in Critical Theory" (e-reserve); bring Pavic's <i>Dictionary</i> to class
F 23	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> : "Preliminary Notes" 1-15

M	26	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Red Book: 21-58; Abrams, "Motif and Theme" 205
W	28	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Red Book: 58-90
F	30	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Red Book: 90-121
M	2 November	Bressler, "Psychoanalytic Criticism" 142-62; Abrams, "Psychological and Psychoanalytic Criticism" 289-95
W	4	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Green Book 125-54; Abrams, "Conventions" 58-59
F	6	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Green Book 154-89; Abrams, "Allusion" 11-12
M	9	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Green Book 189-201; Abrams, "Irony" 165-68 and "Satire" 320-23
W	11	Bressler, "Feminism" 167-88; Abrams, "Feminist Criticism" 110-16, "Gender Criticism" 132-34, and "Queer Theory" 296-99
F	13	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Yellow Book 205-38; Abrams, "Author and Authorship" 18-21 and "Death of the Author" 281
M	16	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Yellow Book 239-74
W	18	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Yellow Book 274-300
F	20	Bressler, "Marxism" 191-207; Abrams, "Marxist Criticism" 181-87
M	23	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , Appendixes 303-33
* * * * * <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b> * * * * *		
M	30	Pavic, <i>Dictionary</i> , "Closing Note" 334-35; Abrams, "Novel" 226-33, "Self-Reflexive Novel" 275-76, "Genres" 134-36, and "Plot" 265-68
W	2 December	Bressler, "Deconstruction" 116-31; Abrams, "Deconstruction" 69-75
F	4	Guest Lecturer on Fiction Writing; Rindo, "Like Water Becoming Air" (e-reserve); Abrams, "Concrete and Abstract" 54-55, "Showing and Telling" 43-44, "Connotation and Denotation" 57-58, and "Short Story" 331-33 (e-reserve)
M	7	Oates, "The Master at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, 1914-1916"
W	9	ROUGH DRAFT WORKSHOP FOR PAPER #3
F	*11	<b>PAPER #3 DUE: SHORT STORY</b>
M	14	Oates, "Accursed Inhabitants of the House of Bly" (e-reserve); Abrams, "Influence and the Anxiety of Influence" 155-56
W	16	Oates, "The Turn of the Screw" (e-reserve); Abrams, "Modernism and Postmodernism" 201-04; Barry, "Ten Tenets of Liberal Humanism" and "Some Recurrent Ideas in Critical Theory" (e-reserve)
F	*18	<b>PAPER #4 DUE: SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY</b> ; course wrap up

—"Not to interpret is impossible, as refraining from thinking is impossible."

—Italo Calvino

# INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH STUDIES

## NOTEBOOKS

Two or three times during the semester, always with one day's advance notice, I will collect the notebook that you use for this course.

### **The In-Class Part (Notes and Questions about Discussions):**

When each class period begins, please write down the date of that class meeting, and then use your notebook to record pertinent observations made by your classmates or me. In this way, the notebook will indicate how well you are listening and what you regard as valuable. If the discussion or lecture raises questions or ideas in your mind and you do not have the opportunity (or perhaps the need) to express them in class, write them out in your notebook. Not only is it good to get in the habit of keeping a record of your ideas and confusions, but sometimes these are useful when you are trying to locate ideas for an essay.

### **The Outside-of-Class Part (Reading Notes):**

Outside of class, you should also use the notebook to write down any questions or observations you have about a text that we are reading. Treat *a separate part* of your notebook—probably pages at the end—as a reading journal for this course. In the notebook, record plot summary (who do what to whom and when and where) and your questions or observations under the date for which the text is assigned.

Finally, I will sometimes ask you to use your notebook as the location for one-paragraph writing assignments outside of class and for brainstorming during class.

When I read your notebook, I will not be looking for carefully crafted sentences or a great vocabulary and eloquent phrases. Notebooks tend to be highly individual matters: some people write down fragmentary observations, while some record full sentences. Do whichever is better for you.

But I will be interested in seeing how well you listen, how much attention you pay to discussions (*particularly to comments made by other students*), what points you find most valuable, and what kinds of questions cross your mind in class and outside of class.

# INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH STUDIES

## ORAL REPORTS (I)

### I. ORAL REPORTS ON LITERARY TERMS:

Posted on the bulletin board outside my office is a list of many of the literary terms that appear in the syllabus and that are taken from Abrams's *Glossary of Literary Terms*. As soon as possible, sign up as the summarizer/applier for *one* and as the questioner/questioned for *one* other.

#### I.a THE SUMMARIZER/APPLIER

The summarizer/applier has two responsibilities:

–consult the discussion of your term in Murfin and Ray's *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, Preminger's *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, and any other reference works you locate. This will guarantee that you do not merely repeat what we have all read in Abrams, and it will help you put the term's definition into a concise statement and make us more aware of its meaning. Again: do not just repeat what we have read; be sure to clarify the reading by dealing with any confusing or ambiguous aspects of the term's definition.

–then, in the larger part of your report, applying the term to the day's reading (if the term is "ambiguity," for example, how and where and why does it appear in the pages we read?), in *The Turn of the Screw* (if that is not the day's reading), and in other texts you have examined in this course or elsewhere—films, paintings, songs, architecture, etc. The more genres/media, the better. The application should greatly clarify the definition of the term.

#### I.b THE QUESTIONER/QUESTIONED

The questioner/questioned also has two responsibilities: to give us a thought provoking, discussible question about the term and to respond to our questions about it.

Both the summarizer/applier and the questioner/questioned are required to look at the discussion of their term in a variety of glossaries/handbooks/dictionaries beyond Abrams's *Glossary*.

Unlike the oral report on the critical essay (see the next page), this oral report remains purely oral; you do not have to hand in anything.

# INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH STUDIES

## ORAL REPORTS (II)

### II. ORAL REPORT ON CRITICAL ESSAY:

Posted on the wall outside my office is a list of the four essays that we will read from the volume containing *The Turn of the Screw* (by Renner, Walton, Robbins, and Felman). Sign up for one as soon as possible.

Both orally and in writing, you have two goals in this assignment: to summarize the essay and to comment on its quality. The summary and the commentary that you will write should be no longer than 250 words each (one typed double spaced page each). On the top of the first sheet, state the author's name and the essay's title and publication information, using the format prescribed in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. You will hand in your summary and commentary on the day that you present your oral report. During our class discussion, the informal oral report will occur when I ask you for some of the most significant points of the summary and the commentary.

#### II.a THE SUMMARY (250 words)

Writing summaries, also known as abstracts or *précis*, is an important skill for your classwork and in many professions. A summary should condense the essential points of an argument using your words (paraphrase); be objective (no explicit or implicit judgment about the argument's strengths and weaknesses); and avoid quotation and such expressions as "Sandra Smith's article states" or "This essay argues" (just say what it states or argues: "In *The Turn of the Screw*, the uncle is the victim of an alien abduction"). Begin by locating what you think is the article's thesis or main point.

#### II.b THE COMMENTARY ON QUALITY (250 words)

When you discuss the quality of the article, ask yourself the following questions:

- Approach: what analytical or theoretical method is this critic using? what are its assumptions or premises (consult Abrams and Bressler)? does he/she use the approach well? You may find it useful to discuss these issues with me before preparing your summary and commentary.
- Thesis and Focus: is the thesis clear, narrow or focused, interesting, and original?
- Usefulness: does the article illuminate the text? how or why not? is it thought provoking?
- Evidence: does the critic use evidence responsibly, using the text to support ideas and not ignoring places where the text contradicts his/her thesis? do the author's ideas about the text stretch beyond what the evidence allows?