

English 112: Composition and Literature

Section FF: Roads, Pathways, and Journeys: Writing to Identity

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T H 11:30 – 12:50

250 Bachelor

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English 112, Composition and Literature, is a writing course designed to teach you the skills needed to compose, revise, and critically analyze texts both within the university and in the wider world. The “Literature” portion of our course will take the form of a journey: one that is designed to explore texts that center upon characters and themes of traveling, roads, and pathways wherein identity is surveyed and examined. We will be asking questions such as: *How can writing facilitate self-hood? In what ways can texts help us understand multicultural identity? Can we embody different identities through various texts? And, furthermore, how can writing be a tool to investigate a writer’s own embodiment?*

Your writing about these texts will be central to making meaning out of identity. We will be looking at various types of texts: poems, short stories, novel, film, amongst others. Having a wide range of texts will help illuminate how identity can be created. By writing and engaging various types of literature this class will challenge you to examine how your own writing creates your identity. In other words, you will consider what it means to be a writer and how writing can inform particular identities through various mediums. By the end of the course, you will be able to utilize textual inquiry to ask deeper, humanistic questions. Our readings will take up the theme of journeying as a means to accomplish this task. The stories, narratives, and characters we will encounter this semester will all hinge upon traveling, whether metaphorical or literal, and how that journey changes and creates identity. Along side the readings you will find that your writing will begin to mirror the same type of journey and you will be able to see your writing unfold as a journey of this ENG 112.

As a Miami Plan Foundation course, English 112 meets the broad goals of a liberal education: to nurture your intellectual capabilities to think critically, to understand diverse contexts, to engage with other learners, and to apply knowledge and skills learned through effective reflection and action. The intellectual skills developed in this course will help you in your academic writing at the university but also in your future civic, social, and professional endeavors.

Required Texts and Materials

- Zora Neal Hurston. "Their Eyes Were Watching God" Any edition.
- Jhumpa Lahiri. "Interpreter of Maladies" Any edition.
- *College Composition at Miami* (Volume 65). 2013. Plymouth, MI: Hayden-McNeil.—> should be available at campus bookstores
- PDFs/Online Readings (available on niihka)
- A charged laptop

Major Projects and Course Requirements

English 112 will be centered on four major writing inquiries along with informal writing and class participation. Our schedule is tiered day-to-day that our in-class activities, group work, and informal writing will prepare you for each assignment. The formalized final drafts of each assignment will vary depending on Inquiry. We will discuss the expectations with each Inquiry as we reach the point in the schedule. Here is the percentage weight of each assignment:

1. Inquiry 1: Close Reading	Identify and differentiate between critical analysis, summary, and personal response; Apply poetic, narratological, and rhetorical concepts to analyze the formal choices writers make.	15%
2. Inquiry 2: Cultural and Historical Analysis	Research and analyze how historical and cultural contexts shape the production and reception of texts. Synthesize evidence from primary and secondary sources to make a complex argument about the meaning / implications of a text.	25%
3. Inquiry 3: Creative and Critical Approach	Applying skills learned from previous inquiries and composing a nonacademic text, (re)appropriating voice and identity with a previous reading.	20%
4. Inquiry 4:	Reflective essay articulating transferable learning/skills.	15%

Reimagining Identity; Reflective Essay	Exhibiting the ability to do a close reading of your journey for this course, and how this has created an identity through the lens of writing.	
5. Journey Journal	A daily blog that is meant to help guide understanding of the texts. An intended avenue to express questions and engagements with the readings and your writing. This will be an integral portion of the class, and will play an important role in Inquiry 4.	15%
6. Attendance and Participation	Active participation in peer response, collaborative group work activities, and in-class writing. Be aware that attendance is necessary in order to participate.	10%
	TOTAL	100%

JOURNEY JOURNAL

This is an online blog that will be utilized throughout the semester as a writing space that is your own. It is intended to record your growth and development throughout the semester. Keeping the journal will enable you look at how your analyses over the 15 weeks of ENG112 will change, keeping in one space your understanding of critical reading and cultural comprehension of various readings. There will be a writing assignment each week. There is a minimum of 500 words a week. Not to put a generic word limit on what it will mean to extrapolate meaning from our readings, but it is necessary to have in mind the expectations of what critical analysis looks like. In other words, the 500 word minimum is not intended to be intimidating, instead a requirement that will allow you to get the most out of each weeks reading.

This journal, it should be noted, is not a space to complain or rant. The writing prompts will be geared to looking for meaning inside the texts we read. That is not to say that you shouldn't express concerns with the readings, or question what the texts are attempting to accomplish. You can even disagree with the stance of the author, or may want to argue that the text doesn't accomplish what it sets out to do—I even encourage this type of writing! To be put another way, this *isn't a daily journal* in the typical sense, where your writing could be mawkish and sentimental. The entries in your journal are meant to ENGAGE with the text, challenging you both as a writer, but also as a writer in dialogue with a text.

The journal is, however, a space in which you will dig deeper into the various reading materials.

Critical reading plays a vital role in this class, and will also help you develop deeper analysis of your own writing. You will be asked to look at what the text is *doing* beyond a superficial reading. That is to say, you will look beyond simply the words as one dimensional and question if there are any other meanings behind the words. This is also a space where you will engage with a literary vocabulary, giving you the capacity to evaluate texts even further. Such terms are, but not limited to: plot, character(izations), tone, motif, theme, symbolism, poetics, narrative, voice, etc. There are weekly prompts that will employ these techniques.

FINAL DRAFTS

Final drafts should illustrate the best product you have for each inquiry. The final draft should be polished showing attention to grammar and sentence structure, as well as offering deep insight into the assignment. I will go in depth on the grading criteria in class for each Inquiry. Final drafts will be submitted to me directly GoogleDrive.

WRITER'S LETTERS

These will accompany each final draft for each inquiry and will each have its own particular focus. These letters are informal in style but do expect all of them to

- explain your purpose and audience for each assignment;
- to explain your rhetorical choices and strategies;
- to reflect on your writing process;
- and to describe what you did in revision and why.

The completion of the Writer's Letter will factor in as a portion of the final grade for each paper; final drafts missing the letter or not reflecting substantive reflection may lower the overall project grade by up to a half letter grade. These letters are also good places to discuss concepts and practices you may still be struggling with. Think of them not as mere individual assignments but as the *continuation* of a conversation between you and me about your writing throughout the semester. Shoot for about a half-page to a page, single spaced, for each.

Policies

1) Academic Integrity/ Plagiarism

"Miami University students are expected to practice Academic Integrity, whether taking a test, turning in an assignment, or writing a research paper. Some examples of violating Academic Integrity include:

- Submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work that has been wholly or partly created by another person.

- Presenting as one's own the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources.
- Knowingly permitting one's work to be submitted by another person as if it were the submitter's original work.
- Submitting the identical or substantially the same assignment to fulfill the requirements for two or more courses without the approval of the instructors involved, or submitting the identical or substantially the same assignment from a previously completed course to fulfill requirements for another course without the approval of the instructor of the later course.
- Violating procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of the assignment.”

The text above is taken from Miami University's Student Handbook, 1.5.B.2 . There will be a day in which we will discuss Academic Integrity further. However, a simple rule to follow in order to avoid Plagiarism is to be honest in your writing. If you borrow text/information from another source be sure to give credit to that source.

2) Attendance

Attendance is of utmost importance to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Much of the learning in English 112 happens via in-class inquiry activities, in-class writing assignments, class discussion, and group interaction that cannot be easily made up or replicated outside of class. Class time will be highly interactive — requiring frequent participation, discussion, team work, in-class writing, and responding to writing. For this reason, attendance at all class sessions is expected. You are allowed a maximum of 3 unexcused absences in this course. Having more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your final grade for the course by each additional day (missing 4 days will take a B+ down to a B, 5 days will take a B+ to a B-).

3) Tardiness. Three late arrivals equals an absence. If you arrive after role call is finished, it is considered a tardy. If you arrive to class after 20 minutes, it automatically becomes an absence.

Keep in mind:

- You will be counted absent if you sleep, are preoccupied with your phone or other distraction during class, or you miss 20 minutes or more of class.
- **3 tardies equal one absence.**

4) Late Work. All assignments must be turned in on time. Final grades on papers will be downgraded one whole grade for each day late (for example A to B) unless you have made prior arrangements for an extension with me (in exceptional circumstances).

However, I am aware that life can interfere at the most inconvenient times. You will have **one** excusable lateness for turning in a finalized assignment, as long as the assignment is turned in within 24 hours after the due date. For example, if a final assignment is due at noon on a Monday, you would be allowed to turn in the assignment by noon on Tuesday. *If you find yourself in this situation and decide to use the excusable lateness, you will have to contact me and explain your situation.* If you don't communicate that you are using this pass, I will consider the work late and mark down a letter grade each day.

5) Distractions

Please silence your cell phone and refrain from texting. While we will regularly use the class computers or your laptops for in-class writing, research, and collaboration, please refrain from using your laptop for non-class activities.

6) Backing up Work

Please make sure to have a plan for backing up all of your digital work in multiple places in case of computer failure. Please also make sure to save all of the writing you complete for class.

7) Respect / Community

While we will often engage in vigorous and lively debate in this class, personal insults or attacks on an individual person's race, class, gender, sexuality, or disability will not be tolerated. This is an important issue to me. I will not tolerate any disrespectfulness.

8) Access / Accommodations

I am committed to maximizing your learning potential and making this course as accessible as possible. If there is any way that I can adapt this course to better meet your unique needs as a learner, please let me know! If you have a documented disability, I am especially interested in providing any accommodations that have been best determined by you and the Office of Disability Resources (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/oeeo/odr/>; 513-529-2541) in advance.

9) Niihka / Daily Schedule. The daily course schedule and more detailed assignment prompts will be available on niihka. The course schedule is subject to change based on the needs and interests of the class. You are responsible for regularly checking niihka for updates.

10) Grading Scale.

A 100-94%

A- 93-90%

B+ 89-87%

B 86-84%

B- 83-80%

C+ 79-77%

C 76-74%

C- 73-70%

D+ 69-67%

D 66-64%

D- 63-60%

F 59% and below

Resources

- *Your classmates.* Rely on one another for the questions you have regarding the readings, the work we're doing in class, software we may be using, etc. You all, both individually and as a collective, embody a vast bank of knowledge and experiences.

- *Your Instructor.* I will do all I can to assist you in succeeding in this course. Feel free to meet with me during my office hours or another scheduled time. Email is a reliable way to contact me and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner.

- *IT Support* (513-529-7900; ithelp@muohio.edu; 317 hughes hall) The IT support desk is the main point of contact for technology questions at Miami, including issues with connecting to MU wireless.

- *Howe (King Library) and Windate (18 Peabody) Writing Centers.* The Howe Writing Center is located on the main floor of King Library. The Center is staffed with writing consultants from many different academic areas. In a one-on-one workshop, a staff member will consult with you concerning work-in-progress, final drafts, research style, and many other aspects of writing. It is best to schedule an appointment ahead of time, but you may also walk in on days when they have consultants available. For further information, visit the student resources site at

<http://writingcenter.lib.muohio.edu/>.

- *The Student Counseling Service*. Located in the Health Services Center, this office provides a wide range of counseling services. For more information, call 513-529-4634

Schedule

Week 1

Day 1 Course Introduction: What is a Journey?

HWK: CCM 139-150; Setting up blog

Day 2 Elements of Close Reading: Terminology and Structuring

HWK: "Diving into the Wreck" – Blog Entry

Week 2

Day 3 Diving into Close Reading and Inquiry 1

HWK: Jhumpa Lahiri Part 1

Day 4 Challenging Texts: "What the Hell?" Or, "Who the Hell?"

HWK: Jhumpa Lahiri Part 2; Blog Entry (Focusing on Inquiry 1 Topic)

Week 3

Day 5 Picking a Topic; Group Work (According to the text they have chosen)

HWK: Blog, developing ideas for I1

Day 6 Re-reading and Making Meaning

HWK: Rough Draft

Week 4

Day 7 Group Work; Writer's Letter

HWK: Finalize Draft

Day 8 Identities in the Past

INQUIRY 1 DUE, HWK: Eyes

Week 5

Day 9 Inquiry 2; Example of Inquiry 2

HWK: Eyes, Blog geared towards thinking Culturally

Day 10 Eyes' Themes and Motifs

HWK: Finish novel

Week 6

Day 11 Cultural Discussion

HWK: Zero Draft/Position Paper

Day 12 Setting History in Context (Investigating possible external sources)

HWK: Rough Draft, Main quotes of the text

Week 7

Day 13 Library Visit

HWK: Part A

Day 14 Thesis Development

PART A DUE; Zero Draft

Week 8

Day 15 Part B; Critical Interpretations

HWK: Rough draft

Day 16 Group Work

HWK: Working Draft

Week 9

Day 17 Conferences

Day 18 Conferences

Week 10

Day 19 Inquiry 3; What is in a Name?

PART B DUE, HWK: Blog

Day 20 "Spirited Away"

HWK: "Spirited Away" Response

Week 11

Day 21 Finish Film

HWK: Blog

Day 22 Proposals Due, Group Work

HWK: Rough draft

Week 12 Inquiry 3

Day 23 Rubric Development

Day 24 Peer review

HWK: INQUIRY 3

Week 13

Day 25 Sharing Inquiry 3

Read : Foucault "What is an Author?"; Rich, "Compulsory Heterosex

Day 26 Discuss Reading

HWK: Inquiry 4 Assignment Blog Response

Week 14 Inquiry 4

Day 27 In Class Reflection Workshop; Looking Over Their Journey

HWK: Work on reflection

Day 28 TBA

Week 15

Workshops