

Course Syllabus

Course Title: English 1600-30: *Critical Thinking, Literature & Composition*

Prerequisite: English 1500 with a grade of C or better

Course Schedule: August 24 – December 17

Course Location: Offline

Required Textbooks:

- *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* (7th ed.) by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs (available to rent from TC bookstore)
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey.

Suggested Resources:

- Dictionary and/or Thesaurus
- Guide to Writing Research Papers (MLA Format)

Instructor: Ryan S. Hickman

Telephone: 661-717-2537 (cell)

E-Mail: rhickman@taft.org

Availability: I am here to help! Please do not hesitate to contact me via email anytime with questions or comments at the above address. If you wish to speak by phone, I can be reached during the weekend at any time between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. and on weekdays anytime after 3:00 p.m. (until 9:00p.m.)

Course Description

This course focuses on critical thinking and composition through reading of essays, poetry, drama and fiction. It introduces critical evaluation, develops techniques of analytical, critical and argumentative writing, explores inference, evidence, inductive and deductive reasoning, identification of assumptions underlying conclusions and other terms of logical thinking, and continues expository writing (8000 word minimum).

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical thinking skills
 - Show mastery of critical thinking terms
 - Recognize errors in thinking
 - Distinguish opinion from fact and valid arguments from unclear and/or invalidly reasoned arguments
- Read analytically so that they can:
 - Evaluate college-level material from a variety of sources
 - Analyze critically and interpret and explain connotations, denotations, implications
 - Know the major literary genres
 - Find, evaluate and use outside sources including professional criticism to develop their own writing
- Write essays in which they:
 - Use a clear thesis, good organization, and logical support
 - Develop an argument using persuasion, deductive and inductive reasoning, draw inferences, and make conclusions
 - Use developing and supporting details, examples, data and evidence, and substantiate their interpretations with specific evidence from text
 - Use outside sources, carefully researched and correctly documented
 - Improve and correct logic, style and mechanics of their writing
 - Revise content after considering instructor's and peers' written comments.

Policies & Procedures

Distance learning offline is a method of course delivery that does not require the student to come to campus, nor does it require Internet access. The course materials (orientation, syllabus, etc.) are available two ways. You can access them via the Taft College distance learning web page (<http://www.taftcollege.edu/dl/index.html>) or by contacting the instructor and requesting that they be mailed to you (TCI students will receive course materials from instructional aides). It is the responsibility of each student to begin on time. ***If you do not complete the first assignment by the due date listed in the course syllabus, you will be dropped from the course.***

Once you have accessed the course materials, read the entire syllabus carefully and follow the instructions regarding the completion and submission of course assignments by the due dates listed. *(Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time should you have any questions regarding any of the assignments.)* The preferred method of submitting assignments is via email to my Taft College email address. Please submit the assignments in .doc format in Microsoft Word. You may also submit assignments to the Taft College Learning Center (LLRC) in the distance-learning folder or via regular mail to the following address:

Taft College
Attention: Mr. Ryan Hickman
29 Emmons Park Drive
Taft, CA 93268

For mailed work to be counted as on time, it must be postmarked on or before the due date. If work is left with the attendant in the LLRC, it must be date stamped.

All submitted work must be typed (TCI students: work may be handwritten if you temporarily do not have computer access). Label all assignments carefully with your name, my name and the title of the assignment in the header. I will always accept work early, but remember that no late work is accepted.

Please contact me immediately concerning the method in which you will gain access to course materials (via Internet or mail) and request mailed materials. If I do not hear from you, I will assume that you are

accessing the Internet and no materials will be mailed.

Attendance

Because this is a distance-learning course, attendance is not required. However, each student is expected to turn in assignments on time. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the due dates listed in the course syllabus. *If you have questions about an assignment, please contact me well in advance.* I invite everyone to contact me as often as needed. If you fail to meet the deadlines listed in the syllabus, your grade will be adversely affected. Plagiarized work will receive zero credit and you may be dropped from the course.

Late Assignments

No late or make-up work will be accepted. If you feel that you have extenuating circumstances, communicate with the instructor and/or counseling office immediately. The instructor will consider situations of students having documented extenuating circumstances (death in the family, hospitalization, court dates). Sickness and computer problems are NOT extenuating circumstances.

Feedback

I will provide timely, constructive feedback regarding any and all assignments that each student submits. If you would like to have your papers returned to you, please make a note to me along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you do not enclose these envelopes with your correspondence, your work will be left in the LLRC for you to pick up. Please pick up your assignments within a week to a week and a half after the due date. TCI students will have their work returned to them by the instructional aide. After receiving feedback regarding an assignment, please read it over carefully as this is part of the learning process. If you seek further clarification regarding feedback, please contact me via email or by phone.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

All assignments that you submit must be your own original words or ideas. Any use of the words or ideas of others must be accompanied by the necessary quotation marks and/or citations. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism. The penalties for such offenses are severe as you will receive no credit for the assignment and may be dropped

from the course. If you have questions regarding the proper format for citing sources, please contact the instructor or refer to any guide on how to write research papers (MLA format).

Accommodations

Students who believe that they may need accommodations for this class are encouraged to contact the instructor or Student Support Services (SSS) at (661) 763-7927 as soon as possible to ensure that the appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Grading

100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59 <	F

Grade Components

Writing Activities	30%
Critical Analysis Essay #1	15%
Critical Analysis Essay #2	15%
Critical Analysis Essay #3	15%
Critical Analysis of <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>	25%

Checking Grades

You may keep track of your own grade by adding together the points you earn for each assignment and dividing by the number of points possible. However, I will give you an update of your current grade in the course after each critical analysis essay has been graded. If you wish to know your grade more often than this, please contact me.

Course Format

The literature text is divided into 4 sections:

- Reading and Writing About Fiction
- Reading and Writing About Poetry
- Reading and Writing About Drama
- Special Writing Topics About Literature

You are required to read each section (including various pieces of literature) from the text and write a critical analysis (essay) of a

specific piece of literature from each genre (fiction, poetry, drama, literature). The fourth and final critical analysis (essay) of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* will act as the final exam for the course. You will also complete writing activities each week that explore the literary elements of each specific genre.

Reading Assignments

This is a very lengthy textbook and completing the assigned reading may require a fair amount of time for some students. Please remember to plan ahead and set aside a fair amount of time to gain adequate understanding of the concepts addressed in the readings. The final critical analysis essay will deal with the novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey. Please begin reading the novel right away as it may require a considerable of time to complete. There are recommended page numbers listed in the course schedule below for you to read each week in order to keep pace with the rest of the class.

Writing Activities in Response to Readings

Weekly writing activities are designed to enhance your critical thinking and writing skills. The writing activities will vary from week to week, but they will always deal with topics relevant to the week's reading selections. Please respond with substance while limiting your responses to the length indicated in the course schedule below. Remember that these assignments will be graded based on the quality of information, not quantity!

Critical Analysis Essays

The goal of a critical analysis is to broaden and deepen your understanding of a work of literature. A critical analysis explains a work of fiction, poetry or drama by means of interpretation. An interpretation is an individual response that addresses meaning. Interpretations are developed by an in- depth examination of a text. (Your interpretation often will be the thesis statement of your paper.) Refer to the suggestions on the final page of the syllabus to assist you in writing your essays

There will be 4 critical analysis essays assigned throughout the course on works of my choosing. Refer to the course schedule below

for essay information. Essays should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced with one-inch margins, size 12 font, Times New Roman or Arial. Remember that I evaluate your work based on quality of content, not quantity! Please make sure that the essays are free of any spelling or grammatical errors. Also remember to cite any secondary sources referenced in your essay in proper MLA format. If you have questions regarding essay assignments, please contact me and I will be glad to help. Also, it will be helpful to read Chapter 33 in the literature text. This chapter offers helpful insights on areas of interpretation of literature. You may also contact me for assistance regarding the writing of research papers. If you wish to send me a copy of your rough draft before the due date, I would be glad to give you feedback and advice concerning your paper and return it to you for revision. This may help ensure a higher grade on the essay.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (August 24-28) Assignments (Due August 28)

- Read and review the course syllabus and contact the instructor telling him how you will be accessing course materials (email, postal mail, instructional aide). Also, feel free to ask any questions you may have concerning the course.
- Read Chapter 1 – *Introduction: Reading, Responding To, & Writing About Literature*
 - Write a typed summary (1 page maximum) of the chapter's key points. Remember that a summary is just a condensed version of important material in your own words.
- Read "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant (p. 4-11) and answer the following questions. Each question should be answered completely.
 - 1. After paying off her debt, Mathilde wonders what her life would have been like if she had not lost the necklace. What do you think would have happened to her?
 - 2. Put yourself in Mathilde's situation. Would you have done the same given the circumstances?

Why or why not? If not, what would you have done?

- 3. Now put yourself in the position of Mrs. Forrestier. What would you have done once you heard the truth from Mathilde ten years later?
- 4. Of the many morals presented in this story, which stands out to you the most? Why?

Week 2 (Aug. 29-Sept. 4) Assignments (Due September 4)

- Read Chapters 2-4 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Begin Reading *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (p. 9-28)
- Read "Neighbors" by Raymond Carver (p 58-62) and answer the following questions. Each question should be answered completely.
 - 1. The opening sentence of *Neighbors* states that the Millers were a "happy couple." After reading the rest of the story, would you agree with the opening statement? Why or why not?
 - 2. Compare the desires of the Millers with those of Mathilde in "The Necklace." How are they similar? How are they different?
 - 3. What is the symbolism of the locked door at the end of the story (In other words, what does the locked door mean)?
- Read "A Rose For Emily" by William Faulkner (p 130-136) and answer the following questions. Each question should be answered completely.
 - 1. Discuss the narrative structure of "A Rose for Emily." Why does Faulkner present the story's events in non chronological order? Would the story be successful if he had told it in a strictly linear fashion? Why or why not?
 - 2. How does the narrator's opinion of Miss Emily change throughout "A Rose for Emily"?
 - 3. Do you think that Emily killed Homer Barron or did he simply die of natural causes? What evidence from the

story supports your stance?

- Read “Two Kinds” by Amy Tan (p 211-218) and answer questions #1- 4 on page 218. Each question should be answered completely.

Week 3 (September 5-11) Assignments (Due September 11)

- Read Chapters 5-8 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 29-41)
- Read “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” by Ambrose Bierce (p 234-240) and answer questions #1-5 on page 240. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “The House on Mango Street” by Sandra Cisneros (p 279-281) and answer questions #1-2 on page 280-281. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “Luck” by Mark Twain (p 336-339) and answer questions #1-4 on page 339. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin and answer questions #2-5 on page 364. Each question should be answered completely.

Week 4 (September 12-18) Assignments (Due September 18)

- Read Chapters 9-12 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 42-69)
- Read “The Fox & The Grapes” by Aesop (p 399) and answer questions #1-3 on page 399. Each question should be answered completely.
- Create an outline to organize your thoughts for your first critical analysis essay on “A Rose for Emily.” Refer to page 31 in the text for a model outline and use the same format. Submit a copy of your outline with this week’s assignments. Remember to keep a copy for yourself so you can begin your essay!

Week 5 (September 19-25) Assignments (Due September 25)

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- Write a critical analysis essay on any aspect of “A Rose for Emily.” Remember to use what you have learned from all of the readings including outside sources if desired. Refer to the sections above and at the end of the syllabus on critical analysis essays to assist you in the process. Include a works cited page with your paper in proper MLA format.

Week 6 (Sept. 26-Oct. 2) Assignments (Due October 2)

- Read Chapters 13-16 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 70-91)
- Read “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost (p 621-622) and answer questions #1-5 on page 622. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “Jabberwocky” by Lewis Carroll (p. 646) and answer question #1.
- Read “The Tyger” by William Blake (p. 703-704) and answer questions #1-4
- Read “Kubla Khan” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (p. 705-706) and answer questions #1-2.

Week 7 (October 3-9) Assignments (Due October 9)

- Read Chapters 17-19 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 92-115)
- Read “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning” by John Donne (p 735- 736) and answer questions #1-5 on page 736. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “Sonnet 18: Shall I Compare Thee To a Summer’s Day” by William Shakespeare (p 746) and answer questions #1-2 on page 746. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read “When You Are Old” by William Butler Yeats (p 787) and answer question #3 on page 787.
- Read “The Sound of the Sea” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (p 822) and answer questions #1-4 on page 822-823. Each question should be answered completely.

Week 8 (October 10-16) Assignments (Due October 16)

- Read Chapters 20-22 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (p. 116-144)
- Read "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas (p 876) and answer questions #1-4 on page 876. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read "Old Men Pitching Horseshoes" by X.J. Kennedy (p 908) and answer questions #1-3 on page 909. Each question should be answered completely.

Week 9 (October 17-23) Assignments (Due October 23)

- Read Chapters 23-25 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (p. 145-168)
- Read "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by Langston Hughes (p 969) and answer questions #1-3 on page 969. Each question should be answered completely.
- Read the works by Wordsworth, Dickinson & Frost in Chapter 24. Choose 1 favorite work written by each author. Using information in all the chapters you have read thus far, write a composition explaining why each work is your favorite. Be sure to site specific examples from the texts of the works and discuss any personal feelings each work may have invoked (1-2 pages).
- Browse the literary works in Chapter 25. Choose two works by the same author (i.e. "Beat! Beat! Drums!" & "I Hear America Singing" both by Walt Whitman). Compare and contrast the two works in terms of wording, imagery, metaphorical language, tone, sound, rhythm, rhyme, form, symbolism, allusion, and/or theme. You do not have to discuss all of these components but be as detailed as possible in your composition (1 page maximum).

Week 10 (October 24-30) Assignments (Due October 30)

- Write a critical analysis essay on “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T.S. Eliot. Remember to use what you have learned from all of the readings including outside sources if desired. Refer to the section above on critical analysis essays to assist you in the process. Include a works cited page with your paper in proper MLA format.

Week 11 (Oct. 31-Nov. 6) Assignments (Due November 6)

- Read Chapters 26-27 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 169-190)
- Read “Oedipus the King” (1263-1301) by Sophocles & “Death of A Salesman” by Arthur Miller (1409-1474) and answer the following:
 - Briefly summarize the tragedies in both plays (1 page maximum).
 - Page 1409 of the text states that these two works are similar. In regard to their tragic elements, how are they similar? Explain your response using specific examples from the text (1 page maximum).

Week 12 (November 7-13) Assignments (Due November 13)

- Read Chapters 28-29 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest (p. 242-272)
- Read “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” by William Shakespeare and do the following:
 - Answer questions #1-18 on page 1546-1547.
 - Contrast the elements of comedy with those of tragedy. Using specific examples from “Oedipus,” “Death of a Salesman,” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” discuss how the tragic and comedic plays differ (1-2 pages).

Week 13 (November 14-20) Assignments (Due November 20)

- Read Chapters 30-31 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
- Read “A Dollhouse” by Henrik Ibsen (p. 1760-1808).
- This play (and others written by Ibsen) is highly symbolic. Write a critical analysis essay on the symbolism in “A Dollhouse” by Henrik Ibsen (p. 1760-1808). Remember to use what you have learned from all of the readings including outside sources if desired. Refer to the section above on critical analysis essays to assist you in the process. Include a works cited page with your paper in proper MLA format.

Week 14 (November 21-27): Thanksgiving

- Read *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (p. 191-241)

Week 15 (Nov. 28-Dec. 4) Assignments (Due December 4)

- Read Chapters 32-35 – *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*
 - Write a 1 page personal review of the course and its readings/assignments. Answer the following in your review:
 - χ 1. How have the readings/assignments affected your appreciation and/or understanding of literature?
 - χ 2. Is there a particular work or genre that stands out to you? Why?
 - χ 3. What was the most beneficial aspect of the course? The least?

Week 16 (December 5-14) Assignments (Due December 14)

- Write a critical analysis essay on one of the following themes explored in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* by Ken Kesey.
 - Issues of Race
 - Gender Issues
 - Accepted definitions of “sane,” “insane,” “healthy” and “sick.”
- Remember to use what you have learned from all of the readings including outside sources if desired. Refer to the section above

on critical analysis essays to assist you in the process. Include a works cited page with your paper in proper MLA format.

Course Schedule at a Glance

Week	Assignments Due	Due Date
#1	-Contact Instructor -Chapter 1 Summary -Reading Responses: <i>The Necklace</i>	August 28
#2	-Reading Responses: <i>Neighbors, A Rose For Emily and Two Kinds</i>	September 4
#3	-Reading Responses: <i>An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge, The House on Mango Street, Luck, and The Story of an Hour</i>	September 11
#4	-Reading Responses: <i>The Fox & The Grapes</i> -Outline: <i>A Rose for Emily</i> OR <i>An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge</i>	September 18
#5	Critical Analysis Essay #1	September 25
#6	-Reading Responses: <i>Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening, Jabberwocky, The Tyger, and Kubla Khan</i>	October 2
#7	-Reading Responses: <i>A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning, Sonnet 18, When You Are Old, and The Sound of the Sea</i>	October 9
#8	-Reading Responses: <i>Do Not Go Gentle into That</i>	October 16

	<i>Good Night, and Old Men Pitching Horseshoes</i>	
#9	-Reading Responses: <i>The Negro Speaks of Rivers</i> -Opinion Paper on Wordsworth, Dickinson & Frost -Compare/Contrast of 2 works by same author	October 23
#10	Critical Analysis Essay #2: <i>The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock</i>	October 30
#11	Reading Responses: <i>Oedipus and Death of a Salesman</i>	November 6
#12	Reading Responses: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	November 13
#13	Critical Analysis Essay #2: <i>A Dollhouse</i>	November 20
#14	Read <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>	NA (Thanksgiving)
#15	Personal Review	December 4
#16	Critical Analysis Essay #4: <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>	December 11

Suggestions for Writing Critical Analysis Essays:

How do you conduct an "in-depth" examination of a text?

- 1. Before reading the work, make sure to examine the title carefully. Often the title is a clue to important ideas in the work.*
- 2. Make sure you look up in the dictionary any words with which you are not familiar.*
- 3. After reading the work the first time, ask yourself the following questions:*
 - χ What is the geographical, historical and social setting? How does this affect the story or poem?*
 - χ Who is (are) the main character(s)?*
 - χ Who are the secondary characters, and how are they linked to the main characters?*
 - χ Does the main character change? If so, how and why? If not, why not?*
 - χ What is the conflict? Can you trace the development and resolution of the conflict?*
 - χ Who is telling the story? How does this influence the story or poem?*
 - χ In poetry, can you find a pattern of rime and meter?*
- 4. As you re-read the work, make sure you can answer these questions. Then ask yourself the following questions, which may help you to discover deeper meanings that will lead you to an interpretation.*
 - Can you summarize the author's meaning in one paragraph?*
 - Can you state a theme of the work in one sentence?*
 - Can you identify any symbols or metaphors? What do they mean?*

How do you support your interpretation?

Support your interpretation by finding multiple examples in the literature that support your thesis. You find these examples in the literary elements, such as plot, point of view, character, setting, symbols, tone, and style. In poetry, the uses of language (rime, meter and metaphors) are also examples that can support your interpretation.

If interpretations are an individual response, are all interpretations

valid?

Because an interpretation must be supported, the strength or weakness of your interpretation rests on the strength or weakness of your argument. In other words, you must organize a discussion that convinces the reader that your point of view is valid.

Where do you find evidence to support your interpretation?

In a literary analysis evidence is found mainly from the work you are discussing. Secondary sources (published critical analyses) may support your point of view as well.

How much of the story should you retell in a critical analysis?

A critical analysis is NOT a summary of the work. You do need to make the reader aware of the scene or section of the poem that you are discussing; therefore, some plot summary is necessary, but re-telling the story or a poem is not considered an analysis. You can assume your reader has read the work.

What should be documented in a critical analysis?

Any secondary sources must, of course, be documented. Also, direct quotes should be documented. Unlike secondary sources, a summary of a literary scene or event does not need documentation. MLA style documentation must be used.