

ENGL 0027 - LITERATURE BY WOMEN

Catalog Description

Prerequisite: Eligibility for ENGL 1A

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Survey of women's literature, including novels/novellas, the short story, poetry, drama, and essays. Within the literature, which spans time, culture, and genre, we will explore patterns and themes involving women's personal, psychological, political, economic, intellectual, social, and cultural lives. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Identify, interpret and analyze literature by women from the middle ages to the present in cultural, historical, political and critical contexts.
- CSLO #2: Analyze the relationship between culture and literary form and content by interpreting author intent in multiple genres.
- CSLO #3: Communicate analyses, interpretations and critiques of single works or several works of literature and authors from each historical period and subperiod.

Effective Term

Fall 2017

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Analyze the relationship between culture and literary form and content by interpreting author intent in multiple genres;
2. Communicate analyses, interpretations, and critiques of single works or several works of literature by authors from each historical period and sub-period;
3. Identify, interpret, and analyze literature by women from the Middle Ages to the present in cultural, historical, political, and critical contexts.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
 - AA/AS - Multicultural Studies
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C2 Humanities
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)

- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3B Humanities

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Sample Prompts: 1. In "When We Dead Awaken," Adrienne Rich writes of Virginia Woolf that her "tone [is that] of a woman almost in touch with her anger, who is determined not to appear angry," and she attributes this to the fact that "to a greater or lesser extent, every woman writer has written for men" (985). Making reference to any two of our writers from this week's reading (Bradstreet, Behn, Astell, Wheatley), discuss the extent to which Rich's observation might apply to their work as well. Do you sense the constraining presence of "The Angel in the House" in this week's texts? 2. Considering one or more of the selections by Sojourner Truth, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Jacobs, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Frances E.W. Harper, discuss and analyze the ways in which the ideology of the cult of "True Womanhood" represents a double-bind for slaves and women of color. What are the connections between slavery and the oppression of women, and in what ways are African American women doubly oppressed by the prevailing racism and misogyny of the 19th century? 3. In addition to its gender-bending plot twist, Alcott's short story "My Mysterious Mademoiselle" engages in a kind of narrative play with gender roles by assuming the voice of a male narrator. Discuss and analyze the effect of Alcott's choice to tell this story from a male point of view. What commentary on gender roles do you see embedded in this text? Discussion posts should consist of 1-2 substantial paragraphs that respond directly to the prompt (see the DB rubric for guidelines). While you should include appropriate and relevant references to the texts, be sure to avoid simply summarizing the material (review "Asking Critical Questions" from the Syllabus page). Use parenthetical MLA citations to acknowledge any quotations, paraphrases, or summaries taken directly from a source. Be sure to read your colleagues' posts--all of them--before responding. It should be clear that you are following along with the ideas, questions, etc.. and engaging in discussion with your classmates, just as you would in a physical classroom environment. Your responses should do more than simply acknowledge or agree or disagree with the post; they should point out some connections among posts/ideas, ask further questions, build on what's already been said. They should extend the discussion, not simply repeat or evaluate.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: 1. Midterm Essay: Sample prompts: 1. The biblical story of the Fall, and Eve's role in it, preoccupies women writers from the very earliest selections we have studied. Trace this theme in the works of two writers from different historical periods that we've covered so far. How does Eve (or some analogue of Eve) function as a literary trope? How is her character reimagined, rewritten, and revised? 2. The idea that intellect is a masculine province and that emotion is the realm of the feminine recurs throughout women's literature. Consider the ways in which two of our writers from different historical periods resist and/or reproduce this dominant gender ideology. How do they subvert

and/or submit to traditional representations of their sex? 3. Choose one essay and one poem or piece of short fiction from among those we've read so far (they may be from the same or different historical periods). What can we learn by reading these two works together? What concerns and themes do they share, and how are those concerns represented differently by the different genres of writing? Papers will be judged in terms of both the viability and clarity of the argument and the quality of the writing (see the rubric attached to the assignment on LMS for details). A narrow topic with great attention to detail will be more successful than a sweeping overview. A paper that merely summarizes will not earn higher than 65 points. Remember that you must use quotations to support your assertions (and cite them according to the new, 8th edition MLA guidelines for 2016); originality will be admired, but not when its claims are unsubstantiated or vague. Remember that a paper is always judged on its coherence and argumentation. Your knowledge of the meaning of the readings is important, but so are the style and structure of your essay.

- Projects
 - Example: For the final research paper, you will have the opportunity to select your own topic and focus from among the range of writers, periods, themes, and genres that we have studied over the course of the entire semester.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will present a lecture on relevant cultural and historical events in England and the U.S. during a specific historical period, along with a preview of the assigned authors and their relevant works and literary styles, in order to frame subsequent class discussions of the literature.

Distance Learning

1. Students will read selections from Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" and watch a dramatized video presentation of the text, after which they will respond to the following prompt for a discussion board: "Taking into account Virginia Woolf's analysis of women writers in 'A Room of One's Own,' as well as the introductory material on the literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, discuss the works we've read by Julian of Norwich and Aemilia Lanyer in the context of their historical circumstances. Do Woolf's observations help to illuminate the subject matter and themes addressed by these writers? If so, how? If not, why not?"

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. In "When We Dead Awaken," Adrienne Rich writes of Virginia Woolf that her "tone [is that] of a woman almost in touch with her anger, who is determined not to appear angry," and she attributes this to the fact that "to a greater or lesser extent, every woman writer has written for men" (985). Making reference to any two of our writers from this week's

reading (Bradstreet, Behn, Astell, Wheatley), discuss the extent to which Rich's observation might apply to their work as well. Do you sense the constraining presence of "The Angel in the House" in this week's texts? 2. After reading the selections from Emily Dickinson's poetry, do you find any topics/themes/symbols that recur in her work? How are these expressed distinctively through her style/language/tone, and how are they connected to, or different from, the literary tradition we've considered so far? Provide a close, analytical reading of one or more of her works that addresses these issues. 3. On the surface, "The Gentle Lena" is a simple narrative about a young woman who is brought to America from Germany and sent out to service for four years before being married off and bearing four children, dying in childbirth following her last delivery. Stylistically, however, the story is unlike any we've encountered thus far. The text is simple and repetitive, yet we know that Stein is very consciously manipulating the superficial elements of language in order to achieve a deeper effect and purpose. With that in mind, how do you interpret this piece? What is going on here in the interplay amongst literary elements like style, character, and theme?

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Sample quotation analysis assignment: For each quotation, you will identify the name of the author and the title of the work; then, you will analyze the quotation, pointing out its important literary features and its relation to the historical context. All quotations will require that you read analytically, noticing and explaining the author's use of language (i.e., metaphor, allusion, figurative language, word choice, etc.) and connecting the ideas to important themes and issues of the period as they relate to women and gender (e.g., religion, government, education, marriage, race, class, etc.). A. "As I went on with my account her color changed frequently, she wept, and sometimes groaned. She spoke in tones so sad, that I was touched by her grief. The tears came to my eyes; but I was soon convinced that her emotions arose from anger and wounded pride. She felt that her marriage vows were desecrated, her dignity insulted; but she had no compassion for the poor victim of her husband's perfidy. She pitied herself as a martyr; but she was incapable of feeling for the condition of shame and misery in which her unfortunate, helpless slave was placed." B. "It is dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough constantly to irritate and provoke study, and when you follow the lame uncertain curves for a little distance they suddenly commit suicide—plunge off at outrageous angles, destroy themselves in unheard-of contradictions." 2. Midterm essay assignment, with sample prompts: Your assignment is to write a paper that responds to one of the prompts below and analyzes one or two of the texts we've read for this course (though the prompts exclude direct references to the critical pieces we've read by Woolf, Rich, Walker, and Welter, you are welcome to make use of those sources as you see fit—they do not count as a "third" text for the purposes of this essay, though of course you should appropriately cite all of your sources). Your paper should be a traditional literary analysis (not a summary or a personal response to the writings). Your paper should have a strong thesis that guides your analysis. Some of the prompts ask you to treat an element of a single work, and some ask you to make a comparison of two works with interesting similarities and differences. A. The biblical story of the Fall, and Eve's role in it, preoccupies women writers from the very earliest selections we have studied. Trace this theme in the works of two writers from different historical periods that we've covered so far. How does Eve (or some analogue of Eve) function as a literary trope? How is her character re-imagined, rewritten, and revised? B. The idea that intellect is a masculine province and that emotion is the realm of the feminine recurs throughout women's literature. Consider the ways in which two of our writers from different historical periods resist and/or reproduce

this dominant gender ideology. How do they subvert and/or submit to traditional representations of their sex?

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Required Materials

- Norton Anthology of Literature by Women Vol. 1
 - Author: Sandra Gilbert & Susan Gubar
 - Publisher: Norton
 - Publication Date: 2007
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Norton Anthology of Literature by Women, Vol. 2
 - Author: Sandra Gilbert & Susan Gubar
 - Publisher: Norton
 - Publication Date: 2007
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.