



**ENGL 3001W-005**  
**TEXTUAL ANALYSIS**  
**T/TH 8:00-9:55AM**  
**Elliott Hall N647**  
**Instructor: Dr. John Pistelli**  
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**Office: 16 Lind Hall**  
**Office hours: TH 10:00AM-12:00PM**

## Description, Goals, and Objectives

**text** from Latin *textus* “style or texture of a work,” literally “thing woven,” from past participle stem of *texere* “to weave”

**analysis** from Greek *analysis* “a breaking up, a loosening, releasing,” noun of action from *analyein* “unloose, release, set free; to loose a ship from its moorings”

This course is an advanced introduction to the content, concerns, and methods of English literary studies. We will read examples of the traditional major forms (poetry, fiction, drama) and watch one film while also surveying literary theory from Plato to the present. Throughout the course, we will pose formal, linguistic, theological, philosophical, ethical, political, psychological, and sociological questions to imaginative writing. In turn, we will be attentive to the limits of these concepts as they confront works of art whose complexity of meaning or intensity of feeling may elude final interpretation. As a writing-intensive course, moreover, this class will ask you to write literary criticism as well as to read it; we will focus on developing arguments, supporting them with evidence, and composing clear and eloquent prose. The word “text” refers to any arrangement of words or other communicative signs, from instruction manuals to political speeches to TV shows. If we privilege *literary* texts over others—“literary texts” being broadly defined as those that tend to invite more attention to the artful patterning of words/signs than to the message those words/signs communicate—it is because literature has long been considered among the most complex, intelligent, and affecting modes of textuality. Perhaps the ultimate question this course will address is whether or not this is the case; in other words, the histories, theories, and methods we learn here may help us to say why we should read literature at all.

## Required Texts

- Course Website ([umn.moodle.edu](http://umn.moodle.edu))\*
- Robert Dale Parker, *How to Interpret Literature*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford UP, ISBN 0199331162)
- T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (Norton, ISBN 0393974995)
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Harcourt, ISBN 0156030357)
- Toni Morrison, *Sula* (Vintage, ISBN 1400033438)
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Vintage, ISBN 1400078776)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Dover, ISBN 0486264785)
- William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Signet, ISBN 0451526929)

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\* A number of required readings will be found on the course website. I expect you to download these and bring them to class on the appropriate day. Please read all online materials as carefully as you would study print documents.

## Assignments

### *Grade breakdown.*

Participation	10%
Quizzes	30%
Short Essays	30%
Final Project	30%

*Participation.* It is your responsibility to be here. I do not directly give an attendance grade but I do take attendance. Be advised that there will be in-class exercises, assignments, and activities in this course that you will miss if you are absent. If you cannot be in class for any reason, please ask a classmate rather than the instructor for notes or a summary. If illness or other problems require you to miss more than a normal amount of class (two or three meetings), please let me know. If you miss more than two meetings without a documented reason, your overall course grade may be affected. If you miss more than four meetings, you may be in danger of failing the course. Finally, be on time to class—lateness is highly disruptive and it will affect your participation grade. As for participation itself, it includes speaking up in class at least once a week, contributing to in-class activities, and/or attending my office hours or otherwise getting in touch with me.

*Quizzes.* There will be brief quizzes, mostly short and information-based, given at the beginning of class from time to time throughout the semester. They will ask you to identify or produce vocabulary, facts, or passages and possibly to write short explanations of their significance. I will not try to trick you, since the main point is recall. As long as you attend class regularly, pay attention, and take careful notes, you should do fine on these. I have not listed them on the syllabus, but they won't be pop quizzes—I will give you fair warning. They cannot be made up.

*Short essays.* You will write a short essay of 3-4 pp. for each of the three parts of the course. These will be thesis-driven argumentative essays that respond to prompts I will provide for you as the course progresses. In brief, each essay will deal with a different type of literary evidence (source materials for poetry, theoretical positions for fiction, textual variants for drama). You will have the opportunity to hand in two drafts of the first short essay; only the revised draft will be graded. For the second essay, you will participate in a peer review before handing in a final draft to me. You are on your own for the final one, but I am always happy to discuss your writing in office hours. Each paper will be worth 10% of your grade. See the course schedule for due dates. Essays should be submitted electronically in .doc or .docx formats and the name of your file should follow this format: yourlastname-essay#.doc (example: pistelli-essay3.doc). More details will be provided later in the course. Late assignments will not be accepted without a documented reason.

*Final project.* This will ultimately take the form of a 7-8 pp. argumentative research paper on any text/author/topic studied in the course (you may develop it from one of your short essays). The assignment will have several graded stages. These steps will include your choice of a text, your preparation of an annotated bibliography, and your submission of a prospectus. More details for this assignment will be given as the course progresses. Late assignments will not be accepted without a documented reason.

## Grades

### *Grading Policy.*

- A (90-100): Outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B (80-90): Significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- C (70-80): Meets the course requirements in every respect
- D (60-70): Worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully
- F (0-60): Work was not completed

*Incompletes.* A grade of incomplete (“I”) is given only in a genuine and documented emergency, and *only* for work which is due during the last two weeks of the course. You must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

## Writing Intensive Guidelines

This course meets the Council on Liberal Education guidelines for a Writing Intensive course. This means that the course:

- integrates writing into course content, through writing assignments that work toward specific course objectives and writing activities that take place throughout the semester
- provides explicit instruction in writing
- requires a cumulative minimum of 2,500 words of formal writing apart from any informal writing activities and assignments
- includes at least one formal assignment that requires students to revise and resubmit drafts after receiving feedback from the course instructor
- requires that at least one-third of each student’s final course grade must be tied to the written work done in the course and that a student cannot pass the course and fail the writing component

## Student Conduct

To avoid disruptions, please observe the following policies: Turn phones off and put them away before coming to class. During class, your attention should be directed toward whomever is speaking or to your assigned task. I strongly discourage use of laptops and other devices during class time (unless appropriate) as they tend to isolate the user and distract others; if you have a pressing need to use one, please come and talk to me about it. Note: this is an upper-level class in the humanities, which means that serious, controversial, and sometimes painful human problems will be discussed—and, in literary works, disturbing things will be depicted. I hope we can approach these topics with an open mind and our conversations with respect for each other.

## Disability Accommodations

Any student with a documented disability condition who needs to arrange accommodations should contact the instructor and Disability Services (612-626-1333) at the beginning of the semester.

## Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an “F” or an “N” for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University.

### **Student Writing Support**

Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall. See <<http://writing.umn.edu/>> for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.

### **Other Policies**

For extensive information about UMN policy regarding the above topics and others—Student Conduct Code; Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Class Room; Scholastic Dishonesty; Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences; Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials; Grading and Transcripts; Sexual Harassment; Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action; Disability Accommodations; Mental Health and Stress Management; and Academic Freedom—I strongly encourage you to visit:

[http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS\\_APPA.html](http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS_APPA.html)

## SCHEDULE

(Key: \*=Moodle, W=The Waste Land, H=Hamlet.)

### Prologue. The Case for Literature

September 8

- Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar" (\*)

September 10

- Miller, "What Is Literature?" (\*)
- Borges, "The Book of Sand" (\*)

### 1. Poetry & Meaning

September 15

- Plato, from *Phaedrus* (\*)
- Aristotle, from *Poetics* (\*)
- Donne, "The Ecstasy" (\*)

September 17

- Shelley, from "A Defence of Poetry" (\*)
- Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (\*)

September 22

- Eliot, *The Waste Land*

September 24

- Sources (W)
- Shklovsky, "Art as Technique" (\*)

September 29

- Parker, New Criticism
- Eliot, Essays and London Letters (W)

October 1

- Parker, Deconstruction
- Ellmann, "The Sphinx Without a Secret" (W)
- DUE: ESSAY #1 FIRST DRAFT TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

### 2. Fiction & Reality

October 6

- Wood, from *How Fiction Works* (\*)
- Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 3-55

October 8

- Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 55-101
- Woolf, "Modern Fiction" (\*)

October 13

- Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 101-191

October 15

- Parker, Marxism
- Lukács, “The Ideology of Modernism” (\*)
- DUE: ESSAY #1 FINAL DRAFT TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

October 20

- Parker, Psychoanalysis
- Abel, from *Virginia Woolf and the Fictions of Psychoanalysis* (\*)

October 22

- Parker, Feminism
- Showalter, from *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (\*)
- Moi, from *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (\*)

October 27

- Morrison, *Sula*, Part One

October 29

- Morrison, *Sula*, Part Two
- Morrison, “Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation” (\*)

November 3

- Parker, Postcolonial and Race Studies
- Grewal, from *Circles of Sorron, Lines of Struggle: The Novels of Toni Morrison* (\*)

November 5

- Rothman, “A Better Way to Think about the Genre Debate” (\*)
- Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, Part One
- DUE: ESSAY #2 FIRST DRAFT FOR PEER REVIEW IN CLASS

November 10

- Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, Parts Two and Three

November 12

- Walkowitz, “Unimaginable Largeness: Kazuo Ishiguro, Translation, and the New World Literature” (\*)
- Armstrong, “The Affective Turn in Contemporary Fiction” (\*)
- DUE: ESSAY #2 FINAL DRAFT TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

### 3. Drama & Culture

November 17

- Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

November 19

- Parker, Queer Studies
- Sedgwick, “Tales of the Avunculate: Queer Tutelage in *The Importance of Being Earnest*” (\*)

November 24

- Shakespeare: An Overview (H)
- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act 1

November 26

- No class

December 1

- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, acts 2-3

December 3

- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, acts 4-5

December 8

- *Hamlet* (dir. Almereyda) screening
- DUE: ESSAY #3 TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

December 10

- Parker, Historicism and Cultural Studies
- Barnet, “*Hamlet* on Stage and Screen” (H)
- Fedderson/Richardson, “Hamlet 9/11: Sound, Noise, and Fury in Almereyda’s *Hamlet*” (\*)
- DUE: FINAL PAPER PROSPECTUS TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

### **Epilogue. Analysis Interminable**

December 15

- Coetzee, “What Is a Classic?” (\*)

December 17

- DUE: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

December 22

- DUE: RESEARCH PAPER TO MOODLE BY 11:59PM

**Chronological Listing of Literary and Film Texts**

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1601)  
John Donne, "The Ecstasy" (1633)  
John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819)  
Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)  
T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922)  
Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)  
Toni Morrison, *Sula* (1973)  
Michael Almereyda, *Hamlet* (2000)  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2005)