

Professor Cummings  
304-724-7645 M-F, after 6 p.m.  
Office hours –by appointment before or after class

English 102 – Writing about Arts and Humanities  
Spring, 2005 – T/TH  
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**COURSE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE:** To develop each student’s critical reading, thinking and writing skills about poetry, fiction and drama. Through in-class discussions and formal essays, you will learn to write clear, logical, well-structured critical essays, free from serious errors in usage and mechanics. Since research is an integral part of the approach, research methods, techniques and the phases of the writing process (prewriting, writing, revision, and editing) will be taught.

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED:**

1. An ability to render close textual analysis;
2. An ability to synthesize information from multiple texts;
3. An ability to render clear, cogent ideas;
4. An ability to structure well-developed essays, with thesis, textual support, and analysis;
5. An ability to correctly employ standard written English usage;
6. An ability to utilize effective research methodology and research paper skills;
7. An understanding of ethnic/cultural diversity;
8. An aesthetic and critical judgment for literature;
9. An ability to utilize basic technology to improve writing and thinking skills.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:**

Harbrace College Handbook  
Perrine’s Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense, newest edition  
Aiche, Chimamanda Ngozi. Purple Hibiscus  
A recent college-level dictionary; a computer account for Knutte Computer Lab

**ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to attend class, on time, fully prepared to join in the discussion. Contact me as soon as possible if you will be absent from class. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY WORK YOU MISS IF ABSENT!**

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Your final grade depends on active participation in class. Always bring your texts with you. Always read your assignments as listed in the syllabus, **before** you come to class! In this class, your participation is vital to the success of the course – both to you and to the class as a whole. For those of you who may hover between one grade and another, active participation can raise your final grade. Therefore, read and think critically and thoughtfully. Assess the assignments, compare and contrast them, question them, and come prepared to discuss them fully.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:** In addition to weekly WebCT discussions (see below), four (4) written essays are required. One will be a formal research paper. I will assign multiple topics for the essays. **MLA documentation style** (found in Harbrace) must be used for all out-of-class essays and the research paper. All out-of-class essays must be computer drafted. The college Writing Center (KN207) will give you individual instruction and feedback on your writing in progress. Visits are by appointment or through **ShepOwl**: <http://www.shepherd.wvnet.edu/scwcweb>.

**SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK:** All written work must be in Word format. It must be submitted electronically. Attach your essay to an email and send it to me by 6 p.m. on the date specified in the syllabus. It is your responsibility to see that I receive your work on time. Late essays will not be accepted unless you consult with me concerning the reason for missing a deadline and get my permission to do so BEFORE the paper is due. (See comments about the Research paper, below.) In any event, papers that are handed in late will be lowered one letter grade for each class day in arrears.

**THE RESEARCH PAPER:** Your research paper is a formal researched essay of at least 1200 words. You will choose the topic about a work which we will not cover in class – and the topic will be discussed in a short conference before you begin your research. This essay will count more than any other work you do in this class; thus I strongly encourage you to seek help from one of the consultants in the Knutti 207 Writing Center. Since you will know well in advance the due date for this research paper, you can make appointments with the same consultant, thus giving yourself a continuity you would not receive any other way. **I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE SUBMISSIONS OF YOUR RESEARCH PAPER. IF YOU FAIL TO TURN IN YOUR RESEARCH PAPER ON TIME, YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF “F” ON THE PAPER.**

**WebCT :**

1. Continuous work in this class will be done via WebCT. Each Friday I will post questions about this week’s and the previous week’s work. You will answer those questions in a discussion group. I will grade your responses. All questions will be based on the study guide at the end of this syllabus. Answer the study guide questions as you are reading the assignment. This will prepare you for your WebCT discussion. **If you do not post to WebCT, you cannot make it up, and will receive a 0 as a grade.** However, at the end of the semester, the lowest WebCT discussion grade will be eliminated before calculating your final grade. All WebCT discussion postings must be completed by Monday evening at 5 p.m.
2. You may contact me anytime by email, but if it is a question that the rest of the class might help with, post it to the discussion group on WebCT.

**ABOUT PLAGIARISM: DON’T!!!!** I expect academic honesty from my students. However, students don’t always see this the way the faculty does. Heads up! *Academic honesty means that all the work you do is your own work.* You should not borrow, copy, or buy any paper from another student, a publishing house, or an Internet site. Although guides to literature proliferate today, you should NEVER borrow passages or words from the introductory summaries in your anthology, a study guide, an internet site, or other sources, including another student’s work – UNLESS you give the author(s) credit, using parenthetical notation. **If you DO use another writer’s words or ideas in your paper without correct citation, you will receive a zero on the paper, and could fail this course.** One last thing: I am scanning papers to be certain you do not use someone else’s work. **Any papers I find that are plagiarized will be turned over to the department chairman and the disciplinary committee of this university.**

**STUDY GUIDES:** There are various study guides that can help you understand each assignment. The bookstore stocks acceptable and departmentally sanctioned study guides from Twayne publishing. Sparknotes.com also has well-written, academically accurate study guides. But these are GUIDES, not acceptable research sources. **Never use study guides in your Works Cited bibliography. Never use them in your papers. If I discover that you did, you will receive a failing grade on your paper.**

**GRADING:** Grading scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 0-59 = F.

Major Research Paper (Novel & Film)	20%
1 Poetry Essay	15%
1 Short Fiction Essay	15%
1 Drama Essay	15%
Final Exam	15%
Mid-term Exam	10%
WebCT participation	<u>10%</u>
	100%

## SYLLABUS

- Jan 11      *Introduction to Course/Discussion of Syllabus*  
Perrine -- In-class discussion – “The Red Wheelbarrow” p. 730  
*How to analyze poetry*
- Jan 13      **In-class Diagnostic Essay – Bring Your Perrine Text & Blue Book To Class**  
To prepare, read in Perrine: Reading the Poem, pp. 737-8; Imagery, p. 771; and Meaning and Idea, p. 865. Pay particular attention to: *General Exercises for Analysis and Evaluation, p. 746.*  
Read: Harbrace: Writing about Literature (39a) – p. 686.  
*Your essay will be assigned from the following:*  
    “The Whipping” p. 727  
    “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” p. 968  
    “Bells for John Whiteside’s Daughter” p. 1080
- Jan 18      *Discussion of In-class Diagnostic Essay, with examples and Common Writing Problems*  
Choose a Topic – chosen topic to be turned in and graded  
*How To Succeed in ENGL102*  
*Poetry Essay Assignment Will Be Given*
- Jan 20      Perrine: Meaning and Idea, p. 865 et al  
**(NOTE: When a poem, short fiction, or play is assigned, read the introduction to the section in which it is found AND the exercises which follow.)**  
    Perrine:            “Dulce et Decorum Est” p. 722  
                          “Ballad of Birmingham” p. 728  
    Class Work:     Developing a Poem
- Jan 25      *Summary, Explication and Analysis: There IS a difference!*  
Perrine:            “A Study of Reading Habits” – p. 740  
                          “Pathedy of Manners” – p. 761  
Perrine: Poetry Explication: “A Study of Reading Habits” – p. 40  
                          Poetry Analysis: “Diction in ‘Pathedy of Manners’” – p. 42  
Harbrace: Planning and Drafting Essays (32b, c, d) – pp. 401-418  
*Outlining your papers*
- Jan 27      ***Poetry Essay Outline Due***  
Perrine –            “The world is too much with us” – p. 766  
                          “Because I could not stop for Death” – p. 938  
Class Work:     Developing a Poem
- Feb 1        ***Poetry Essay Draft Due***  
*Perrine: Proving Your Point, p. 11 AND Writing the Paper, p. 12*  
*Revising Your Writing – Work with a partner to help revise your draft*
- Feb 3        **Poetry Essay Due**  
Perrine:            “Bereft” -- p. 787  
                          “I taste a liquor never brewed” -- p. 797  
                          “The Road not Taken” – p. 807  
*Short Fiction Essay Assignment Given*

- Feb 8 Perrine: “My Last Duchess” -- p. 849  
“I heard a Fly buzz – when I died” – p. 948
- Feb 10 Perrine: “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” -- p. 867  
“In a Station of the Metro” – p. 731  
“After Apple Picking” – p. 780
- Feb 15 Perrine – “God’s Grandeur” – p. 905  
“We Real Cool” – p. 907  
*Completion of poetry study*
- Feb 17 *Introduction to Fiction (Die Hard & The Net)*  
Perrine: The Elements of Fiction – Read the chapter introductions of Plot, p. 107;  
Characterization, p. 168; Theme, p. 203; Point of View, p. 238.  
“The Most Dangerous Game” – p. 57  
“The Destructors” – p. 115
- Feb 22 Perrine: “Roman Fever” – p. 427  
“The Drunkard” – p. 342  
“The Lesson” – p. 210
- Feb 24 Perrine: “Miss Brill” – p. 182  
“Life after High School” – p. 572
- Mar 1 MIDTERM EXAM – Poetry, Harbrace writing sections, and first half of Short Fiction will be covered. You will be responsible for all introductions to poetry and short fiction sections – whether we covered them in class or not!**  
*Research Paper Assignment Given*
- Mar 3 **This assignment will be discussed on WebCt! There is no class, only the discussion and a short paper to be handed in via WebCT!**  
Perrine: “The Rocking Horse Winner” – p. 302  
“Young Goodman Brown” – p. 316  
“The Lottery” – p. 263
- Mar 8 **Short Fiction Essay Due**  
Perrine: “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall” – p. 272  
“A Rose for Emily” – p. 281  
“Everyday Use” – p. 173  
*Conclusion of Short Fiction*
- Mar 10 *Introduction to Drama*  
The Sandbox – p. 1145
- Mar 12 – 20 SPRING BREAK
- Mar 22 Death of a Salesman (Act 1) – p. 1545 – *Discussion*  
Begin Video of Death of a Salesman

- Mar 24      Death of a Salesman (Act II and Requiem) -- *Discussion*  
Video of Death of a Salesman
- Mar 29      *Finish Death of a Salesman – Discussion and Video*  
**Major Research Paper PROPOSAL Due (by email attachment!)**
- Mar 31 &  
Apr 5      *Conferences – To Be Arranged (To discuss research paper proposal)*
- Apr 7      **Drama Essay Due**  
*Introduction to the Novel*  
Purple Hibiscus
- Apr 12      Purple Hibiscus
- Apr 14      Film as Literature  
*Films to watch outside of class – will be assigned*
- Apr 19      Film as Literature  
*Films to watch outside of class – will be assigned*
- Apr 21      SPRING WEEKEND – NO CLASS
- Apr 26      The Other Humanities – Art, Music, Social Sciences, Psychology  
Essays to be handed out
- Apr 28      The Other Humanities – Art, Music, Social Sciences, Psychology  
Essays to be handed out  
**Research Paper Due**
- May 3      Reading Day – No Class
- May 5      **FINALS BEGIN -- FINAL EXAM IN CLASSROOM ON DATE ASSIGNED**

## Evaluative Criteria for All Essays in ENGL102

### “A” Paper (90-100) - Superior:

- Originality of thought and effectiveness
- Logical, emphatic development of a central idea
- Sophisticated, lively, and precise diction
- Well-developed, effectively organized essay and paragraphs
- Clear, engaging illustrative support
- Mature and diversified sentence structure
- Absence of errors in punctuation, usage, and spelling

### “B” Paper (80-89) - Good

- Convincing and engaging expression
- Logical development of a central idea
- Appropriate, lively, acceptable diction
- Effectively organized essay and paragraphs
- Detailed support of ideas
- Correct, clear, and varied sentence structure
- Absence of major errors in punctuation, usage, and spelling

### “C” Paper (70-79) - Competent

- Clear Communication
- Satisfactory development of a central idea
- Appropriate diction
- Satisfactory organization of essay and paragraphs
- Adequate support of ideas
- Some variety of sentence structure
- Relative absence of major errors in punctuation, sentence structure, usage, and spelling

### “D” Paper (60-69) - Deficient

- Superficial, unclear, or repetitious content
- Some instances of illogical thinking
- Immature, simplistic diction
- Poor organization of essay and paragraphs
- Weak support of ideas
- Awkward, monotonous sentence structure
- Some \*gross errors in punctuation, structure, usage, and spelling

### “F” Paper (0-59) - Unacceptable

- Confusing content
- Flawed central idea
- Inappropriate, unclear diction
- Random organization of paragraphs
- Unsupported generalizations
- Awkward, wordy, or simplistic sentence structure
- \*Gross errors in punctuation, structure, usage, and spelling

An “F” paper displays any, though not all, of the above characteristics. In addition, failure to develop the assigned topic or to state a thesis automatically results in an “F.”

\*Gross errors include awkward/unclear sentence structure, fragments, fused (run-on) sentences and comma splices, agreement mistakes, vague/unclear pronoun reference, faulty verb forms, unjustified tense shifts, faulty parallelism, and dangling and misplaced modifiers. All of these errors are explained in detail in your Harbrace Handbook. Use it!

## STUDY QUESTIONS GUIDE FOR READING POETRY

Here are questions you might ask when you are faced with the task of reading and writing about poetry.

### 1. Who is the speaker?

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character? In some poems the speaker may be nothing more than a voice meditating on a theme, while in others the speaker takes on a specific personality. Try to ascertain what that personality is and why the poet used it.

### 2. Is the speaker addressing a particular person?

If so, who is that person, and why is the speaker interested in him or her? Many poems are addressed to no one in particular and therefore to anyone, any reader. Others, while addressed to a specific person, reveal nothing about that person because the focus of the poem is on the speaker's feelings and attitudes. In a dramatic monologue, the speaker usually addresses a silent auditor. The identity of the auditor will be important to the poem.

### 3. Does the poem have a setting?

Is the poem occasioned by a particular event? The answer to this question will often be "no" for lyric poems, such as many of Frost's works. It will always be "yes" if the poem is a dramatic monologue or a poem that tells or implies a story.

### 4. Is the theme of the poem stated directly or indirectly?

Some poems, such as Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est," use language in a fairly straightforward and literal way and state the theme, often in the final lines. Others may conclude with a statement of the theme that is more difficult to apprehend because it is made with figurative language and symbols. This means you have to work harder to understand.

### 5. From what perspective (or point of view) is the speaker describing specific events?

Is the speaker recounting events of the past or events that are occurring in the present? If past events are being recalled, what present meaning do they have for the speaker – and for us as readers?

**6. Does a close examination of the figurative language of the poem reveal any patterns?** Sometimes it is imagery which drives the poem. Sometimes it's the attitude of the poet. Sometimes it's a Biblical reference. Sometimes it's difficult. Work at it.

### 7. What is the structure of the poem?

Since narrative poems (those that tell stories) are highly selective, it is useful to ask why the poet has focused on particular details and left out others. Analyzing the structure of a non-narrative or lyric poem can be more difficult because it does not contain an obvious series of chronologically related events. Look for patterns of images or language that embody the theme.

### 8. How does sound and meter contribute to the poem? What do they contribute?

Alexander Pope said that in good poetry "the sound must seem an echo to the sense," a statement that is sometimes easier to agree with than to demonstrate. Try.

### 9. What was your response to the poem on first reading?

Did your response change after studying the poem? Did it change after the class discussion? Why?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING WRITING PROCESS

### A. Introduction:

1. Do I have a specific thesis statement that reflects the main idea of the essay? (An essay always has to have a main idea/topic).
2. Does my introductory paragraph give the reader an idea of what points I will develop in the subsequent paragraphs? (The reader should know what the essay will be about.)
3. Do I have a snappy title and an interesting introduction to catch my reader's interest? (A boring introduction will turn the reader away and s/he may not want to continue reading.)

### B Body of Essay

1. Do my paragraphs focus on my main idea?
2. Is there a logical connection between the main idea and the supporting ideas? (These two must be related if the essay is to stay focused.)
3. Are my supporting points arranged in chronological or other order of importance? (Reasonable organization of ideas is important.)
4. Have I given enough specific examples to support and develop the main idea? (Examples help the reader to visualize ideas & understand the essay in concrete ways.)
5. Does this essay show that I have a basic knowledge of the topic?

### C. Conclusion:

1. Is there a good conclusion that summarizes what I wrote about and does it make an impact? (An effective conclusion is just as important as an effective main idea.)
2. Does my conclusion offer an effective solution to a question, a resolution of a problem, or perhaps suggest some unexamined implication or possibility—to give the reader something to think about? (It is useful to provide a kind of closure, a wrap-up of the main ideas, or food for thought.)

### D. Essay as a Whole:

1. Does my essay have a specific purpose? (Essays are written to inform, persuade or entertain the reader. All essays in ENGL 102 should be persuasive essays.)
2. Do I target a particular audience? (Knowing the audience affects the tone, language, and often the content of an essay. The audience for ENGL 102 is another member of the class.)

### E. Mechanics:

1. Are spelling, punctuation, & grammar accurate? Is my essay free from fragments, run-ons, or errors of subject-verb agreement? (Use Microsoft Word spelling and grammar check!)