



Fall 2018 Syllabus
Overview

The Stories We Tell

NOTES: All readings are due on the date listed. Please consult the detailed syllabus for unit descriptions and reading and discussion questions.

A written reading response is due each Monday unless otherwise noted.

Date	Subject	Reading Assignment Due
Monday, August 20	ALL FACULTY	Entering the Conversation: Meeting Each Other As Learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen Keller, <i>The Story of My Life</i> (excerpts)
Thursday, August 23	ALL FACULTY	Thinking As a Scholar: Six Perspectives on Martin Luther King, Jr. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail," (excerpts)
Monday, August 27	CREATIVE WRITING	Honoring Our Stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Lamott, <i>Bird by Bird</i>, pages 3-43 Optional: read the fun "Introduction" See full syllabus for writing assignment
Thursday, August 30	CREATIVE WRITING	Structuring Our Narratives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Lamott, <i>Bird by Bird</i>, pages 44-79 See full syllabus for writing assignment
Monday, September 3	NO CLASS	Happy Labor Day – no class tonight!
Thursday, September 6	CREATIVE WRITING	Following the Arrows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne Lamott, <i>Bird by Bird</i>, pages 97-130 (optional) See full syllabus for writing assignment
Monday, September 10	LITERATURE	Studying Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i>" and other prefatory material (xii-iv) Response Paper 1 due
Thursday, September 13	LITERATURE	Reading Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Hamlet</i> Acts 1-3
Monday, September 17	LITERATURE	Performing Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Hamlet</i> Acts 4-5 Response Paper 2 due
Thursday, September 20	LITERATURE	Viewing Shakespeare: Performance of <i>Hamlet</i>, UT Campus, Actors from the London Stage

Monday, September 24	LITERATURE	Analyzing Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Hamlet: A Modern Perspective</i>” essay by Michael Neill (pgs. 319-338) • Response Paper 3 due
Thursday, September 27	WRITING	Academic Writing and Good Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They Say, I Say</i>, Chapter 9, “You Mean I Can Just Say It That Way?” • See full syllabus for writing assignment
Monday, October 1	WRITING	Establishing Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They Say, I Say</i>, Chapter 3, “As He Himself Puts It” • See full syllabus for writing assignment
Thursday, October 4	ART HISTORY	The Stories We Tell Visually: A Tool Kit for Art History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selections from Marilyn Stokstad, <i>Art: A Brief History, xiv-xvii</i> (course packet) • ** Formal Paper 1 Due**
Monday, October 8	ART HISTORY	Telling Stories with Words/Telling Stories with Pictures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sir John Everett Millais, <i>Ophelia</i>” (a short video) • Section from Act 4, Scene VII, of <i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare • Response Paper 4 due
Thursday, October 11	ART HISTORY	Stories Told about Ophelia by Shakespeare and Pre-Raphaelite Artists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sir John Everett Millais, <i>Ophelia</i>” (Khan Academy) • “The Story of Ophelia” (Tate Museum Website)
Monday, October 15	WRITING	Helping a Reader See <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPR’s “Blind Art Lovers Make the Most of Museum Visits...” • Assignment sheet • See full syllabus for writing assignment
Thursday, October 18	WRITING	Joining a Conversation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They Say, I Say</i>, Chapter 1, “They Say,” and Chapter 4, “Yes/No/Okay, But”
Monday, October 22	LITERATURE	Where We Live <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The House on Mango Street</i>, from “The House on Mango Street” through “Darius and the Clouds.” • Response Paper 5 due
Thursday, October 25	LITERATURE	The Lives of Women <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The House on Mango Street</i>, from “And some more” through “Rafaela who drinks coconut and papaya juice on Tuesday” • **Formal Paper 2 Due**
Monday, October 29	LITERATURE	From a House to a Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The House on Mango Street</i>, from “Sally” to end of the novel • Response Paper 6 due

Thursday, November 1	LITERATURE	Writing Esperanza's Story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "Introduction" to <i>The House on Mango Street</i> and "Hydra House," an essay by Sandra Cisneros (course packet)
Monday, November 5	ART HISTORY	Art in the Era of Plato's Republic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Introduction to Ancient Greek Art" (Khan Academy) Response Paper 7 due
Thursday, November 8	ART HISTORY	Conventions of the Human Body in Ancient Art <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection from <i>Art: A Brief History</i> pp. 102-116 (course packet)
Monday, November 12	ART HISTORY	Stories We Tell About Human Perfection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review selection from <i>Art: A Brief History</i> pp. 102-116 with focus on p. 116 about <i>The Spear Bearer</i> by Polykleitos, ca. 120—50 BCE Response Paper 8 due
Thursday, November 15	PHILOSOPHY	Reading Plato: Thrasymachus' Challenge and The City and the Soul <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Read me first" handout Plato, <i>Republic</i>, Book I and II See syllabus notes about where to focus
Monday, November 19	PHILOSOPHY	Education and Character <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plato, <i>Republic</i>, Book III Response Paper 9 due
Thursday, November 22		NO CLASS – Enjoy your Thanksgiving!
Monday, November 26	PHILOSOPHY	Wisdom, Courage, Moderation, and Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plato, <i>Republic</i>, Book IV Response Paper 10 due
Thursday, November 29	WRITING	The Art of Summary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>They Say, I Say</i>, Chapter 2, "Her Point Is" Rough draft of Formal Paper 3 due. See full syllabus for writing assignment.
Monday, December 3	WRITING	Creating a Sense of Flow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>They Say, I Say</i>, Chapter 8, "As a Result"
Thursday, December 6	PHILOSOPHY	Men, Women, Children, Philosophers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plato, <i>Republic</i>, Book V
Monday, December 10	PHILOSOPHY	What Can a Philosopher Know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plato, <i>Republic</i>, Book VI Response Paper 11 due
Thursday, December 13	ALL FACULTY	END OF SEMESTER CELEBRATION! **Formal Paper 3 Due**

The spring semester begins on Thursday, January 17. Enjoy your holidays!

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Reading Response Papers: For each Monday class in the literature, art history, philosophy, and U.S. history units, you will turn in a written response in answer to a question posed in your syllabus. Response papers should be about a page in length if hand-written or three-quarters to one page, double spaced if typed.

Reading response questions will stimulate your thinking, help you understand the text, and pinpoint which parts do not make sense to you. These assignments are crucial. They allow you to process the text on your own, and they make our class discussions more productive. Reading response papers are graded on a 10-point scale. There will be 11 assignments this semester, and your lowest grade will be dropped. You may hand in a response paper the class after if it is due for a maximum of half credit. **Response papers will not be accepted more than one class period after the original due date.** If you miss class, you should email the assignment that day (to amynathanwright@gmail.com) or turn it in at the next class period for maximum half credit.

Formal Papers: You will hand in three short formal papers this semester, each one and a half to two pages in length (400-500 words). These papers will respond to the work you're doing in the literature, art history, and philosophy units. Your first formal paper will be a character sketch focused on *Hamlet*; in the second, you'll use description to interpret a visual work of art onto the page; in the third short essay, you'll focus on summarizing and paraphrasing an argument from Plato's *Republic*.

To help you prepare for all of these assignments, we will have several pre-workshops dedicated to writing throughout the semester.

DETAILED SYLLABUS

Always read this section before preparing for class

Monday, August 27

Creative Writing Unit with Vivé Griffith

Unit Overview: The Stories We Tell (of the Self)

Writing has power. Writers and teachers have long known this, and researchers can confirm it. For example, studies have found that simply writing about a traumatic experience for four days straight can help individuals overcome the experience as well as improve their immune systems and GPAs. We are more likely to reach our goals if we write them down. And in difficult times, poetry can make us feel less alone in the world. We know ourselves better when we place our stories on paper.

What's this got to do with the Creative Writing unit? This fall, plenty! We will begin a year of exploring stories by telling our own stories and honoring each other's stories. We will begin to discover the power of writing while creating a safe space for listening and sharing. We'll also read from Anne Lamott's entertaining and inspiring *Bird by Bird*, a text that you just may find yourself returning to for the entire year. We'll see if we know ourselves better when we place pieces of ourselves on paper.

In an academic setting, Creative Writing classes generally focus on how the *craft* of writing—description, dialogue, setting, language play, and more—enables us to create the best poems, stories, and essays possible. Craft will be at the center of our work in the spring. For this fall, my hope is that you jump into writing as a practice. Our assignments will warm you up for the rest of the writing you'll do this year, help us form our community, and maybe shine a light on some of the ways you perceive and live your life. Let's have some fun!

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Important note: Some of the Creative Writing assignments require you to do an assignment over several days, keeping a journal or writing several versions from the same prompt. Please read through the entire unit syllabus as you begin so that you can stay on track. Assignments are due on the day they are noted on the syllabus.

Creative Writing Class 1: Honoring Our Stories

Background: We will open the creative writing unit by writing and sharing some of our stories—the stories of our lives, our families, our history, our particular place in the world. In order to do this, we have to begin with believing our stories are worth telling. We have to honor them.

Telling our stories requires a balance of self-reflection and a fair amount of *chutzpah*, a wonderful Yiddish word reflecting a mixture of guts, audacity, courage, and brazenness. The self-reflection enables us to see our stories from the outside, as belonging to us and outside of us at the same time. The *chutzpah* encourages us to bring bravery to the process.

Anne Lamott's *Bird by Bird* captures that pairing of self-reflection and chutzpah. Both Lamott's tone and subject matter make writing accessible. She reminds us that writing is hard, but important work. Anne Lamott was born in San Francisco in 1954. She writes both novels and books of nonfiction centered on spirituality, parenthood, alcoholism, and, of course, writing. You can find a lot of her essays on the internet.

Here's a quote from her about her work: "I try to write the books I would love to come upon, that are honest, concerned with real lives, human hearts, spiritual transformation, families, secrets, wonder, craziness—and that can make me laugh. When I am reading a book like this, I feel rich and profoundly relieved to be in the presence of someone who will share the truth with me, and throw the lights on a little, and I try to write these kinds of books. Books, for me, are medicine."

Read: Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, pages 3-43. Optional: read the fun "Introduction" too.

Write: Anne Lamott says that writing short assignments about simple things like school lunches can "yield a bounty of detailed memory, raw material, and strange characters lurking in the shadows." So we will begin with a short assignment.

Set a timer and write three minutes on each of the following prompts:

1. Tell me about a memory of your mother, grandmother, or aunt. If it's an aunt, say her name. For example, "I remember my aunt Gladys." Be specific.
2. Tell me about school lunches, or one particular school lunch.
3. Tell me about how you first learned to read. What do you remember?
4. Tell me about a meal you loved. Where were you when you ate it? What was the weather like out the window? Who were you with? How old were you?
5. Teach me something. It doesn't have to be the traditional subjects. How about how to tie a shoe, be a good mother, clean out the refrigerator, change a tire? Something that is deep in your bones—driving in rush hour on I-35 each morning? Don't overthink it. Choose something and teach me how to do it.

After you've written three minutes on each of these, return to the one that is the most interesting or alive to you. Set a timer and write for seven minutes about that topic, using the prompt, "I remember."

Bring both sets of writing to class with you on Monday. That means you will turn in five short free writes as well as one longer one.

Bonus Poem:

You Reading This, Be Ready

by William Stafford

Starting here, what do you want to remember?
How sunlight creeps along a shining floor?
What scent of old wood hovers, what softened
sound from outside fills the air?

Will you ever bring a better gift for the world
than the breathing respect that you carry

wherever you go right now? Are you waiting
for time to show you some better thoughts?
When you turn around, starting here, lift this
new glimpse that you found; carry into evening
all that you want from this day. This interval you spent
reading or hearing this, keep it for life –

What can anyone give you greater than now,
starting here, right in this room, when you turn around?

Thursday, August 30

Creative Writing Class 2: Structuring Our Narratives

Background: Today, with the help of Anne Lamott, we'll look at how a story gets told. Then we'll look at our own life as a story worth telling, with characters, setting, plot, and resolution.

Read: Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, pages 44-79

Write: Your assignment for our second class is to keep a Decision Journal, as described below:

Keep a daily journal of your decisions. No need to explain or justify—just make a note of the situation and the decision you made. For instance, suppose you really need to pick up a prescription, but your only chance involves skipping a meeting. That's the *situation*, so jot that down, and then jot down the decision you made, like this:

Jan 17 → had to decide whether to pick up the prescription or attend the community meeting: decided to skip pharmacy and attend

Your decisions may be simple: what to eat for breakfast, whether to take the highway or the back roads, whether to meet a friend for lunch or eat at your desk. They may be more complicated. They may seem very ordinary. Just pay attention and write them down. That's it.

Make sure you keep the journal for all the days between classes, and bring it with you to class. Happy journaling!

Bonus Poem:

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,

Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

We will not meet for class on Monday, September 3. Enjoy your Labor Day!

Thursday, September 6

Creative Writing Class 3: Following the Arrows

Background: Anne Lamott says, “Writing is about learning to pay attention and to communicate what is going on.” We will finish up this part of the Creative Writing unit by considering ways we can use writing to be attentive to our lives. And we will see what writing can open up for our futures.

Read: Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, pages 97-130 (optional)

Write: This assignment requires that you write for four days in a row, so make sure you start early enough to do so! Here is your prompt:

*Think about your life in the future. Imagine that **everything has gone as well as it possibly could**. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all of your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined.*

Write for 20 minutes each day for four days in a row. Set a timer and go! Don't be alarmed if the image shifts over those four days, but don't push it to shift either. And be open to the questions that might arise and see if you can write through them. Let the writing guide you.

Bonus Poem:

The Good Life

by Tracy K. Smith, current Poet Laureate of the U.S.

When some people talk about money
They speak as if it were a mysterious lover
Who went out to buy milk and never
Came back, and it makes me nostalgic

For the years I lived on coffee and bread,
Hungry all the time, walking to work on payday
Like a woman journeying for water
From a village without a well, then living
One or two nights like everyone else
On roast chicken and red wine.

Monday, September 10

Literature Unit with Dr. Patricia Garcia

Unit Overview 1: William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

We are reading two classic works of literature by two important authors this year: William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* and Sandra Cisneros' novel *The House on Mango Street* to examine our course theme of "the stories we tell." Both of these writers tell great stories! We will begin with *Hamlet*, and we are lucky that we will see a performance of the play as part of our unit. The play begins with Hamlet, told one story about how his father died and why his mother is now married to his uncle, now questioning what really happened. How can he uncover the real story? What is his own story as a young man, a student, a lover, a son, and someone questioning his place in the world? As we study the play, we'll look at how Hamlet tries to write his own story and get others to listen to it.

Literature Class 1: Studying Shakespeare

Background: Our edition of *Hamlet* is the very helpful Folger Shakespeare Library edition. The Folger Shakespeare Library, located in Washington, D. C., is one of the most important research centers in the world for Shakespeare scholars. For this first meeting, you will be reading the prefatory materials to the play in our book, probably the pages that many students skip and shouldn't! You will get some initial insight into *Hamlet* and learn about Shakespeare's life, theater, and language. Pay special attention to the section "Reading Shakespeare's Language" as it will prepare you for the nuts and bolts of reading the play.

Read: "Shakespeare's *Hamlet*" and other prefatory material (xii-iv)

Response Paper Prompt: What do you like to read (books, magazines, and even web sites count here) and what do you learn from this reading? For example, when I read a novel, I learn about the characters' lives and the world they live in. I might also learn something about the writer who wrote the story based on what he or she created. I also learn something about myself when I think about what I liked or didn't like in the story. So, I might answer the prompt above like this: When I read *Hamlet*, I learn how characters often feel out of control when circumstances in their world change quickly. I also learn that like them, I don't like being out of control and sometimes make poor choices because of it.

Thursday, September 13

Literature Class 2: Reading Shakespeare

Background: As you read through the play, be sure to look at the summary of each scene that our text

provides. *Hamlet* is one of Shakespeare's most famous plays, and that's because Hamlet, the main character, is so complex. In Act 1, he is mourning the death of his father and his mother's quick marriage. But, when he meets his father's ghost who tells him of his murder, Hamlet quickly turns to thoughts of revenge. By Act 3, his plan to catch the murderer seems to be working, but he still seems lost, angry, and confused. Pay attention to what Hamlet says about himself and the world, especially in his long soliloquies or speeches. Also pay attention to what others—such as his uncle/step-father Claudius, his mother Gertrude, his friend Horatio, and his former girlfriend Ophelia—say about him.

Read: *Hamlet* Acts 1-3. Focus especially on the following acts/scenes: Act 1, Scene 2; Act 2, Scene 2; Act 3, Scene 1.

Discussion Question: Choose any one of Hamlet's long speeches (called a soliloquy and typically addressed to the character himself and the audience) and consider the "story" it tells about how he sees the world and his place in it. A good one to look at is the "to be or not to be" speech in Act 3, Scene 1, but there is also "o, what a rogue and peasant slave am I" in Act 2, Scene 2.

Monday, September 17

Literature Class 3: Performing Shakespeare

Background: As you finish reading the play, keep your focus on Hamlet's plan to trap Claudius and how it begins to unravel, especially in Act 5. The final scene in the play is epic: fencing/sword fights, poisoning, confessions made, bodies scattered around the stage, and the death of our hero. To work through these complicated theatrics, we will have a guest lecture tonight: Clayton Stromberger, a member of the UT Department of English's Shakespeare at Winedale program. He will be speaking to us about performing Shakespeare in preparation for our viewing of the AFTLS performance at our next session. Here's some information about the Winedale program from their website (<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/progs/winedale/>):

Established in 1970 as a UT English course, Shakespeare at Winedale has grown into a year-round program reaching many different groups. Students in the summer program spend two months in the Texas countryside, studying and performing three plays in the converted nineteenth-century barn that is our theatre. A spring semester version of the course is offered on the UT campus, with performances at Winedale. Camp Shakespeare provides a two-week experience of learning and playing Shakespeare for 10-16 year-olds. Our Outreach program brings Shakespeare into the classrooms of elementary school students throughout central Texas, and brings those students to Winedale to perform. Our program also includes a medieval nativity play performed by children from the Winedale area, a summer course for teachers through the UTeach program, visits by British Shakespeareans to the Winedale theatre barn, and special performances in other venues, including an annual tour to England.

Read: *Hamlet* Acts 4-5. Focus especially on the following acts/scenes: Act 4, Scene 5; Act 5, Scene 2.

Response Paper Prompt: If you could play any character from *Hamlet*, who would it be? Why? To support your answer, choose a scene and one great line from this scene that demonstrate what you find most interesting about this character. How would you deliver that line?

Thursday, September 20

Literature Class 4: Viewing Shakespeare (AFTLS Performance)

Background: The Actors from the London Stage is a professional theater troupe that will be performing *Hamlet*. Here is some information on the group from the UT website: (<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/english/shakespeare-studies/AFTLS.php>):

Actors from the London Stage, now housed at the University of Notre Dame, is an educational and theatrical program that brings a troupe of five classically trained actors from major English theatres to college campuses for weeklong residencies. During their week at the University of Texas, the actors teach approximately 30 classes and workshops and perform minimalist productions of a full-length Shakespeare play – three times at UT and once at Winedale. Begun in 1975 by Professor Homer Swander of the University of California, Santa Barbara and Patrick Stewart, the British actor, AFTLS's unique program of performance and education has had approximately 350 residences on 150 campuses, including UT Austin in 1979, 1983, and 1999 to present.

The London actors explore the relationship of page and stage, language and meaning: "rehearsing" students in scenes from Shakespeare and other playwrights, helping them to examine the many ways scenes can be understood and performed, leading them in analyzing and speaking verse, teaching them about metrical stresses and rhythm, cues, blocking, stage breathing, and the like. The actors work with English and drama majors; students in foreign languages, communications, speech, music, history, classics, psychology; as well as with high-schoolers and members of the community. Their one-actor shows have been performed in residence halls and retirement communities, in auditoria and open areas, in coffee houses and student unions.

Read: No assigned reading, but review the play.

Discussion Question: As you prepare to watch the play, choose one scene that you are particularly interested in seeing how the actors perform it. What do you expect them to do with the scene, and did their performance meet, challenge, or frustrate your expectations and understanding of the play?

Thursday, September 24

Literature Class 5: Analyzing Shakespeare

Background: For class tonight, you are reading a critical essay by a scholar that analyzes *Hamlet*. Michael Neill makes an interesting argument about many topics important to the play: surveillance, memory, storytelling, and death. Pay attention to how he supports his argument through evidence from the text. And, in light of our theme of the semester, pay special attention to how he argues Hamlet is constantly writing and re-writing his own story.

Read: "*Hamlet: A Modern Perspective*" essay by Michael Neill (pgs. 319-338).

Response Paper Prompt: By tonight’s meeting, you will have read the play, performed scenes from the play, seen a live performance of it, written about it, and read a scholarly essay that interprets it! Which of these experiences has been most helpful to you in understanding and, hopefully, appreciating the play? Why? Be specific in your response, and reflect upon your own learning style, the most effective ways in which you gain new knowledge and broaden your perspective on a subject.

Thursday, September 27

Writing Unit with Amy Nathan Wright

Unit Overview: In this unit, we have two primary tasks. The first is to use the writing process to aid and deepen our thinking about what we read. One of the best ways to understand an idea or text is to explain it to a reader—real or imagined—on paper. As Flannery O’Connor once put it, “I write because I don’t know what I think until I read what I say.” Toward this goal, we will often spend time in class free writing about the texts that we have read in the other Free Minds units and using a variety of strategies to generate ideas for both your weekly response papers and the three formal papers due this semester.

Our second primary task is to become familiar with, and adept at using, the key tools of academic writing. We will use *They Say, I Say* as our guide. In the opening sentences of *They Say, I Say*, Gerald Graff claims that “writing well means entering into conversation with others. Academic writing... calls upon writers not simply to express their own ideas, but to do so as a response to what others have said.” This fits perfectly with our theme of citizenship and community and “telling our stories.” Together we will ask, how does writing create and address particular communities? How do our own ideas and experiences fit into the broader conversations going on in and around the texts we’ll study? And we will use tricks of the trade—summarizing, describing, quoting, making arguments, analyzing, and organizing our thoughts— to help us establish credibility and join the ongoing conversations that we want to be part of.

In addition to our six classes together this fall, we will also work on writing skills and assignments during our pre-class workshop time. While this may be your first attempt at writing an academic paper in many years, and while these assignments may look different than ones you’ve done before, stick with the process! Through our practice of writing and discussion, we are building a set of skills that can be taught and learned—skills that will improve your writing in the classroom and in any other setting where you are putting pen to paper. You’ve got this!

Writing Class 1: Academic Writing and Good Writing

Focus: We will outline our ideas and assumptions about what makes good academic writing and how the expectations for academic writing might differ from what we’ve learned in the past. We will focus our discussion of good academic writing by joining the large community of writers and thinkers who have responded to Shakespeare’s works.

We will spend time in class asking, what is it about Shakespeare’s work that invites readers to interpret, respond, and engage with his writing across all of these centuries? What are the personality traits of his characters that strike us as familiar today? We will take a look at some sample profile articles and work on crafting our first short paper, a character sketch modeled after a profile feature article.

Read: *They Say, I Say*, Chapter Nine, “You Mean I Can Just Say It That Way?”

Write: Pick a character from *Hamlet* that you’d like to focus on, one that you find most fascinating, mysterious, or exciting. Using the practice of free writing, answer each of the following questions in a few sentences:

- Where do we typically find this character? What does his/her environment look like?
- What quote from the play sums up this character to you? (It could be something that he/she says or something that is said about him/her.) Explain why this quote exemplifies the character.
- What motivates this character? What gets him/her up in the morning? What is the moment from the play where this becomes apparent? Describe it.

Bring: *Hamlet*; *They Say, I Say*

Monday, October 1

Writing Class 2: Establishing Authority

Focus: You will receive feedback on your in-class writing from Thursday’s class, and we will workshop drafts of Paper #1 in class, paying particular attention to techniques for establishing authority by using specific details, key quotations, and clear examples.

Read: *They Say, I Say*, Chapter 3, “As He Himself Puts It: The Art of Quoting”

Bring: *Hamlet*; *They Say, I Say*

The final version of Formal Paper 1 is due in class on **Thursday, October 4.**

Thursday, October 4

Art History Unit with Dr. Janis Bergman-Carton

Unit Overview 1: What is Art History?

There are many ways to study or appreciate works of art. Art history represents one specific approach, with its own goals and its own methods of interpretation. Art historians try to understand the meaning of art from the past within its original contexts, both from the point of view of its producers—artists, architects, and patrons—as well as from the point of view of its consumers—those who formed its original audience.

Coming to an understanding of a work of art requires detailed and patient investigation on many levels, especially with art that was produced long ago and in societies different from our own. In art history, the work of art is seen as an embodiment of the values, goal, and aspirations of its time and place of origin. It is part of culture. Art historians use a variety of theoretical perspectives and interpretative strategies to come to an understanding of works of art within their original contexts. But as a place to begin, the work of art historians can be divided into four types of investigation:

1. assessment of physical properties,
2. analysis of visual or formal structure,
3. identification of subject matter or conventional symbolism, and
4. integration within cultural context.

In the short time we have together, we cannot explore each type of investigation in detail. Instead, we will dip our feet into each of them in the context of a series of case studies, one for each unit.

The case studies for the Art History unit were chosen to complement and engage the texts you will read in the Literature, Philosophy, and History units. In fall 2018, for example, we will examine a nineteenth-century oil painting by a PRE-RAPHAELITE artist based on a scene from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and an ancient Greek sculpture of the human body created in the era of Plato's *Republic*.

Your assignments will involve reading texts, watching videos, and reading images. Please come to class having read and looked carefully. Make notes of page numbers and details you want to talk or ask questions about so you can easily point the rest of us toward those particular pages and details during class discussion.

Art History Class 1: The Stories We Tell Visually: A Tool Kit for Art History

Read: Selections from Marilyn Stokstad, *Art: A Brief History*, 2016, pp.xiv-xvii (course packet).

Look closely at the two full-page color plates at the beginning of the art history section of the packet: a painting by **John Everett Millias** titled ***Ophelia***, created in **1851**, and an ancient Roman marble sculpture, a copy of a lost original sculpture in bronze by Greek artist **Polykleitos** known as ***The Spear Bearer*** made around **120-50 BCE**. This painting and this sculpture will provide our two case studies for the fall semester. We will see many other works of art to compare and contrast them with, but you will become experts on these two.

Discussion questions:

1. After you read through the tool kit section in the Stokstad book, apply two of the new terms you learned (i.e. texture, space, content, style) to one or both images. Make a note of any new observations about *Ophelia* or *The Spear Bearer* this exercise helps you notice.
2. Which Art properties or terms do you find most confusing and why?

Monday, October 8

Art History Class 2: Telling Stories with Words/Telling Stories with Pictures

View: "Sir John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*," (Khan Academy), a short video
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/victorian-art-architecture/pre-raphaelites/v/sir-john-everett-millais-ophelia-1851-52>

Reread this section from Act 4, Scene VII, of *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare:

Hamlet, Act 1V, Scene V11

Laertes: Drowned! O, where?

Queen Gertrude: There is a willow grows askant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead-men's-fingers call them.
There on the pendent boughs her crownet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up;
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element. But long it could not be

Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laertes: Alas, then she is drowned?

Queen Gertrude: Drowned, drowned.

Response Paper Prompt: Millais paints a scene from *Hamlet* that does not exist in the play except in the description by Queen Gertrude of what has transpired off stage. In what ways was Millais influenced by Gertrude's language in the creation of this painted scene and its details?

Thursday, October 11

Art History Class 3: Stories Told about Ophelia by Shakespeare and Pre-Raphaelite Artists

In 1848, as revolutions swept Europe, seven rebellious young artists in London formed a secret society with the aim of creating a new kind of art for the nation of Great Britain. They called themselves the **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB)**, a name that was meant to indicate their disillusionment with traditional Victorian academic painting which they found artificial and irrelevant to the time in which they were living. Most of them met as students at the Royal Academy of Art in London. They joined forces with the idea of reforming British art by rejecting what was being taught at the school, an approach to art first adopted during the Renaissance (1400s-1500's) by the followers of the artists Raphael and Michelangelo. The PRB believed the classical poses and elegant compositions of Raphael in particular had been a corrupting influence on art (that's why they chose the name 'Pre-Raphaelite'). The brotherhood looked instead to approaches associated with medieval art: great detail, intense color, and complex compositions. The PRB were also interested in giving art a different kind of subject matter, more noble, moralizing, and better suited to a period in nineteenth-century Great Britain marked by political upheaval and the negative social consequences of industrialization.

To renew British art by imbuing it with seriousness, sincerity and truth to nature, the PRB began by establishing a different kind of canon of artistic greats. Instead of looking to Italian visual artists of the 16th century for models, the PRB looked to literary greats from Britain. **Shakespeare** was at the top of their list. They produced many paintings of scenes from Shakespeare’s plays that focused less on the literal text of the play than on the visual power and intensity derived from a theatrical performance.

Read: “Sir John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*,” (Khan Academy):

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/victorian-art-architecture/pre-raphaelites/a/sir-john-everett-millais-ophelia>

Read: “The Story of Ophelia” (Tate London website)

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-ophelia-n01506/story-ophelia>

Discussion questions:

- Why do you think this painting of *Ophelia* by Sir John Everett Millais is one of the most popular Pre-Raphaelite works in the Tate Museum?
- The Khan Academy text makes reference to a letter by Millais about the painting. What do you find most informative about the letter? Do you find anything surprising in the letter?

Monday, October 15

Writing Class 3: Helping a Reader See

Focus: Today we will work on our Formal Paper 2, a thick, rich description of Millais’ *Ophelia*, the focus of our recent art history unit. We will employ sensory detail—appealing to readers’ sense of touch, smell, taste, sound, and sight— to help our readers “see” and experience the painting.

Listen: NPR’s story “Blind Art Lovers Make the Most of Museum Visits with Insight Tours”

<http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/01/05/505419694/blind-art-lovers-make-the-most-of-museum-visits-with-insight-tours>

Read: Assignment sheet

Write: Begin a few paragraphs of a rough draft of your Formal Paper 2. To get you started, free write on the following questions:

- What in this painting catches one’s attention first? Where is the eye drawn?
- How would you describe the gesture, posture, expression of the central figure in this painting?
- What are some of the important objects in the painting? Get creative in your description—think about how this image evokes taste, touch, smell, sound, etc.
- How is color used in the painting? What about shadow and light? What is the overall mood of the painting and how do you know?

Bring: *They Say, I Say*

Thursday, October 18

Writing Class 4: Joining a Conversation

Focus: You will receive feedback from your first drafts from last class, and we will continue working on Formal Paper 2. Today we will situate our descriptions within conversations about Millais' *Ophelia*. What have others said, or what might a first-glance impression be, and how do our descriptions respond to what "they say" about this work of art? The "they" in this case could be other viewers or even you yourself before looking more closely.

We will move a step closer to analysis, drawing some conclusions about the overall impression of the works of art we are describing.

Read: *They Say, I Say* Chapter 1, "They Say" and Chapter 4, "Yes/No/Okay, But"

Bring: *They Say, I Say*

The final version of Formal Paper 2 is due on **Thursday, October 25.**

Monday, October 22

Unit Overview 2: Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*

The second work we will read in our literature unit is Sandra Cisneros' novel *The House on Mango Street*. Cisneros is a Mexican-American author originally from Chicago but a San Antonio resident for many years. The novel examines life in an inner city or *barrio* neighborhood in Chicago as seen through the eyes of the young protagonist, Esperanza. Esperanza tells the stories of those around her, particularly the women, and how they live their lives in the face of poverty, racism, and sexism. As a young girl, how will Esperanza live and tell her own story? How might telling stories of people who live on Mango Street help change the lives of others?

Literature Class 6: Where We Live

Background: Sandra Cisneros (American, 1954) published *The House on Mango Street* in 1984, a time when many Mexican American and Latina women writers began publishing as a result of and in response to the Chicano political and literary movement of the 1960's and 70's. While this earlier movement had given voice to the Chicano/a community, many of its most vocal members were male. Writers such as Cisneros began to examine ethnic identity in terms of gender. In other words, how does the experience of being Mexican American in the U.S. differ for men and women? This is an important question in the novel that also addresses more universal questions of gender and class. The novel is written in a child's voice and told in vignettes: short passages that form the chapters. The chapters don't present a straight narrative but rather glimpses into Esperanza's life on Mango Street. It does tell a story, so look at how Esperanza responds and reacts to the world around her. We are witnessing her growing up. Finally, Esperanza is not Cisneros, but rather a character that speaks from Cisneros' own experience and her experiences with others. Esperanza is a young girl, but she makes some very grown-up observations about the world.

Read: *The House on Mango Street*, from "The House on Mango Street" through "Darius and the Clouds."

Response Paper Prompt: How would you describe Esperanza? How does she describe herself? How does Esperanza describe her dream house, especially as compared to the house on Mango Street? Support your answer with direct references to the text.

Thursday, October 25

Literature Class 7: The Lives of Women

Background: Esperanza spends time with many girls and women who are older than her, such as Marin, Alicia, Ruthie, and Rafaela. What's their story? What do their experiences teach Esperanza about the lives of women on Mango Street? What sort of life does Esperanza want for herself? A re-occurring motif in the novel is fairy tales. For example, how might "The Family of Little Feet" remind us of Cinderella, or Rafaela of Rapunzel? What lessons do fairy tales teach women about the world, especially how to handle difficult situations? Does the novel offer us any alternatives to these lessons, perhaps to challenge the fairy tale idea?

Read: *The House on Mango Street*, from "And some more" through "Rafaela who drinks coconut and papaya juice on Tuesday."

Discussion Question: In addition to memorable characters, Cisneros also creates beautiful and powerful symbols in the book, such as the house on Mango Street itself. It's a place that Esperanza rejects, and yet it becomes a part of who she is. Choose another symbol from the novel and consider its meaning in the novel. Some possible symbols would be shoes (shoes show up a lot in the novel!), the music box in "Gil's Furniture," a red balloon, or the four trees.

Monday, October 29

Literature Class 8: From a House to a Home

Background: The storyline about Sally is one of the most powerful in the novel. Look especially at her first observations about Sally and how she comes to learn more about her life. Esperanza is drawn to Sally because, like her, she is an outsider. How would you compare Sally to the other women in the novel? How does Esperanza's relationship with Sally change Esperanza? By the novel's conclusion, Esperanza has moved from observation to action. What has living on Mango Street taught her about her world and how she can act to change it? What does she learn about the power of stories?

Read: *The House on Mango Street*, from "Sally" to the end of the novel.

Response Paper Prompt: Esperanza tries to save Sally numerous times. Choose one attempt and discuss why Esperanza's plan fails to work. What factors in her plan are within Esperanza's control, and what things can she not control? What is Esperanza's response to this failure?

Thursday, November 1

Literature Class 9: Writing Esperanza's Story

Background: Tonight you'll be reading two essays by Cisneros, the introduction to the novel and the essay "Hydra House" from her recent collection of essays entitled *A House of My Own*. In these essays,

she will speak about how and why she wrote the novel, including the ways in which she worked in her own life and the life of others to create Esperanza's story. Pay attention to how Cisneros sees herself as a writer, both when she wrote the essay and now looking back to this time in her life. How did telling stories help save Cisneros, and how does she see her stories helping others?

Read: The "Introduction" to *The House on Mango Street* and "Hydra House," an essay by Sandra Cisneros (course packet).

Discussion question: Based on these two essays, what aspects of Esperanza are drawn from Cisneros' own life? What other characters in the novel do you think also reflect Cisneros' experiences? Why?

Monday, November 5

Art History Class 4: Art in the Era of Plato's *Republic*

For the next three classes we will study the art of ancient Greece, with a focus on work made in the city of Athens during what is called "The Classical Period." By 500 BCE the concept of "rule by the people," or democracy, had emerged in the city of Athens and what followed was a "Golden Age." In drama and philosophy, literature, and art, Athens was second to none. The city's empire stretched from the western Mediterranean to the Black Sea, creating enormous wealth. This wealth paid for big public building projects with elaborate sculptural decoration.

As Athens became the dominant cultural, political, and commercial center in Greece, artists there were called upon to produce new visual art forms that expressed the values of truth, virtue, and harmony advocated for by its citizens and by philosophers like Plato. In this unit, we will study the most influential of those new visual art forms: the development of "naturalism" in ancient Greek sculpture, ways to represent the human body in as lifelike a form as possible, and the ideal of the male nude. The nude figure in art first became significant in the art of ancient Greece, where athletic competitions at religious festivals celebrated the human body, particularly the male. The athletes in these contests competed in the nude, and Greeks considered them embodiments of all that was best in humanity. It was in this context that Greeks came to associate the idealized male nude with the values of triumph and moral excellence.

The ancestry of the female nude in art is quite different from the male. While the male nude originates in the concept of a perfect human athlete, constructed through ideal proportions based in mathematical ratios, the female nude evolved to embody the divinity of procreation. (In the spring of 2018, we will read Chapter 3 in *Ways of Seeing* about the cultural impact of these very different developments, relative to the male nude body and the female nude body in art history.)

Read/View:

1. "Introduction to Ancient Greek Art" (Khan Academy)
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/greek-art/beginners-guide-greece/a/introduction-ancient-greek-art>
2. Marilyn Stokstad, *Art: A Brief History*, pp. 102-115 (handout)

Response Paper Prompt: Look closely at the two different sculptural figures known as "Dying Warrior" on p. 105 of the Stokstad reading. Both figures were sculpted to fit into triangular pediments in Greek

temples (see diagram below) creating a challenge for artists working within those limits. Which do you find more realistic or naturalistic (5-16 or 5-17)? Back up your choice with descriptions of the two elements or techniques the artist has used to convey a more life-like figure. Think about the arrangement of the figure, the twist or torque of his body, gesture, facial expressions, and the effects of light and shadow created in areas of deep or shallow carving.

Thursday, November 8

Art History Class 5: Bodies at Rest and in Motion

Read: *Art: A Brief History* pp. 116-127 (handout).

Watch this 8-minute video about representations of the body in ancient Greece:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/tools-understanding-art/v/the-body-in-western-sculpture>

Discussion Questions:

1. What techniques did Polykleitos use when he carved *The Spear Bearer*, c. 450 BCE, to convey a message of heroism?
2. Compare and contrast the messages conveyed in *The Spear Bearer* with those conveyed by *The Dying Gallic Trumpeter* (Roman copy after Greek bronze original, c. 220 BCE).
3. Do you think either was intended to convey qualities about citizenship?

Monday, November 12

Art History Class 6: Tools and Techniques for Representation of the Human Body

View/Read:

1. "A brief history of representing of the body in Western sculpture" (Khan Academy)
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/tools-understanding-art/v/the-body-in-western-sculpture>
2. "A brief history of representing of the body in Western painting" (Khan Academy)
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/tools-understanding-art/v/the-body-in-western-painting>
3. "What is Contrapposto?" (Khan Academy)
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/tools-understanding-art/v/contrapposto>
4. "What is foreshortening?" (Khan Academy)

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-history-basics/tools-understanding-art/v/what-is-foreshortening>

Response Paper Prompt: Choose one art work discussed in any of the four Khan Academy videos that you would like to think about more deeply. Describe two tools or techniques about which you learned that contribute to the art work's organization and power (i.e. contrapposto, symmetry, foreshortening, naturalism, illusion of three-dimensions on a two-dimensional surface). Be specific.

Thursday, November 15

Philosophy Unit with Dr. Matthew Daude Laurents

Unit Overview: Plato's *Republic*

When people think of Western philosophy, they almost always think of **Plato**. In fact, Plato so dominates our philosophical landscape that Alfred North Whitehead (who was himself rather a good philosopher) characterized our philosophical tradition as a "series of footnotes to Plato" (*Process and Reality*). And when people think of Plato, the one work that is mentioned most frequently is the *Republic*. What's it all about?

To oversimplify greatly (*very greatly*), Plato's *Republic* is Socrates' exploration of the **ideal city** in pursuit of **justice**—that is, the city in which justice is perfectly realized. Along the way, we encounter some of the most influential ideas and arguments of our philosophical tradition—ideas about being a citizen and about governing ourselves as a community, and about the stories we tell and how that shapes us for living in our communities—ideas that are still influencing us (and about which we still argue) today. That's why we Free Minds are spending our time together reading the *Republic*. We will read about half of the text in the fall, and wrap up the *Republic* after the winter break.

Philosophy Class 1: Reading Plato Thrasymachus' Challenge & The City and the Soul

Read: "Read me first" (handout); *Republic*, Books I and II

Focus, Book I: Thrasymachus' and Socrates' dispute, "final" round (348b to 354c). For the first book, you might consider reading the whole "lightly" (skimming if you need to) and then double-down on the last bit. I'm going to cover Thrasymachus's challenge and Socrates way of approaching his argument to get us started.

Focus, Book II: The Ring of Gyges (359c-361d); A Tale of Two Cities (369a to 374a)

Discussion Questions: In Book I, what is Thrasymachus' challenge to Socrates? What is justice, according to Thrasymachus? How does Socrates argue against Thrasymachus' view of virtue? Is Thrasymachus convinced by Socrates' arguments? Is Socrates convinced?

In Book II, (1) Why does Socrates shift ground from the individual to the city? What is he trying to show about the relationship between the individual and the city? (2) How does Socrates characterize the healthy city? What are its elements? What is the "luxurious city"? Is it "sick"? Who are the Guardians? What is the proper work of the Guardians of the city?

Monday, November 19

Philosophy Class 2: Education and Character

Read: *Republic*, Book III (The discussion of the education of the Guardians runs from 376c in Book II.)

Focus: Sick, Healthy, Drugged (389b); the Fable of the Metals (414c-415e).

Discussion Questions:

- Why must “music” be so carefully supervised? What will this supervision involve? How does this supervision play a role in making “good citizens”?
- Why is the use of falsehoods by the rulers permitted? Isn’t this just what Thrasymachus says those in power will do?

Response Paper Prompt: Who are the equivalent of the Guardians in our communities? Why should we care how our “Guardians” are educated?

We will not meet for class on Thursday, November 22. Enjoy your Thanksgiving break.

Monday, November 26

Philosophy Class 3: Wisdom, Courage, Moderation, and Justice

Read: *Republic*, Book IV (Plato begins the discussion of “living arrangements” at 415e.)

Focus: The three classes and the tripartite soul (428b-434d); Health and disease: What is a “sick soul”? (444d)

Discussion Questions:

- What is Adeimantus’ problem with respect to the happiness of the Guardians? How does Socrates respond?
- The city is complete: How do we find *justice* in the city? What is the relationship between the classes in the city and the “parts” of the soul?

Response Paper Prompt: What *is* justice, according to Socrates? How is justice “lived” in the community we have built?

Thursday, November 29

Writing Class 5: The Art of Summary

Focus: What is the value in summarizing another’s views, and what can we learn from it? In many ways, summarizing lays the groundwork for entering into conversations about texts. In spoken conversation,

we sometimes restate what another person has said in our own words before offering our own response to it. Similarly in academic writing, we want to confirm and show readers that we have understood someone else's ideas before offering our response to them.

And with someone like Plato, restating his arguments in terms that we can understand and offer to others can be a challenge—albeit a rewarding one—in and of itself!

Read: *They Say, I Say*, Chapter 2, “Her Point Is: The Art of Summarizing”

Write: Bring a first draft of your Formal Paper 3 with you to class tonight. Remember that this can be a rough draft. Include and explain at least two short quotations from the text that sum up Plato's argument about the importance of one person, one work.

Bring: Plato's *Republic*; *They Say, I Say*

Monday, December 3

Writing Class 6: Creating a Sense of Flow

Focus: Tonight you will receive feedback on your Formal Paper 3 draft. We will work on creating greater organization and flow in our papers, focusing on transitions between paragraphs and ideas, and using signal phrases that can help readers to follow our train of thought.

Read: *They Say, I Say*, Chapter 8, “As a Result: Connecting the Parts”

Bring: Plato's *Republic*; *They Say, I Say*

Your final draft of your Formal Paper 3 is due on the last night of the semester, **Thursday, December 13.**

Thursday, December 6

Philosophy Class 4: Men, Women, Children, Philosophers

Read: *Republic*, Book V

Discussion Questions: What, according to Socrates, is the best arrangement between women and men in the city? Do women and men have different roles in the city? How could we transform existing cities into cities of the ideal type?

Monday, December 10

Philosophy Class 5: What can a Philosopher know?

Read: *Republic*, Book VI

Focus: Philosophers, the city's self-rule, and The Good (499d-505e); The Divided Line (507a-511e)

Discussion Questions: Does Socrates really think that philosophers are “worthless” to the city? What are “true philosophers”? What must someone “know” to be a philosopher?

Response Paper Prompt: Why are properly-educated philosophers so valuable to the city that is trying to rule-itself? What do philosophers contribute to this sort of community?

Thursday, December 13

End of Semester Celebration. Tonight you will turn in the final version of Formal Paper 3, as well as reflect on and celebrate the accomplishments of the past few months.

Congratulations on all of your hard work this semester!