**MLA-EBSCO Collaboration for Information Literacy Prize**

**Course designator and number:** LIT3212

**Course title:** Research & Writing About Literature

**Course level (undergraduate or graduate):** Undergraduate

**Course dates:** Most recent, January 9 to May 2, 2023

**Institution:** University of Central Florida

**Department(s):** English

For each submitter (there should be at least two: an instructor and a librarian)

- **Name:** John Venecek
- **Title:** Humanities Librarian
- **Department, program, or library:** John C. Hitt Library

and

- **Name:** Barry Mauer
- **Title:** Associate Professor
- **Department, program, or library:** UCF English Department

**Additional Information:** The collaboration described below, Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, is a research skills textbook designed for LIT3212: Research & Writing About Literature, which Dr. Mauer taught in the spring of 2023. We offer the textbook as an OER to instructors throughout the humanities at UCF, where it is being used in many courses. As we discuss below, the textbook and the specific course, LIT 3212, are built around the ACRL’s Information Literacy framework, with openness and adaptability being two more of our primary goals.

**Reflection:**

**IL Objectives:** When Dr. Mauer and John Venecek began collaborating on Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, our goal was to integrate core principles of the ACRL Framework with key literary research strategies. With this in mind, we built the course around Scholarship and Conversation, Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration, and Authority is Constructed and Contextual. Each of those ideas has its own module within the course as well as a companion video featuring a student researcher, Jada Reyes, who studied James Baldwin’s short story, “Sonny’s Blues” through the lens of Critical Race Theory. In the videos, Jada discusses how each aspect of the Framework informed her research.
Collaboration: This work was a collaboration in every sense of the word. As a librarian, John Venecek built the first modules related to the Framework while Dr. Mauer converted a set of handouts about how to conduct literary research. We blended the two and thus was born the first incarnation of the course. Since then, we have continued expanding the scope of the course by adding new modules, resources, and services. In 2021 we were awarded a course redesign grant that allowed us to hire a team of assistants; we revised the course while adding quizzes and other forms of assessment. We also transitioned from Canvas webcourse modules to Pressbooks, an Open Access publishing platform that syncs with Canvas. Since Pressbooks has more interactivity and style options than Canvas, we were able to create a much more dynamic version of the textbook and course. Pressbooks also made it easier to share the materials with other instructors who are free to remix and reuse as much of the content as they want.

Class Composition: The students in LIT 3212 have some familiarity with literary research, but most do not have the skills to join professional scholarly conversations. This class aims to get them to that level. Our assessment is that, while students may have heard of information literacy, they do not come into this (or other undergraduate courses) with deep knowledge of information literacy, specific components of the framework, or have experience using the methods. Further, there had been fewer opportunities to talk to students about information literacy in recent years as requests for traditional library instruction had declined along with the rise of online, mixed-mode, and hybrid courses. Our response to these changes was to create a more flexible and adaptable research skills course that could accommodate these modalities. We created the first version of Strategies as a proof of concept in which we would start with the framework as the foundation and build up from there. Our goal, then, was to demonstrate how the components of literary research and information literacy are intertwined thereby providing students with the skills and confidence needed to enter the scholarly conversation.

Content and Design: Each chapter begins with an introduction that lists the objectives for that unit followed by a narrative explaining what each objective is, why it’s important, and how it fits into the course. We used these introductory sections to connect the course content to the elements of the Framework and to illustrate how those elements integrate with literary research skills. For example, chapter three focuses on Research as Inquiry, Searching as Strategic Exploration, and Scholarship as Conversation, but we also add a discussion about overcoming the anxiety of influence, a literary concept in which young researchers often defer to who they perceive to be far more experienced and sophisticated scholars, which prevents them from entering the conversation on their topic as an active participant. We also introduce students to the idea that Authority is Constructed and Contextual: “An understanding of this concept enables novice learners to critically examine all evidence—be it a short blog post or a peer-reviewed conference proceeding—and to ask relevant questions about origins, context, and suitability for the current information need.” Students can test their knowledge in low-stakes quizzes and by answering discussion prompts.

Student Impact and Assessment: We conducted an A-B comparison with papers from a course that used our textbook and papers from a course that had not used our textbook. The comparison was based on a series of rubrics designed to assess our key goals including identifying a problem, using evidence, interpreting literary works, and finding trustworthy sources, and others. The results show that students’ skills increased in most of the categories for those who used our textbook. One category, Evaluating Purpose, showed a decrease, so we revised that section to clarify points that may have been difficult for students. Here is a screenshot of the results:
**Instructional Impact:** The impact of this course has gone beyond what either of us imagined. The response from colleagues throughout the humanities has been overwhelming. At the start of the fall 2022 semester, we had 62 instructors enroll in a faculty webcourse site that showcased the textbook (and from which faculty could export the whole or parts to their own webcourses) and it was picked up by MERLOT, the OER portal, which has enhanced the accessibility of the course beyond UCF. The key pedagogical impact, however, is how adaptable the course is. Using Pressbooks allows us to make changes in real-time as we receive feedback from students and instructors. This adaptability enhances engagement among students who play an active role in shaping the course as they learn new skills.

**Reusability:** The current version of our textbook and course is UCF-centric, which means we discuss resources that require an institutional subscription. However, we plan to create a universal edition that would discuss commonly used databases, such as MLA and Academic Search Premier, but without the references to UCF-specific services and resources so the course can be more easily adapted by instructors at other institutions. Instructors outside UCF can do this now by replacing references to UCF, but we believe that the work will be more accessible if MERLOT and other OER portals can share a more easily adaptable version.
“The dilemmas of the practical world are fundamentally resistant to policies that neglect the human question.” – Gregory Ulmer, Internet Invention

LIT 3212: Research and Writing about Literature

Weekly Content

Each week contains required readings and assignments. Course activities are scheduled two times a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays). See the course schedule.

My video introduction to the course.

Technical Support
Use this link to seek Technical Support

Instructor Information
Course Information

- Spring 2023
- 3 Cr Hours
- Place and time: online but generally the assignments are due Tuesdays and Thursdays

Prerequisite: C or better in ENC 1102 or equivalent

Course Description

LIT 3212: Research and Writing about Literature

Catalog Description: Research and Writing about Literature (LIT 3212) This course is designed to teach literary research and writing skills. PR: Grade of “C” (2.0) or better required in ENC 1102 or C.I. Research, writing, and critical analysis skills applicable to upper-level English courses. 3 credit hours

LIT 3212 is designated as a Research-Intensive (RI) course. This designation will be noted on your transcripts. Your active engagement in the research and/or creative scholarship process will be the core of your learning experience in this course. A significant portion of your grade for LIT 3212 will be derived from both your active participation in the research process and the tangible course-related project(s) that comes out of said project. If you have any questions about this designation, please ask your course instructor.

Detailed Description: This course walks you through the process of conducting literary research while helping to refine your library skills. Along the way, we will draw from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Framework. According to the ACRL, “Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers lead to additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.” We will discuss this concept more in-depth throughout the course. Your goal in the course is to produce a research paper suitable for publication in a literary studies journal.

The course will also focus on a research project created by Jada, an English major who conducted a literary study of James Baldwin’s classic short story, “Sonny’s Blues.”
The basic textbook we will be using for our class is *Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, 2e*. It has loads of concepts and vocabulary, some of which you may not have encountered before. In a research-based course, your instructor will require you to write a research paper of 8-12 pages, but the knowledge you need to perform this task can fill up dozens of pages. Writing about literature is a complicated, often messy process; it needs to meet high standards while incorporating knowledge from other fields such as psychology, history, science, and other arts. It entails knowledge about language, genre, structures, styles, and more. To produce good research about literature, we need to know a lot of things about a lot of things!

Although we will discuss the research process in a linear fashion throughout this course, you’ll find that, in practice, literary research is a highly recursive process. We’re constantly circling back through the process as we write. Because writing instructors are locked into presenting the writing process in a linear way, we tend to discuss it in terms of stages such as preliminary research, drafting, revising, and so on. But writing a research paper requires us to rethink and redo our work at any stage. It’s not uncommon for writers to be in the middle of proofreading (one of the final stages) and realize they need to go back and gather more research. Though this course focuses on research about literature, the skills and knowledge in these chapters apply to many other areas and topics, especially in the humanities.

**Key Objectives for This Course**

- Read disciplinary texts and develop a “toolbox” of content knowledge, core principles, and practices.
- Improve research, interpretation, writing, and argumentation skills about literary texts and society by obtaining, critically evaluating, and synthesizing scholarly literature and relevant data.
- Implement appropriate methodologies to address key research problems.
- Gain communication skills through the dissemination of the research (process and product) in appropriate formats and venues, including professional journals and platforms in literary studies.
- A more granular breakdown of course objectives is below:
  - Understand the assignment
  - Identify a research problem
  - Develop audience awareness
  - Enter a scholarly conversation
  - Understand theory’s integral role within humanities research
  - Understand how theory relates to particular research methodologies and methods for gathering evidence
  - Learn to use online library catalogs, database search strategies, library services, citation management, and search alerts
  - Evaluate source credibility
  - Posit your research question
  - Posit a thesis statement
Compose a title
Define your key terms
Write persuasively
Write academic prose
Steer clear of plagiarism

“Research & Writing about Literature” is a Gordon Rule course, which means you will produce at least 6000 words of evaluated writing as required by the English Department. Each Gordon Rule assignment has the following characteristics:

1. The writing will have a clearly defined central idea or thesis.
2. It will provide adequate support for that idea
3. It will be organized clearly and logically
4. It will show awareness of the conventions of standard written English
5. It will be formatted or presented in an appropriate way

Note that our course discussions will take place in Yellowdig, a social media type application. You are free to use any of the questions there or to post your own questions and topics.

Course Introduction

Please visit Course Introduction to get an introduction to the course (is that redundant?).

Course Objectives

Please visit Course Objectives to see the . . . course objectives.

Required Texts

The only required text for the class is Mauer and Venecek: Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, 2e. This is an open educational resource authored by Barry Mauer and John Venecek, UCF. The identical textbook is incorporated in our course modules. Outside research is required and will be explained in the course modules.

This text is published through Pressbooks. Contact and support information for Pressbooks is available at this link.

Course Policies

Please visit Course Policies to see, uh, the course policies.

Course Projects and Grading

Please visit Course Projects and Grading for detailed explanations of how assignments are graded and how the overall course grade is calculated.
Tips for Success

Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 10-12): Introduction / "Sonny's Blues"

Tuesday, January 10

1. Complete the course Participation Quiz.
2. Introduce yourself in Yellowdig.

Thursday, January 12: Last Day to Drop and Request Full Refund

1. Read Introduction to Strategies for Conducting Literary Research. Read James Baldwin's “Sonny’s Blues.” Review the Table of Contents.
2. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
3. Friday, January 13: All faculty are required to document students’ academic activity at the beginning of each In order to document that you began this course, please complete the Participation Quiz and a Yellowdig post by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than today. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Week 2 (January 17-19): Understanding the Assignment / Types of Research Projects / Conducting Preliminary Research

Tuesday, January 17

1. Read Chapter 1 Objectives, Understanding the Assignment, and Types of Research Projects.
2. Take the Understanding the Assignment Refresher Quiz and the Types of Research Projects Quiz (within the chapters)
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, January 19

1. Read Conducting Preliminary Research and Advanced Tip: Calls for Papers.
2. Take the Conducting Preliminary Research Refresher Quiz, and the Calls for Papers Refresher Quiz (within the chapters)
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the **Conducting Preliminary Research Exercise**: Discuss three of your previous research experiences and get clarification about the major assignments for this course (10 points).

**Week 3 (January 24-26): Choose Your Literary Works**

**Tuesday, January 24**

1. Read three literary works chosen from the anthologies available in our course readings.
2. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
3. Turn in your personal notes on literary works (20 points)

**Thursday, January 26**

1. Read two works of literary theory or criticism chosen from the anthologies available in our course readings.
2. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
3. Turn in your personal notes on works of literary theory or criticism (20 points)

**Week 4 (January 31-February 2): Identifying a Problem / Evaluating Relevance and Purpose / Considering Audience**

**Tuesday, January 31**

1. Read Chapter 2 Objectives, Identifying a Problem, and Establishing Relevance & Evaluating Purpose.
2. Take the Identifying a Problem Refresher Quiz, the Establishing Relevance Refresher Quiz, the Evaluating Purpose Refresher Quiz, and the Establishing Relevance & Evaluating Purpose Refresher Quiz (within the chapters)
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the **Identifying a Problem Exercise**: discuss your plan for researching problems your audience considers to be "significant" and "relevant" and identify a problem you wish to research. Problem identification can be provisional (subject to change) at first. (10 points)
5. Complete the **Evaluating Relevance/Purpose Exercise**: choose one work of literary criticism or theory and discuss its rhetorical purpose, noting the ways that literary critics and theorists try to persuade their audiences. (10 points)

**Thursday, February 2**

1. Read Considering Audience.
2. Take the Considering Audience Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
Week 5 (February 7-9): Research as Inquiry / Searching as Strategic Exploration / Scholarship as Conversation

Tuesday, February 7

1. Read Chapter 3 Objectives, Research as Inquiry, and Searching as Strategic Exploration.
2. Take the Searching as Strategic Exploration Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Searching as Strategic Exploration Exercise: present a coherent plan for beginning your research and note parts of the plan that need to be more clearly defined. (10 points)

Thursday, February 9

1. Read Scholarship as Conversation.
2. Take the Scholarship as Conversation Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Scholarship as Conversation Exercise: discuss your ideas and feelings about the need to be “original” in your writing; has the fear of being “influenced” by other writers held you back from reading them and studying their work? (10 points)

Week 6 (February 14-16): Research Goals / Theory / Methodologies / Methods / Evidence

Tuesday, February 14

1. Read Chapter 4 Objectives, Research Goals, Theories, and Methodologies.
2. Complete the Theories Exercise: select the theory or theories you will use for your research project and explain why you made this theory selection over other Discuss what specific concepts from the theory/theories you are most interested in exploring in relation to your chosen literary work and put forward your plan for researching your chosen theory and its major concepts. (10 points)
3. Complete the Methodologies Exercise: select the methodologies you will use for your research project and explain why you made this theory selection over other methodologies. Discuss what specific concepts from the methodologies you are most interested in exploring in relation to your chosen literary work and put forward your plan for researching your chosen methodologies. (10 points)
4. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, February 16
1. Read Research Methods and Research Skills.
2. Take the Research Skills Refresher Quiz.
3. Complete the Research Methods Exercise: select the research methods and skills you will use for your research project and explain why you made this method and skills selection over others. Put forward your plan for learning your chosen methods and skills. (10 points)
4. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Week 7 (February 21-23): Reading and Interpreting Literary Works
Tuesday, February 21

1. Read Chapter 5 Objectives, Reading Literary Works, and Interpreting Literary Works.
2. Take the Reading Literary Works Refresher Quiz and the Interpreting Literary Works Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, February 23

1. Read Intercultural Competence.
2. Take the Interpreting Literary Works Refresher Quiz and the Intercultural Competence Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Interpreting Literary Works Exercise: practice their reading skills on “Tell Me a Story” by Paul Auster and “Departures” by Storm Jameson using explication, analysis, or comparison/contrast. Do an interpretation of one or both of the stories, using either an explication or symptomatic approach. (10 points)

Week 8 (February 28-March 2): Reviewing the Secondary Literature / Types of Literature Reviews / Reading Like a Researcher
Tuesday, February 28

1. Read Chapter 6 Objectives, Reviewing the Secondary Literature, Types of Literature Reviews.
2. Take the Annotated Bibliography Refresher Quiz, the Literature Review Refresher Quiz, the Reviewing the Secondary Literature Refresher Quiz, and the Types of Literature Reviews Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Types of Literature Review Exercise: determine what type of annotated bibliography or literature review you will use for your research projects, and explain why you made this selection over Additionally, discuss
specific challenges you face in completing an annotated bibliography or a literature review. (10 points)

Thursday, March 2

1. Read Reading Like a Researcher and Advanced Tip: Talk to People!
2. Take the Reading Like a Researcher Refresher Quiz and the Talk to People Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Week 9 (March 7-9): Library Services & Resources

Tuesday, March 7

1. Read Chapter 7 Objectives, Introducing Primo, Advanced Primo Options, and Library Services & Resources.
2. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, March 9

1. Read Database Search Strategies, Citation Management, and Advanced Tip: Creating Search Alerts.
2. Take the Database Search Strategies Refresher Quiz, the Citation Management Refresher Quiz, and Creating Search Alerts Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Week 10 (March 14-16): Spring Break: No Class

No Class

Week 11 (March 21-23): Using Google Scholar

Tuesday, March 21

1. Read Chapter 8 Objectives, Google Scholar Features, Linking to the UCF Libraries, and Cited by & Related Articles.
2. Take the Citation Chaining Refresher Quiz and the Validating Resources Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, March 23

1. Read Author Profiles & Journal Metrics and Advanced Search Tips.
2. Take the Validating Resources Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
Friday, March 24: Withdrawal Deadline

Week 12 (March 28-30): Evaluating Scholarly Resources / Refining Your Research Question / Evaluating Your Research Question / Writing an Abstract

Tuesday, March 28

1. Read Chapter 9 Objectives, Finding Trustworthy Sources, and Avoiding Misinformation, Disinformation, and Dismediation.
2. Take the Finding Trustworthy Sources Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Evaluating Scholarly Resources Exercise: discuss why we need gatekeepers in our disciplines, what efforts we should make to ensure source credibility, the differences between warranted and unwarranted bias, and the significance of disinformation, misinformation, and dismediation. (10 points)

Thursday, March 30

2. Take the Refining Your Research Question Refresher Quiz, the Evaluating Your Research Question Refresher Quiz, and the Writing an Abstract Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Evaluating Your Research Question Exercise: posit your research question and make sure it meets all the criteria for a good research question listed in the textbook: Is your question clear, complex, and focused? Is your answer arguable? Are you filling a gap or solving a problem? Is your question loaded or leading? Is your question too broad or narrow? Is the scope of your project realistic and researchable within the given timeframe? Do you have the tools &/or technology needed to accomplish your task? Do you have access to the information and resources you will need? (10 points)

Week 13 (April 4-6): Positing a Thesis Statement and Composing a Title / Defining Key Terms

Tuesday, April 4

1. Read Chapter 11 Objectives, Research as an Inferential and Critical Process, Relating the Conceptual and Concrete.
Thursday, April 6

1. Read Chapter 12 Objectives, Positing a Thesis Statement and Composing a Title, Defining Key Terms, and Formatting and Style Guidelines: MLA & APA.
2. Take the Positing a Thesis Statement Refresher Quiz, the Composing a Title Refresher Quiz, and the Defining Key Terms Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
4. Complete the Thesis Statement Exercise and posit your thesis statement and make sure it meets all the criteria for a good thesis statement listed in the textbook. (10 points)
5. Complete the Title Exercise, following criteria: Does your title indicate the literary work, theory and/or method, and hint at the thesis? (10 points)

Week 14 (April 11-13): The Writing Process

Tuesday, April 11

1. Start work on Foundational Materials Assignment.
2. Read Chapter 13 Objectives, Writer’s Block, and Structures.
3. Take the Writer’s Block Refresher Quiz and the Structuring Your Writing Refresher.
4. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Thursday, April 13

1. Read Revisions and Writing Academic Prose.
2. Take the Revision Refresher Quiz, the Writing Guidelines Refresher Quiz, and the Writing Academic Prose Refresher Quiz.
3. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

Week 15 (April 18-20): Avoiding Plagiarism, Additional Resources, Foundational Materials Assignment

Tuesday, April 18

1. Foundational Materials Assignment due.
2. Read Chapter 14 Objectives, Avoiding Plagiarism, Additional Resources, and Foundational Materials Assignment.
3. Take the Avoiding Plagiarism Refresher Quiz.
4. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.
5. Complete the Avoiding Plagiarism Exercise (10 points)

Thursday, April 20

1. Work on your final research project.
2. Participate in the Discussion in Yellowdig.

**Week 16 (April 25-May 2): Finals**

Tuesday, April 25: Continue work on your Final Research Project.

Thursday, April 27: **Final Exam**.

1. This will be a short exam - multiple choice, true/false, and matching - worth 50 points. The exam starts at 12:00 am on Tuesday, April 25 and is due at 11:59 pm on Thursday, April 27.

Friday, April 28: **Final Research Project** due

**Foundational Materials Assignment**

This assignment is a major step on your way to the research project. Turn in your proposed title, research question, thesis statement, abstract, and annotated bibliography for your final research project. Rubrics for each of these components are available in the “Rubrics” menu item on the left of your webcourse page.

Your Foundational Materials work may only end up being a couple of pages long, but we are going for quality not quantity here. You will use this material as the basis for your research project. Not all of these elements necessarily appear in your final research project, however. Some research projects do not require abstracts or annotated bibliographies, for example, but these elements are useful to you as you put together your research project.

This foundational material project is intended to give you a template for your final research project. Completing this foundational work requires adequate time and attention, and a clear idea of how to complete the assignment’s demands. It is ok to revise it as you are working on the research project; scholars do this all the time. But we must begin with an assessment of audience and purpose, a provisional “problem,” research question, thesis, and overview of an argument. We must have some sense of the existing scholarly discussion on a topic for any chance of our contribution to have relevance.

Most important is to develop the contents of the paper – your arguments, use of sources, etc. Your arguments need specificity, strength, support, and coherence. As one of my former professors used to say, writing arguments is not “natural” and is extremely difficult to learn. But the power of arguments is immense and worth the effort. Professional scholars sometimes rework their argument dozens of times before they are happy with it. Most of the time we cannot create a strong, coherent argument in one or two drafts.
Please ask for your instructor’s feedback or help if you need it before turning in this assignment. They are here to help you (it’s literally their job!).

Further instructions are below.

1. Be sure to indicate which prompt from the project assignments you are referring to. By choosing one, you are choosing the “frame” for your work. Make sure you incorporate key terms in your proposal. If your research is about metaphor in a literary work, you need to explain which metaphor(s) in particular you are addressing. It shouldn’t be about metaphor in general.

2. The parts of the assignment, such as composing a title, developing a research question, writing a thesis statement, and so on, are explained in our course units. Following the advice in these units will help you stay away from many common yet avoidable mistakes.

3. Titles: If a key word appears in your title, it needs to appear somewhere else in your proposal. The title should indicate which text is your object of study. It should also indicate which theory, methodology, or method you are using to discuss the work. Your title needs to give the reader some guidance on what to expect in the paper. Imagine that your title is listed among twenty other titles in a journal – how will readers know which text you are discussing? Which theory or perspective you are taking? You should capitalize all words in your title except for prepositions (unless a preposition is at the beginning of the title, in which case you capitalize it). Your own title does not go in quotation marks. It is a mistake to imply that a particular writer is using a theory in their writing (as in this made-up example: “Judith Williamson’s Myth Structure in Poe’s ‘The Masque of the Red Death’.” The word “in” here implies that Williamson’s theory is in the story itself. Instead, you could say you are doing a reading of the story using Williamson’s theory.

4. Research questions: The assignment prompt is not the same thing as your research question about the text you are studying. What is it you want to know about this text? Don’t make your research question too broad. To avoid writing a paper that makes little contact with evidence, make your research question about a specific text and specific things (such as particular metaphors or paradoxes, etc.) in the text. The question should be answerable with an arguable claim. Make sure your research question is relevant to your audience (of textual scholars). What do you want to know that isn’t answered adequately by available studies? Why should the question you raise matter to
others? Don’t ask whether we can apply a theory to a text. I’m sure we could apply almost any theory to almost any text, but what is it you want to know about the text? Is there something specific about it that can’t be understood by other means?

5. **Thesis statement:** Writing a good thesis statement is one of the most difficult tasks in academic writing. Your thesis statement should be an answer to your research question. It needs to be about a specific text or texts, rather than about a topic (like paradox) in general. Because you are stating an arguable claim, you should do more than claim you will discuss or analyze a text (these terms imply an explicatory paper, which is “about” something, and not an argumentative one that makes a claim). Avoid making vague claims that we can “understand” a text. Tell your reader the text’s meaning. Avoid making claims that are already known or generally accepted, such as that Ernest Gaines’ writing is about injustice. Tell us what actions are unjust and explain why. Avoid vague language. Stating that something is “different” or “unique” is not an arguable claim. Don’t claim that a text is an “example” of a theory. Most theories are general enough to cover a potentially infinite number of examples. Tell us what is special about a text and why it matters. Don’t claim to prove that a theory (like Cleanth Brooks’ theory of paradox) is true. Many literary theories are fairly well accepted; you can add research showing how other theorists have amended and extended their work. The theory should tell us something about a text that we can’t learn another way. Don’t claim that Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory shows us that Gaines’ work is about race because we already know that without help from the theory. Instead tell us how Gaines’ text represents discourses of race, how these discourses conflict, how a character navigates them, and so on. Keep your thesis statement as short as possible and put longer explanations in the abstract.

6. **Abstract:** Explain how your research contributes to the scholarly conversation by stating briefly the relation of the research question to the ongoing scholarly conversation, the theory and methods you use, and the results in the form of a thesis statement. Your abstract should explain your argument in more detail and provide an idea of what support you are using and why your claim is significant.

7. **Annotated bibliography or Review of Literature:** How are you positioning your argument in relation to that of other scholars? Which ones do you agree with or disagree with? Of the ones that agree, how will your work differ from theirs? Are you deviating from other scholarship in some ways? Building upon it? Providing meta-commentary on it? Which sources are you using for evidence? How does your work contribute to the scholarly discussion? If your proposal refers to a theory or method, include something in the bibliography about it. Sometimes one source you found will be closest to the paper you are writing. You can use it as your primary jumping off point – how does your work differ or supplement this work? Each work listed in your bibliography should have a full citation. Make sure your citations are properly formatted (MLA, APA, etc.). If you’d like to see an excellent example of a review of
literature, see this one about *narratology, etc. by Carissa Baker*. Keep in mind that your sources may focus on different things – the literary work, the theory, the methodology, etc.

8. **Stylistics**: Keep proposals in present tense (unless it’s specifically about the future or the past). In other words, avoid writing “this paper will . . .” Avoid passive voice sentences, especially agentless ones that don’t tell us who is doing what. Make sure your arguments are strong and clear and that there are few or no mechanical or style problems to slow down your reader. Your reader wants to learn and enjoy – they do not want to struggle to figure out what you mean, how your ideas are connected, or to confront style problems. Writers work harder so that their readers don’t have to. Short story titles go in quotation marks and book titles go in italics. Avoid using “this” as a stand-alone pronoun, which leads to vagueness.

If your project uses a theory outside of its normal application, then explain why it is doing so and how you are making it work. For instance, Vladimir Propp’s morphological theory is about folktales. If you are applying it to a modernist literary work, explain why Propp’s theory is relevant outside of folktales. Your reader may think, for example, that modernist works don’t follow the narrative structures of folktales and that applying Propp to one will just tell us what we already believe – that folktales and modernist literary works are different. But if applying Propp to a modernist literary work reveals something about that work we could not have understood otherwise, then by all means, use it!

Research projects take time to prepare and write. Be sure to schedule time regularly each week to do this work. Start with something very manageable like 15 minutes a day, and then if you go over that time it’s a bonus. The hardest part is starting.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense that can lead to expulsion from the university. You must properly cite your sources, using quotation marks (or offsetting longer quotes) and providing proper citation.

**Points**

100

**Submitting**

a text entry box or a file upload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Available from</th>
<th>Until</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>Apr 18 at 11:59pm</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>-N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Foundational Materials Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong>&lt;br&gt;If a key word appears in your title, it needs to appear somewhere else in your proposal. The title should indicate which text is your object of study. It should also indicate which theory, methodology, or method you are using to discuss the work. Your title needs to give the reader some guidance on what to expect in the paper. Imagine that your title is listed among twenty other titles in a journal - how will readers know which text you are discussing? Which theory or perspective you are taking? You should capitalize all words in your title except for prepositions (unless a preposition is at the beginning of the title, in which case you capitalize it). Your own title does not go in quotation marks. It is a mistake to imply that a particular writer is using a theory in their writing (as in this made-up example: “Judith Williamson’s Myth Structure in Poe’s ‘The Masque of the Red Death’.” The word “in” here implies that Williamson’s theory is in the story itself. Instead, you could say you are doing a reading of the story using Williamson’s theory.</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Foundational Materials Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td></td>
<td>15  pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The assignment prompt is not the same thing as your research question about the text you are studying. What is it you want to know about this text? Don't make your research question too broad. To avoid writing a paper that makes little contact with evidence, make your research question about a specific text and specific things (such as particular metaphors or paradoxes, etc.) in the text. The question should be answerable with an arguable claim. Make sure your research question is relevant to your audience (of textual scholars). What do you want to know that isn’t answered adequately by available studies? Why should the question you raise matter to others? Don’t ask whether we can apply a theory to a text. I’m sure we could apply almost any theory to almost any text, but what is it you want to know about the text? Is there something specific about it that can’t be understood by other means?</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
<td>0 pts No Marks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Foundational Materials Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thesis statement: Writing a good thesis statement is one of the most difficult tasks in academic writing. Your thesis statement should be an answer to your research question. It needs to be about a specific text or texts, rather than about a topic (like paradox) in general. Because you are stating an arguable claim, you should do more than claim you will discuss or analyze a text (these terms imply an explicatory paper, which is “about” something, and not an argumentative one that makes a claim). Avoid making vague claims that we can “understand” a text. Tell your reader the text’s meaning. Avoid making claims that are already known or generally accepted, such as that Ernest Gaines’ writing is about injustice. Tell us what actions are unjust and explain why. Avoid vague language. Stating that something is "different" or “unique” is not an arguable claim. Don’t claim that a text is an “example” of a theory. Most theories are general enough to cover a potentially infinite number of examples. Tell us what is special about a text and why it matters. Don’t claim to prove that a theory (like Cleanth Brooks’ theory of paradox) is true. Many literary theories are fairly well accepted; you can add research showing how other theorists have amended and extended their work. The theory should tell us something about a text that we can’t learn another way. Don’t claim that Mikhail Bakhtin's theory shows us that Gaines’ work is about race because we already know that without help from the theory. Instead tell us how Gaines’ text represents discourses of race, how these discourses conflict, how a character navigates them, and so on. Keep your thesis statement as short as possible and put longer explanations in the abstract.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 pts</td>
<td>Full Marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 pts</td>
<td>No Marks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 pts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>Explain how your research contributes to the scholarly conversation. Your abstract should explain the argument in more detail and provide an idea of what support you are using and why your claim is significant.</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annotated Bibliography</strong></td>
<td>How you are positioning your argument in relation to that of other scholars? Which ones do you agree with or disagree with? Of the ones that agree, how will your work differ from theirs? Are you deviating from other scholarship in some ways? Building upon it? Providing meta-commentary on it? Which sources are you using for evidence? How does your work contribute to the scholarly discussion? If your proposal refers to a theory or method, include something in the bibliography about it. Sometimes one source you found will be closest to the paper you are writing. You can use it as your primary jumping off point – how does your work differ or supplement this work? Each work listed in your bibliography should have a full citation. Make sure your citations are properly formatted (MLA, APA, etc.). If you’d like to see an excellent example of a review of literature, see this one about narratology, etc. by Carissa Baker. Keep in mind that your sources may focus on different things – the literary work, the theory, the methodology, etc.</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stylistics</strong></td>
<td>You follow stylistic guidelines.</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points: 100
Final Research Assignment

"Write, let no one hold you back, let nothing stop you: not man; not the imbecilic capitalist machinery, in which the publishing houses are the crafty, obsequious relayers of imperatives handed down by an economy that works against us and off our backs." - Hélène Cixous

"It is my ambition to say in ten sentences what others say in a whole book." - Friedrich Nietzsche

The purposes of the final research paper are to

- use your research skills
- apply your knowledge of literary theory and methodology to interpret, critique, historicize, or creatively adapt a work of literature
- apply best writing practices, explained in our *Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, 2e* text, to produce a strong argument within a polished academic research project

Your work must be aimed at publication in a literary studies journal or other professional venue (conference, platform, etc.). You may actually submit your work to the journal or platform, but it is not required to do so for the assignment. The project should be accompanied with a brief note to the prospective journal or platform (so your instructor knows which one you are aiming for).

Click on [this link for a folder of literary anthologies](#). You may select the literary work(s) you research from one of these.

You **must** include at least five outside sources (in other words, sources that have not been assigned to the class) in your research project. The five works you choose to cite must be scholarly works; in other words, they must be from scholarly journals, books, or websites. You may cite additional, non-scholarly works, but do not do so exclusively. The total length for a conventional essay is 8-12 pages. Essays are not your only option, however, and you may produce a graphic work, conference presentation, video, exhibit, or other form of work. See [Presenting Your Research Visually: Academic Posters and Slides](#), if you are interested in using these media.

Your project must include an abstract, as well as a review of literature (see the Types of Literature Reviews page for advice on how to develop your annotated bibliography into a literature review), a properly formatted works cited page, and all of the components we have covered so far (research question, thesis statement, title, etc.). You may choose MLA, APA, or Chicago as your style guide.

The skills involved in producing this project are required in upper division literature courses. The skills you learn and demonstrate in this work are also transferable to any activity that requires careful reading, critical thinking, rhetoric ability, and effective writing.
Make sure you refer to *Strategies for Conducting Literary Research, 2e* for instructions about writing the essay.

200

Submitting

a text entry box or a file upload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Available from</th>
<th>Until</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>Apr 28 at 11:59pm</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>-N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-N/A</td>
<td>-N/A</td>
<td>-N/A</td>
<td>-N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rubric

**Final Research Project Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conceptual  
Has cogent analysis, shows command of interpretive and conceptual tasks required by assignment and course materials: ideas original, often insightful, going beyond ideas discussed in lecture and class.  
This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion. | 40 pts |
| Rhetorical  
Commands attention with a convincing argument with a compelling purpose; highly responsive to the demands of a specific writing situation; sophisticated use of conventions of academic discipline and genre; anticipates the reader’s need for information, explanation, and context  
This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion. | 40 pts |
| Thesis  
Essay controlled by clear, precise, well-defined thesis; is sophisticated in both statement and insight  
This area will be used by the assessor to leave comments related to this criterion. | 30 pts |
## Final Research Project Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development and Support</strong></td>
<td>Well-chosen examples; uses persuasive reasoning to develop and support</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thesis consistently; uses specific quotations, statistics, aesthetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>details, or citations of scholarly sources effectively; logical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>connections between ideas are evident. MLA, APA, or Chicago is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistently and correctly used throughout.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structuring</strong></td>
<td>Well-constructed paragraphs; appropriate, clear, and smooth transitions;</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arrangement of organizational elements seems particularly apt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appropriately; observes professional conventions of written English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and manuscript format; makes few minor or technical errors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Points:** 200

---

**Course Introduction**

I am very excited about this class because I love the subject so much that helped write the textbook for it! There is way too much information about literary research to ever fit into one semester. Thus we are really just introducing ourselves to many of the concepts and methods used in this discipline.

Some students like to get to know their instructor. If you want to know more about me, I’ve created a [short bio](#).

If there are films or news stories or other materials you think are relevant to the class, please bring them to my attention and I will try to work them in. I also want you to feel free to contact me by email as much as you need to in order to succeed in the course. And I want to see lots of posts on our discussion boards. If you have a thought, opinion,
or argument, please share it. Don't be afraid to push back against me if you disagree with anything I say or write. And don't stop pushing if I push back again. This is brain exercise! Think of it as a self-defense class for your mind. Sparring is part of training.

In previous courses, I received feedback from students that they "had to agree with the professor." Not true. You do not have to agree with others' arguments, including mine, but you do have to learn to engage with them and argue convincingly if you disagree with them; you have to be able to explain why another's argument is wrong – using sound evidence and valid reasoning while avoiding logical fallacies. If I point out that your claims lack sufficient evidence or reasoning, I'm not disrespecting you nor am I forcing you to agree with me; I am doing my job. In the world of knowledge, claims that lack sufficient evidence or sound reasoning should not be accepted. Furthermore, claims that are sufficiently supported by evidence and reasoning must be accepted, no matter how extreme they sound.

From American Association of University Professors’ 2007 report on "Freedom in the Classroom"

"An instructor may not harass a student nor act on an invidiously discriminatory ground toward a student, in class or elsewhere.” However, “it is neither harassment nor discriminatory treatment of a student to hold up to close criticism an idea or viewpoint the student has posited or advanced. Indeed it would be a dereliction of professional responsibility to fail to do so."

Course Objectives

1. Students need help to enter into academic and professional discourse. My teaching aims to help you enter these communities by integrating four knowledge areas: literacy, critical thinking, self-knowledge, and citizenship.

   - Literacy is more than the ability merely to read and write; it is also the ability to read reality and to interpret the "instrument panels" (the mediated data streams and theoretical frameworks) that tell us about it. At the university level, literacy means the ability to communicate within academic and professional communities using specialized discourses. From my perspective, I want your literacy skills to be high enough to write for publication in a professional peer-reviewed journal. Such work requires new habits of reading and writing, habits that do not come easily or naturally for most people. Gregory Ulmer used to remind me that a pencil was probably the cheapest technology a person could buy but the most expensive to learn to use effectively. I focus on improving each student’s abilities regardless of his or her skills on the first day of
Critical thinking is the ability to assess the merits of an idea or it requires skills in analysis and interpretation. Analysis describes what type a text is, how it functions, details its elements and explains how it achieves its effects. Interpretation declares what a text means, what its major themes are, and what morals or lessons the reader should draw from it. When students become adept at these skills, they are ready to assess the merits of ideas, including their own.

Self-knowledge lies at the origins of scholarly learning, beginning with the Delphic Oracle’s instruction to Socrates: “Know thyself!” Self-knowledge is the process of creating an inventory of one’s thoughts and behaviors, discovering one’s values, and checking for congruence. By studying literature, we explore different ways of being in the world.

Citizenship is a process of engagement with the world, one that balances empowerment with humility. It begins with an understanding of self, of groups, of traditions, and of actions and their consequences. The citizenship process is similar to the self-knowledge process. It entails examination of a group’s values and its beliefs and behaviors. Again, theory and the arts are agents for understanding what it means to have responsibility, power, and limitations in our own place and time.

By integrating these four areas, you will gain a sense of confidence about your place in academic and professional worlds. You will have the ability to find, evaluate, and use information. Below are additional goals of the course.

2. To train you to work in the field of literary studies.
3. To identify the formal and stylistic features of a variety of texts.
4. To identify the methods of composition practiced by the producers of such.
5. To learn how to read and incorporate elements from difficult works, including experimental texts, theories that account for such texts’ methods and meanings, and written accounts of complex historical events on your own.
6. To write persuasively about the “how” and “why” of critical and theoretical work, particularly your own. Each act of composition, even in theory and criticism, involves developing the “rules of the game,” a set of constraints about what is and isn’t. You will learn to explain and justify the rules of the game for your own as you communicate your findings.
7. To formulate an original research question or objective appropriate to the discipline.
Course Policies

Class Disclaimer

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. This course will discuss some potentially controversial issues. Part of the purpose of the course is to enable you to understand how reasonable people might disagree about such issues (especially involving ethics and justice). You are not required to believe any particular position that we discuss and examine on such issues. You are expected, however, to have an open mind and to try to understand the arguments (and to consider the ideas and evidence used in such arguments) for many different positions on these issues, and to critically examine and respectfully discuss such arguments, ideas and evidence.

Specific to this course:

1. Proper online course behavior is expected at all times. Students must follow UCF standards for personal and academic conduct as outlined in The Golden Rule. Proper classroom conduct entails creating a positive learning experience for all students; therefore, sexist, racist, homophobic, or other derogatory remarks will not be tolerated. My top priority is to provide a safe environment for learning.
2. Participation in the webcourse discussion forums is strongly encouraged and will count for 30 points towards your final grade.
3. Make-up work is available at the professor’s discretion for excused absences only. No make-up work will be given for unexcused absences. Students who miss class are responsible for raising the issue of make-up work with the professor.
4. Late assignments will lose 20% of the total possible points per class meeting after due date.
5. All work is to be done individually unless otherwise noted by the instructor.
6. All papers must be proofread and submitted to our webcourse. Incomplete papers will be returned.
7. All quizzes are “open note” and “open book.”
8. Emails sent to me must be courteous and professional. Please provide a greeting (“Dear/Hello Dr. Mauer”). Always sign your name. Responses to emails may take up to three days, especially on weekends. Please be patient.
9. Please allow up to one week for instructor grading and feedback on assignments.
10. No incompletes will be given in this course.

11. Complaints about assignment grades should be discussed with me within one week after return.

12. If there are mistakes (missing texts, broken links, wrong calendar dates, etc.) in webcourses, please let me know so I can fix them. Creating a webcourse involves setting up hundreds of texts and links. More than likely I made at least one mistake.

13. This syllabus may be amended or modified in any way upon notice; most such changes will affect the Course schedule, so be sure that you know if any due dates change.

14. Plagiarism and Cheating: All work that you submit for this class must be your own, and it must be written exclusively for this course. Also, any sources consulted for your writing must be properly documented. “Rewriting,” in which a student consults a source, changes a few words, and presents the ideas as his/her own, is plagiarism. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an “F” for that assignment and may also lead to an “F” for the entire course. Plagiarism and cheating subjects a student to referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information (UCF Golden Rule). I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, do not cheat by giving answers to others or by taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not expect me to change your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

15. Disability Accommodation: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Rm. 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/ TDD only phone (407) 823-2116.

16. University Writing Center, Trevor Colbourn Hall 109, Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library & Online, 407-823-2197 Writing Center The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to UCF students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Trained peer consultants provide help at every stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, researching, drafting, revising, incorporating sources, and learning to proofread and edit. The UWC’s purpose is not merely to fix papers or to make better writers, but to teach writers strategies to navigate complex situations for writing, both in and outside the University. Consultations are available for individuals and small groups. To make the best use of the UWC, visit far enough before your due date to allow yourself time to revise after your consultation, browse the writing resources on our website, and arrange a regular weekly appointment if you’d like long-term help. You may schedule a 45-minute appointment by phone or by using the TutorTrac scheduler on our website; walk-in consultations are also available. In addition, the UWC seeks
graduate and undergraduate tutors from all majors; contact the UWC to learn more about peer writing consulting and ENC 4275/5276: Theory & Practice of Tutoring Writing, our three-credit tutor-education course.

General Policies Related to the University:

**Academic Integrity**

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF’s Rules of Conduct. According to Section 1, “Academic Misconduct,” students are prohibited from engaging in

1. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.

2. Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else’s efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.

3. Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor’s PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.

4. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student’s own academic work.

5. Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another’s work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student’s own.

6. Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

7. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity. For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices.”

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF’s student handbook, The Golden Rule. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students’ education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or
expulsion from the university, and/or a “Z Designation” on a student’s official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, click here.

**Course Accessibility Statement**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

- **Campus Safety Statement**

  Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

  - In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
  - Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide’s physical location and review the online version.
  - Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
  - If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator).
  - To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by logging in. Click on “Student Self Service” located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue “Personal Information” heading on the Student Center screen, click on “UCF Alert”, fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click “Apply” to save the changes, and then click “OK.”
  - Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
  - Learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere.

**Make-Up Assignments for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities**
Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied.

Religious Observances

Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

UCF Cares

During your UCF career, you may experience challenges including struggles with academics, finances, or your personal well-being. UCF has a multitude of resources available to all students. Please visit UCFCares, if you are seeking resources and support, or if you are worried about a friend or classmate. Free services and information are included for a variety of student concerns, including but not limited to alcohol use, bias incidents, mental health concerns, and financial challenges. You can also e-mail UCFCares with questions or for additional assistance. You can reach a UCF Cares staff member between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling 407-823-5607. If you are in immediate distress, please call Counseling and Psychological Services to speak directly with a counselor 24/7 at 407-823-2811, or please call 911.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally
identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

**Course Projects and Grading**

Projects

**Final research project** is a literary research project of 8-12 pages (or equivalent) (200 points/26.6%), aimed at publication in a professional journal or platform. Students investigate a literary work and produce an argument about it. Objectives

- use your research skills
- apply your knowledge of literary theory and methodology to interpret, critique, historicize, or creatively adapt a work of literature
- apply best writing practices, explained in our *Strategies for Conducting Literary Research. 2e* text, to produce a strong argument within a polished academic research paper

The skills involved in producing this project are required in upper division literature courses. The skills you learn and demonstrate in this work are also transferable to any activity that requires careful reading, critical thinking, rhetoric ability, and effective writing.

Make sure you refer to *Strategies for Conducting Literary Research* for instructions about writing the essay. In particular, please see the **Final Research Project Instructions**. Click on this link for a folder of literary anthologies, from which you will choose a literary work (or works) to write about.

You **must** also include at least **five outside sources** (in other words, sources that have not been assigned to the class). The works you choose to cite must be scholarly works; in other words, they must be from scholarly journals, books, or websites. You may cite other, non-scholarly works, but do not do so exclusively. Length: 8-12 pages.

**The Foundational Materials assignment** (100 points/13.3%) is a late “midterm” assignment (it actually comes nearer the end of the course) that compiles five previous assignments—spaced throughout the semester—proposed title, research question, thesis statement, abstract, and annotated bibliography. The assignment requires research into literary works through secondary sources and engagement with original evidence.

**Yellowdig**. (40 points/5.3%). This class uses **Yellowdig**, which is more like a social media platform than it is a standard discussion board. For each of the class modules, go to and discuss at least one question (which can be your own, someone else’s, or just one from any provided by the instructor), but feel free to answer as many as you'd like. Also, the
discussion gets lively if you check back in with it to see if anyone has responded to your post. Reminder that the Yellowdig grade (out of 14,000) will be converted at the end of the semester to a webcourse grade (out of 40 points) for discussion and class participation.

**Quizzes** (35 total at 5 points each/175 points/23.3%). The quizzes are incorporated in the module pages/textbook and each is worth five points. You have unlimited attempts at each quiz and the best score is recorded in the gradebook.

**A series of 17 small scaffolded assignments** (total 190 points/25.3%) build towards the Foundational Materials assignment and the Final Research Project:

1. **Conducting Preliminary Research Exercise** Discuss your previous research experiences and get clarification about the major assignments for this course (10 points). Due January 19.

2. **Personal Notes on Literary Readings** Meant to capture some basic facts and considerations about the three literary works you are required to read from our Literary Anthologies (20 points). Due January 24.

3. **Personal Notes on Works of Literary Theory or Criticism** Meant to capture some basic facts and considerations about the two literary theory or criticism works you are required to read (20 points). Due January 26.

4. **Identifying a Problem Exercise** Discuss your plan for researching problems their audience considers to be "significant" and "relevant" and they identify a problem they wish to Problem identification can be provisional (subject to change) at first (10 points). Due January 31.

5. **Evaluating Relevance/Purpose Exercise** Choose one work of literary criticism or theory and discuss its rhetorical purpose, noting the ways that literary critics and theorists try to persuade their audiences (10 points). Due January 31.

6. **Searching as Strategic Exploration Exercise** Present a coherent plan for beginning your research and note parts of the plan that need to be more clearly defined (10 points). Due February 7.

7. **Scholarship as Conversation Exercise** Discuss your ideas and feelings about the need to be “original” in their writing; has the fear of being “influenced” by other writers held them back from reading them and studying their work? (10 points). Due February 9.

8. **Theories Exercise** Select the theory or theories you will use for your research project and explain why you made this theory selection over other theories. Discuss what specific concepts from the theory/theories you are most interested in exploring in relation to your chosen literary work and put forward your plan for researching your chosen theory and its major concepts (10 points). Due February 14.

9. **Methodologies Exercise** Select the methodologies you will use for your research project and explain why you made this theory selection over other methodologies. Discuss what specific concepts from the
methodologies you are most interested in exploring in relation to your chosen literary work and put forward your plan for researching your chosen methodologies (10 points). Due February 14.

10. **Research Methods Exercise** Select the research methods and skills you will use for your research project and explain why you made this method and skills selection over others. Put forward your plan for learning your chosen methods and skills (10 points). Due February 16.

11. **Interpreting Literary Works Exercise** Practice your reading skills on “Tell Me a Story” by Paul Auster and “Departures” by Storm Jameson using explication, analysis, or comparison/contrast. Do an interpretation of one or both of the stories, using either an explicatory or symptomatic approach (10 points). Due February 23.

12. **Types of Literature Review Exercise** Determine what type of annotated bibliography or literature review you will use for your research projects, and explain why you made this selection over others. Additionally, discuss specific challenges you face in completing an annotated bibliography or a literature review (10 points). Due February 28.

13. **Evaluating Scholarly Resources Exercise** Discuss why we need gatekeepers in our disciplines, what efforts we should make to ensure source credibility, the differences between warranted and unwarranted bias, and the significance of disinformation, misinformation, and dismediation (10 points). Due March 28.

14. **Evaluating Your Research Question Exercise** Posit your research question and make sure it meets all the criteria for a good research question listed in the textbook (10 points). Due March 30.

15. **Thesis Statement Exercise** Posit your thesis statement and make sure it meets all the criteria for a good thesis statement listed in the textbook. Also, propose a title, following criteria (10 points). Due April 6.

16. **Title Exercise** Do an exercise for Avoiding Plagiarism from The Purdue Online Writing Lab to determine whether each example uses citations accurately. If it doesn’t, students improve it so it’s properly cited (10 points). Due April 6.

17. **Avoiding Plagiarism Exercise** Respond as to whether each quote uses citations accurately (10 points). Due April 18.

## Project Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Calculated</th>
<th>Total points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellowdig Discussions</td>
<td>Calculated over the semester</td>
<td>40 points (5.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quizzes
35 quizzes (@5 points each) 220 points (23.3%)

Scaffolded Assignments
15 @10 points 190 points (25.3%)
2 @20 points

Foundational Materials Assignment
1 @100 points 100 points (13.3%)

Final Research Project
1 @200 points 200 points (26.6%)

Final Examination
1 @50 points 50 points (6.6%)

Total
750 points (100%)

Course Grades

Grade breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>705 – 750 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>675 – 704 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>652 – 674 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>630 – 651 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standards for Written Work

- An “A” text is exceptional. It presents sophisticated and significant critique and is guided by a meaningful argument. It contains the required elements of the assignment, is written in an engaging style, is arranged in a logical manner, is memorable, and is visually appealing. It is free of mechanical errors.
- A “B” text is strong. It contains all required elements of the assignment. It is generally above average in terms of the criteria mentioned above, but falls short of excellence in one or more category. It has few mechanical errors.
- A “C” text is competent. It contains all required elements of the assignment. It is generally average in terms of the major criteria listed above. It has some mechanical errors.
- “D” work is weak. It does not include the required elements of the assignment and it falls below average in terms of one or more of the major criteria.
“F” work fails in terms of one or more of these criteria.

## Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual</th>
<th>Rhetorical</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Structuring</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>has cogent analysis, shows command of interpretive and conceptual tasks required by assignment and course materials: ideas original, often insightful, going beyond ideas discussed in lecture and class.</td>
<td>commands attention with a convincing argument with a compelling purpose; highly responsive to the demands of a specific writing situation; sophisticated use of conventions of academic discipline and genre; anticipates the reader’s need for information, explanation, and context</td>
<td>well-chosen examples; uses persuasive reasoning to develop and support thesis consistently; uses specific quotations, statistics, aesthetic details, or citations of scholarly sources effectively; logical connections between ideas are evident</td>
<td>well-constructed paragraphs; appropriate, clear, and smooth transitions; arrangement of organizational elements seems particularly apt</td>
<td>uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words appropriately; observes professional conventions of written English and manuscript format; makes few minor or technical errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>shows a good understanding of the texts, ideas and methods of the assignment; goes beyond</td>
<td>addresses audience with a thoughtful argument with a clear purpose; responds directly to the demands of a</td>
<td>pursues explanation and proof of thesis consistently; develops a main argument with explicit major</td>
<td>distinct units of thought in paragraphs controlled by specific, detailed, and arguable topic sentences;</td>
<td>a few mechanical difficulties or stylistic problems (split infinitives, dangling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Shows an understanding of the basic idea, and information involved in the assignment; may have some factual, interpretive or conceptual errors. Presents an adequate response to the essay prompt; pays attention to the basic elements of the writing situation; shows sufficient competence in the conventions of academic discipline and genre; signals the importance of the reader’s need for information, general thesis or controlling idea; may not define several central terms. May make occasional problematic word choices or syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or a cliché; usually presents quotations effectively, using appropriate format.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific writing situation; competent use of the conventions of academic discipline and genre; addresses the reader’s needs for information, explanation, and context. Terms undefined. Points with appropriate textual evidence and supporting detail. Clear transitions between developed, cohering, and logically arranged paragraphs. Modifiers, etc.; may make occasional problematic word choices or syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or a cliché; usually presents quotations effectively, using appropriate format.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The obvious; may have one minor factual or conceptual inconsistency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Explanation, and context</td>
<td>Makes effort to present quotations accurately</td>
<td>Some major grammatical or proofreading errors (subject/verb agreement, sentence fragments, word form errors, etc.); language frequently weakened by clichés, colloquialisms, repeated inexact word choices; incorrect quotation or citation format</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Shows inadequate command of course materials or has significant factual and conceptual errors; confuses some significant ideas</td>
<td>Shows serious weakness in addressing an audience; unresponsive to the specific writing situation; poor articulation of purpose in academic writing; often states the obvious or the inappropriate</td>
<td>Frequently only narrates; digresses from one topic to another without developing ideas or terms, makes insufficient or awkward use of textual evidence; relies on too few or the wrong type of sources</td>
<td>Simplistic, tends to narrate or merely summarize; wanders from one topic to another; illogical arrangement of ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Writer lacks critical understanding of lectures, readings, discussions, or assignments</td>
<td>Shows severe difficulty communicating through academic writing</td>
<td>Little or no development; may list disjointed facts or misinformation; uses no quotation, or fails to cite sources or plagiarizes</td>
<td>Numerous grammatical errors and stylistic problems seriously detract from the argument; does not meet Standard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tips for Success

"To hold a pen is to be at war." – Voltaire

The following expectations will help you be successful in this course. Please carefully review these expectations and follow them.

1. Log into the course several times each week to check the course content, announcements, conversations, and discussions.
2. Keep up with the weekly readings and assignments. Students who keep up with the weekly reading and assignments tend to do much better in an online course than those who do not.
3. Please do not miss an assignment deadline. Refer to the course schedule/calendar to ensure that you submit assignments on time.
4. Remember that academic integrity will be appraised according to the student academic behavior standards outlined in The Golden Rule of the University of Central Florida’s Student Handbook.

Notifications

Each semester, review your Notification settings to make sure you receive course information in a timely manner. Use this notification guide to make adjustments.

Conversations

Conversations will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you:

1. Check your inbox at least twice per week (more often is better).
2. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered a reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
3. Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.
4. Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
5. Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may
want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or message).
6. Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

**Interaction Guidelines**

Many of the "rules of the road" that apply to conversations also apply to the use of interactive tools used in this course. Use the following conventions when interacting with the instructor and fellow students:

1. While using synchronous tools, such as chat and conferences, be located in a quiet, private environment. This will help you stay clear of disturbances.
2. If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use conversations rather than the discussions (see Conversations).
3. Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you post to a discussion.
4. Respect each other’s feelings and experience.
5. Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
6. Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
7. Be sure to post discussions in the appropriate discussion topic.
8. Do not use postings such as "I agree," "I don't know either," "Who cares," or "ditto." They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the discussion boards, and will not be counted for assignment credit.
9. Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
10. During a discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the discussions tool multiple times during the week.

**Viruses and Redundancy**

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course. **AVG** is a great, free antivirus program. **Malwarebytes** is a great anti-malware program.

Back up your files using One Drive in Office365. Technical issues can and will happen. These problems do occur and are really inconvenient; however, they are not a valid excuse for failing to get your work in on time. Store your documents using One Drive to minimize the impact of such events.

**Technical Resources**
• Center for Distributed Learning's website provides information about support services and resources available for distance learners (e.g., Service Desk, Technology Commons, and campus computer labs).
• Webcourses@UCF Support provides technical support for students taking online courses at UCF.
• Knights Online: Resources specific for online students including Webcourses@UCF tutorials.