Approaches to Literature for Non-Majors

A person holding a book

Description automatically generated with low confidence

“…everything I’ve ever done, in the writing world, has been to expand articulation, rather than to close it, to open doors, sometimes, not even closing the book—leaving the endings open for reinterpretation, re-visitation, a little ambiguity.”

--Toni Morrison, 1931-2019

Course Information

Semester: Spring 2023 Course: ENGL 280.310

Professor: Dr. Christine Grogan Credits: 3

Email: [cgrogan@udel.edu](mailto:cgrogan@udel.edu) Meetings: TR 1:30-2:45 in 748

Library Resource: <https://library.udel.edu/associateinarts/> Prerequisites: ENGL 110

Website: http://christinegrogan.weebly.com/approaches-to-literature.html

Office Hours: TR 12:15-1:30 pm and by appointment in Room 759

Course Description

When commenting on (re)interpreting literature, Flannery O’Connor, one of the most popular southern writers of the twentieth century, said: “I find that everybody approaches [literature] according to his particular interest…and if they find what they want, or at least what they can recognize, then they judge the piece…to be superior” (*Mystery and Manners: Occasional Prose*). One of O’Connor’s literary forerunners, F. Scott Fitzgerald, conveyed a similar sentiment when he wrote that he had gotten rich simply by telling people that he felt as they did (“Echoes of the Jazz Age”).

Sampling a variety of literary works, including short stories, a play, and poems, this discussion-based, three-credit course introduces you to the terms and techniques frequently used to analyze literature in order to move from personal, subjective responses to more informed, objective readings—from what we like and/or understand to what we may not. Fulfilling one of the university breadth requirements for creative arts and humanities, the course offers you practice in speaking and writing about literary subjects as it cultivates skills in close reading and critical writing. It encourages you to synthesize ideas by creating analyses of literature that relate apparently disparate works to one another. Divided into three units (short stories, drama, poetry), the course exposes you to well-known and not as well-known literary texts on assorted topics by diverse authors.

Required Text

All readings will be provided.

[*Authoring America:* *A Survey of American Literature from the Beginnings to 2020*](https://udspace.udel.edu/items/ed526bbf-fc31-475b-8f96-332eff1ec4b2)

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

* Read literary works analytically, critically, and in context, considering multiple perspectives
* Write persuasively and clearly
* Define and apply literary terms and concepts related to fiction, drama, and poetry
* Conduct research about literary works, its authors, its context, and its interpretations as demonstrated in your writing and presentations
* Create explications and analyses of literature that relate apparently disparate works to one another and synthesize ideas that connect them into a tradition or a literary period
* Craft persuasive thesis statements and develop support by using textual evidence and literary research in which sources are cited in MLA format
* Defend a critical judgment against the informed opinions of others
* Expand your understanding of how works by African-Americans shaped American literature

Graded Assignments

The following distribution will be used to determine final grades:

Homework or Quizzes 100 Exam 1 100

Presentations 100 Exam 2 100

Research Paper 200 Exam 3 100

Class Work 300

\*If you take your papers for our class to the Writing Center and/or participate in the upcoming extra credit events, you will receive a token. Tokens may be “cashed in” to revise the exams or research paper; excuse a homework assignment/quiz; present late.

Homework

To encourage you to keep turning those pages, I need to assess your reading. We will vote at the beginning of the semester on if I do that through reading quizzes or homework assignments. If we do reading quizzes, they will be in class and graded. If we do homework assignments, they will be typed responses due before the start of class. You may be asked to read yours in class to launch our discussions.

Presentation

You are responsible for presenting once this semester. For this brief (10-15 minute) presentation, you should focus on one scene (1 to 1.5 pages) or poem from the assigned reading for that day. You should read the scene or poem aloud to the class, examine its significance, discuss the author and **context**, and ask thought-provoking questions (that you are prepared to answer). You can show clips from the Internet if this enhances the presentation. I encourage you to use PowerPoint and to be creative and energetic and to get your classmates to engage with the text. These presentations are designed to get you to practice analyzing texts in an open-ended way, bringing observations and questions, probing the class to explore details of the work further.

Exams

In order to help synthesize all of the material that we are covering, you will complete three exams, which will focus on the class lectures, assigned literary works, class discussions and activities. The exams will consist of short-answer questions and essay questions. The first exam will cover fiction; the second, drama; and the third, poetry. To prepare, you should read thoroughly and take notes during class. We will workshop possible questions and go over how to prepare for the exams before each one. An example of a fiction essay question is: “The Lottery” and “Battle Royal” were published around the same time. Write a comparative analysis of their portrayal of the United States in the post-World War II era.

Research Paper

The capstone for this course is a 4-page analytical research essay on one of the texts we read. You are required to locate a secondary, scholarly article and engage with it. We will draft this paper, in that you will turn in a thesis statement, summary of the secondary source, outline, and rough draft. There will be a peer review session that will be held during class. You are required to submit a complete copy of a draft of your analytical research paper for this session. Classmates will read and offer feedback on the essay. I will also meet with you individually to check on your progress.

Class Work

I will take attendance at the beginning of each class for purposes of financial aid eligibility. Work done in class will often be worth points that count toward your final grade. In other words, you must attend class and do the in-class work to get the points.

If absent, you are still responsible for any work due that day, and it is your responsibility to check Canvas/Modules for assignments, class notes, and course announcements. If you would like to try to make up the in-class work to get the points, you need to email me the reason for your absence within one week of the absence. I will allow you to make up the missed work (with a new deadline) if the absence was for a reason that would be excused according to the university’s attendance policy (including inclement weather, religious holidays, participation in athletic events or other activities representing the university, serious illnesses or deaths in the family, serious personal or mental illnesses, and short-term military service). Whether your absence is reasonable or not depends entirely on my judgment.

It is your responsibility to notify me that you are present if you are late to class.

If you do not claim your seat by attending class and do not drop the course by February 17, you will receive a grade of Z at the end of the term. It is your responsibility to drop each course that you do not plan to attend, even if your registration is canceled for non-payment of fees.

Students with extended absences are encouraged to contact Dr. Trembanis ([sltrem@udel.edu](mailto:sltrem@udel.edu)) to coordinate communication with faculty and with Mr. Mendoza ([melvin@udel.edu](mailto:melvin@udel.edu)) to work through program progress issues.

For further information about the university’s attendance policies, please visit <https://catalog.udel.edu/content.php?catoid=63&navoid=16103#seat-claim-policy>.

Grades

This course uses the following grading scale. There are a total of 1,000 points to be earned in the course. At the end of the semester, your point total will be divided by 1,000 to determine your final grade.

**A** 940-1000 points (or 94% - 100%)

**A-** 900-939 points (or 90% - 93.9%)

**B+** 870-899 points (or 87% - 89.9%)

**B** 840-869 points (or 84% - 86.9%)

**B-** 800-839 points (or 80% - 83.9%)

**C+** 770-799 points (or 77% - 79.9%)

**C** 740-769 points (or 74% - 76.9%)

**C-** 700-739 points (or 70% - 73.9%)

**D+** 670-699 points (or 67% - 69.9%)

**D** 640-669 points (or 64% - 66.9%)

**D-** 600-639 points (or 60% - 63.9%)

**F** 0-599 points (or 59.9% or lower)

Late Work Policy

An assignment is late if it is not turned in by the due date on Canvas. I do not accept late work without a token.

ChatGPT

Students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools.

Writing Center

Writing tutoring is available for all AAP students. Our tutors can help you with each step in the writing process: generating a research question, developing a claim, organizing reasons, and shaping evidence, along with using MLA and APA format effectively.

AAP Writing Specialist Dr. Yates will be available both in person and over Zoom this semester.

In person: Mondays and Wednesdays 1pm–3pm. Email her at [byates@udel.edu](mailto:byates@udel.edu) to make in-person appointments.

Virtual: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1pm– 6pm. (<https://udel.zoom.us/my/bmyates>)

Blue Hen Success virtual appointment sign-up link: <https://udel.campus.eab.com/home>

AAP Writing Specialist Professor Aronovitz will be available over Zoom this semester. Sign up here through Blue Hen for virtual appointments Fridays starting at 8am and finishing at 6pm (so the last appointment for the given day would be 5pm). [UDEL Student Scheduling Link](https://udel.campus.eab.com/capabilities#/my/appointment-results?care_unit_id=2&service_id=17197&begin_date=2022-02-22&staff_ids=6420478)

When you sign up, it sends Professor Aronovitz an alert so he can email you the link for the meeting on Zoom.

If you need to go over a paper and you are not available on the given Friday, please send Professor Aronovitz an email at [marono@udel.edu](mailto:marono@udel.edu). He will set up a meeting on Zoom off schedule, even the weekend if need be!

Detailed instructions for scheduling an appointment through the Blue Hen Success platform are available at [www.udel.edu/008652](http://www.udel.edu/008652). If you have any questions, contact Dr. Yates at [byates@udel.edu](mailto:byates@udel.edu). All AAP students are also welcome to [make a virtual appointment](https://udel.mywconline.net/) with a student-tutor at the University of Delaware Writing Center in Newark. Visit <https://udel.mywconline.net/> to make an appointment with the UD Writing Center.

I always took my papers to the Writing Center, even as a graduate student. As writing expert William Germano says, “Revision makes writing better. Always.”

Remember: You can gain a token by taking your papers for our class to the Writing Center.

Assignment Submissions

Papers should be typed (in 12-point, Times New Roman, black font), double-spaced, and have one-inch margins. MLA formatting should be followed (your name, my name, course title, and date in the upper left-hand corner of the first page). All of the pages should be numbered (your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner). A works cited page should be included if you are citing external sources. A title should be provided, which is centered. Please see the MLA document posted on Canvas.

For electronic copies, you should ensure the file is in PDF and should always check that your submitted file successfully uploaded to Canvas. I may have additional instructions, and requirements may change depending on the assignment medium. You should check with me well in advance of a deadline if you are unsure.

Class Etiquette

Student learning can only occur when students and their instructors feel safe, respected, and supported by each other. To ensure that our learning environment is as safe as possible, you are expected to abide by the most up to date [University of Delaware’s COVID-19 Guidelines](https://www.udel.edu/home/coronavirus/).

Professionalism is expected at all times. While a free exchange of ideas and expressions is very much encouraged, strive for civility and respect in all of your comments—whether in the classroom or online. Please keep in mind that we come to the class conversation from different walks of life and with different personal experiences. Whatever our values, commitments, or stories might be, I trust that diversity will prove to be an asset as we explore these topics together. If at any point you feel concerned about or uncomfortable with a dynamic in our conversation, I encourage you to reach out to me to share your observations.

Interest in the English Major and Minors

The English major has been carefully designed as one of the most flexible and collaborative programs at UD. In addition, it is a perfect double major for students interested in (1) making themselves more attractive on the job market, and (2) taking challenging and intellectually rewarding coursework. For an overview of the possibilities for designing your own English major, visit <https://www.english.udel.edu/undergraduate/english-major>

The English Department also offers a range of minors to suit a variety of interests, all designed to be flexible in fitting in with the rigorous requirements of other majors. Most of our minors are interdisciplinary, encouraging students to engage in coursework across curricula. We currently offer minors in English, Writing, and Environmental Humanities. For more information about the minor, visit <https://www.english.udel.edu/undergraduate/minors>

If you’d like to speak with an advisor about the major or minors, feel free to contact Mr. Jordan Moses, Academic Advisor in the English Department. His contact information is:

[jsmoses@udel.edu](mailto:jsmoses@udel.edu)**,** 206 Memorial Hall, Phone: 302-831-2187.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with UD policies regarding academic dishonesty. To falsify the results of one’s research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance. Complete details of the university’s academic integrity policies and procedures can be found at [sites.udel.edu/studentconduct/sgup/](https://sites.udel.edu/studentconduct/sgup/) Office of Student Conduct, 218 Hullihen Hall, 302.831.2117. E-mail: [student-conduct@udel.edu](mailto:student-conduct@udel.edu)

Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The University of Delaware works to promote an academic and work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and sexual misconduct. As a member of the community, your rights, resources, and responsibilities are reflected in the non-discrimination and sexual misconduct policies. Please familiarize yourself with these policies at [www.udel.edu/oei](http://www.udel.edu/oei). You can report any concerns to the University’s Office of Equity & Inclusion, at 305 Hullihen Hall, 302.831.8063 or you can report anonymously through UD Police 302.831.2222 or the EthicsPoint Compliance Hotline at [www1.udel.edu/compliance](http://www1.udel.edu/compliance). You can also report any violation of UD policy on harassment, discrimination, or abuse of any person at this site: [sites.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct/how-to-report/](http://sites.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct/how-to-report/)

If, at any time during this course, I happen to be made aware that a student may have been the victim of sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic/dating violence, or stalking), I am obligated by federal law to inform the university’s Title IX Coordinator. The university needs to know information about such incidents to, not only offer resources, but to ensure a safe campus environment. The Title IX Coordinator will decide if the incident should be examined further. If such a situation is disclosed to me in class, in a paper assignment, or in student appointment hours, I promise to protect your privacy—I will not disclose the incident to anyone but the Title IX Coordinator.

For more information on Sexual Misconduct policies, where to get help, and reporting information please refer to [www.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct](https://sites.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct/). At UD, we provide 24-hour crisis assistance and victim advocacy and counseling. Contact 302.831.1001 to get in touch with a sexual offense support advocate, as well as confidential and anonymous counseling services for other concerns.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students who think they may need an accommodation based on a disability should contact one of the AAP liaisons to the [Office of Disability Support Services](https://sites.udel.edu/dss/) (DSS) as soon as possible. In Dover: Amy Shupard, ashupard@udel.edu. If you will be using accommodations in this course (or if you are in the process of registering for accommodations), please contact me as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Non-Discrimination

The University of Delaware does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, disability, religion, age, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in its employment, educational programs and activities, admissions policies, and scholarship and loan programs as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The University of Delaware also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

For inquiries or complaints related to non-discrimination policies, please contact: Office of Equity & Inclusion- [oei@udel.edu](mailto:oei@udel.edu), 305 Hullihen Hall Newark, DE 19716, 302.831.8063.

For complaints related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact: Office of Disability Support Services, [dssoffice@udel.edu](mailto:dssoffice@udel.edu), Alison Hall, Suite 130, Newark, DE 19716, 302.831.4643 OR contact the [U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html).

Black Lives Matter

The Associate in Arts Program (AAP) values and celebrates the humanity of each student, staff member, and educator in our community. There is a long tradition of calling for racial justice in American society. Black Lives Matter continues that tradition. We categorically maintain that we care about Black lives. We acknowledge the long history of racist policies and attitudes that persist in American culture, including at the University of Delaware. As part of the University, the AAP is committed to creating and maintaining an equitable and inclusive learning and working environment for each member of our community through both reflection and action.

Student Hardship Affecting Learning

Students who have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lack a safe and stable place to live and believe this may affect their performance in the course, are urged to reach out for support. You may notify me and/or your other professors if you are comfortable doing so and you are also encouraged to reach out to our Student Support and Engagement Coordinators. On the Dover campus this is Lindsey Massey (lrmassey@udel.edu). We will do our best to provide any resources that we may possess. Student and family resources include:

**The AAP Student Support Fund**

This AAP-only fund is here to help if you face an acute financial hardship that might disrupt your college education. The Student Support Fund can assist if you are experiencing food insecurity, difficulty maintaining access to housing, technology, or transportation, or financial strain that may threaten your ability to keep up with schoolwork or remain enrolled. Application is easy. Just fill out the application below and one of our Student Support and Engagement Coordinators will reach out to you as soon as possible. Please be aware that our fund is limited, and student demand may outstrip supply. However, we will do our best to assist you and connect you to alternative forms of financial assistance.Application link: <http://www.udel.edu/0010295>.

### **Student Crisis Fund**

### In addition to the AAP’s fund,the University of Delaware’s Office of the Dean of Students also provides emergency money to eligible UD students who face a serious financial hardship due to unanticipated expenses, including those related to Covid-19. AAP students can apply to this fund, too. To find out if you are eligible, please fill out the [Student Crisis Fund Application form](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofDelaware&layout_id=24) which you can find here: <http://www.udel.edu/0010296>.

The Office of the Dean of Students will then contact you to discuss further. Please note that it is ok to leave questions on this form blank if you do not know the answer; just fill it out to the best of your ability.

**Mental Health & Well-Being**

In addition to impacting your overall wellbeing, diminished mental health can interfere with optimal academic performance. If this course is causing or contributing significant mental or emotional stress, then please reach out to me directly. However, problems with other parts of your life can also contribute to decreased academic performance. UD’s Center for Counseling & Student Development (CCSD) provides cost-free and confidential mental health services to help you manage personal challenges that threaten your emotional or academic wellbeing. Remember, getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do—for yourself and for those who care about you.

* Contact me: If you are struggling with this course, please come by during office hours or contact me by email.
* Check in with your academic advisor: If you are struggling in multiple classes, unsure whether you are making the most of your time at UD, or unsure what academic resources are available to support you, make an appointment with your advisor through BHSC.
* All students enrolled at the University of Delaware now have access to 24/7 virtual mental health care through [TimelyCare](https://sites.udel.edu/counseling/timelycare/). This service is completely free for students. Features include on-demand and scheduled appointments with licensed counselors. In most cases, students will be connected with a professional within five minutes of initiating a request for 24/7 support or students can browse providers and make a scheduled appointment with their chosen counselor: <https://sites.udel.edu/counseling/timelycare/>.
* Use the UD Helpline: The UD Helpline is a free service available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for any UD student feeling anxious, overwhelmed, or otherwise in need of someone to talk to. The number is 302.831.1001.
* Connect with Mental Health Counselors at the UD Center for Counseling and Student Development: They are available at 302.831.2141 during business hours (M-F, 8-5). CCSD offers services to AAP students on a one-time basis including crisis appointments, triage appointments, referral appointments and consultations. After this initial session, UD counselors can help you determine what further resources you need and where to find them. If you are looking for UD counseling or joining one of the support groups, a Wellbeing Fee needs to be paid. Limited funds are available to cover this fee for eligible students. <https://sites.udel.edu/counseling/>.
* Use UD’s Crisis Text Line: Text “UDTEXT” (or “STEVE” for students of color) to 741741 to connect with confidential text message support.

### **Free Food:** For an up-to-date list of where to find free food in Delaware please see this doc: <http://www.udel.edu/0010297>.

### **WIFI:** For a list of free and affordable WIFI in Delaware please see this doc: <http://www.udel.edu/0010298>.

**Help with Technology:** UD IT in conjunction with the Office of the Dean of Students is distributing technology (e.g., laptops, internet hot spots) to students. Go to the [Tech at UD homepage](https://sites.udel.edu/techatud/) (<https://sites.udel.edu/techatud/>) then follow the directions on the “Apply for a loaner laptop” button.

Tentative Schedule

\*Works should be read **before** class. For example, “Battle Royal” for February 14 should be read **before** we meet on February 14 for class.

**Week 1**

February 7 Introduction to Course

Group Activity

First Day Writing

February 9 Introduction to Fiction/Short Story

**Unit 1: Fiction**

**Week 2**

February 14 “Battle Royal”

Model Presentation; Presentation Sign-Up

February 16 “Cathedral”

**Week 3**

February 21 No Class

February 23 “The Story of an Hour”

MLA Review

**Week 4**

February 28 “Babylon Revisited”

March 2 “One Sunny Morning”

**Week 5**

March 7 “The Things They Carried”

March 9 “Sonny’s Blues”

**Week 6**

March 14 “Parker’s Back”

March 16 “The Lottery”

**Week 7**

March 21 Finding a Secondary Source

Fiction Exam Workshop

March 23 Mid-Semester Feedback (Stop/Start/Continue)

Fiction Exam Due

Introduction to Literary Research Papers and Model Essay

**Unit 2: Drama**

**Week 8**

March 28 No Class

March 30 No Class

**Week 9**

April 4 Introduction to Drama

Secondary Source and Thesis Due

April 6 *Fences* Act I

**Week 10**

April 11 Fences Entire

April 13 Drama Exam Workshop

**Research Paper**

**Week 11**

April 18 Introduction to Poetry

Drama Exam Due

April 20 Research Paper Peer Review

**Unit 3: Poetry**

**Week 12**

April 25 Research Paper Due

“Introduction to Poetry” and “My Papa’s Waltz”

April 27 “Mother to Son” and “We Real Cool”

**Week 13**

May 2 “Spring and All” and “The Red Wheelbarrow”

May 4 “Hard Rock Returns to Prison from the Hospital for the Criminal Insane” and

“Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers”

**Week 14**

May 9 Poetry Exam Workshop

May 11 Jeopardy

Reflective Writing

**Week 15**

May 16 Poetry Exam Due