The Literary Imagination: An Introduction to Literature - Eng. 105.001

Fall 2013
MWHThF 10:00-10:50
L&L 415

Dr. Sutphin (Sut-fin)
403E; 963-3433, sutphinc@cwu.edu
Office hours: M 4:00-5:00
Th 12:00-1:00
F 11:00-12:00
and by appointment
Course website: cwu.edu/~sutphinc

Texts:

*A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens
Packet at the bookstore: stories by Thomas King, Brian Aldiss, and Lisa Norris, poems by Marge Piercy, Carter Revard, Judith Ortiz Cofer, John Betjeman, Jean Tepperman, Toi Derricote, Langston Hughes, and Martin Espada
Also required:
Tickets for the performance of *A Christmas Carol* (Dec. 5, 6, or 7 at 7:30 p.m. or Dec. 8 at 2:00 p.m.; preferably Thurs., Dec. 5; see schedule below), McConnell Theatre - $7 with student ID

**Purpose of the Course:**
The Literary Imagination is designed to provide opportunities for students to read, talk, and write about fiction, poetry, and drama. We will discuss the kind of terminology used in discussing and writing about literary works and the ways literary effects are created. We will explore the ways in which literary works can bring significant issues into focus in meaningful ways. As Jessamyn West said: “Fiction reveals truths that reality obscures.” In our interaction with literature, we will also discuss differences in interpretation, why these occur, and the characteristics that make some interpretations more convincing than others. This course should help you articulate the reasons for your responses to particular literary works.

**Outcomes:**
1) Students will read and respond to literary works from a variety of cultures and from a range of historical periods.
2) Students will read and respond to literary works of poetry, fiction, and drama; they may also read nonfiction or view films and/or performances, depending on the organization and orientation of class materials.
3) Students will demonstrate an understanding of how literary elements such as character development, setting, and figurative language relate to literary meaning.
4) In accordance with the General Education Writing Requirement, students will submit at least seven pages of writing “that is assessed for content and mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation, and organization).”

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

**Reading, and attendance:** Since this is a discussion class, it is essential that you keep up with
your reading and writing, attend class, and contribute to discussions. Read carefully and actively; write your questions and responses to the texts in the margins or keep a reading notebook. Be prepared for class.

Purpose: to foster engagement with literary texts, social issues, and the learning community of this class.

Four absences may reduce your final grade by one degree (B to B-; C- to D+).
Five absences may reduce your final grade by one full letter (B+ to C+).
Six or more absences may cause you to fail the course.
There are no excused absences, but of course, I understand that emergencies do arise. If you establish a pattern of conscientious attendance and turning in assignments on time, your credibility increases, and when you have an emergency, I can assume that you are a responsible person and are doing everything you can to meet your obligations. If you establish a pattern of absences, late assignments, and continual excuses, you damage your credibility, making my giving you a break impossible to justify. While coming to class every day is important, simply being here doesn’t earn an “A” in this category. Being here is a basic requirement. You exhibit the level of your participation through the thoughtfulness of your questions and comments in large and small groups; the degree of reflection and care you give to your writing; your tone and attitude in regard to your work and the members of the class; your commitment to the course. November 1 is the last day to drop a course without petitioning. If you have missed three or more classes by this date or know that you will miss more than three classes before the end of the quarter consider dropping 105. Also consider dropping by Nov. 1 if you are behind in your work. Don’t just disappear if you decide not to attend class and fall behind in your work. Withdraw so you won’t receive a failing grade.

If you need disability related educational accommodations, contact the Disabilities Support office at 963-2171. Please let me know about any accommodations made through DS.

Ground rules: In an academic community, the following behavior fosters learning. In addition to the course requirements, you agree to the ground rules when you sign up for this class. I consider these criteria, along with the criteria mentioned above, when assessing your participation grade.

--Show respect for others.
--Try to understand others’ ideas and points of view. Feel free to disagree and be prepared to support your ideas with references from the texts.
--Listen carefully. Especially in large groups, it can be hard to hear, so don’t engage in private conversations; stay tuned in to the class discussion.
--Ask for clarification if you don’t understand fully.
--Work collaboratively with others in large and small groups.
--Try to include everyone in discussion in small groups.
--Stay on task in your group.
--Attend class regularly, prepared for the assignment of the day.
--Turn off cell phones and don’t check or send messages during class.
--In presentation groups, share the work as equally as possible.
--Show up for group meetings.

**Assignment Policies:**

Be careful to give credit to any sources you quote or authors whose ideas you use. Even if someone gives you permission to use material he or she has written, it’s still plagiarism. A **case of plagiarism damages your credibility as well as your grade.** Plagiarism also wastes my time because I am commenting on a bogus assignment. If I find that a paper contains plagiarized material, it will receive a 0. Professors are encouraged to report cases of plagiarism to Student Affairs. At present, the English Department is working on a plagiarism policy.

Written work is due in class on the due date. Late assignments are not acceptable unless you speak with me about an extension and I agree that your circumstances warrant it. Extensions must be arranged in a timely manner. Too many extensions interfere with my schedule, so ask for them only when you have a genuinely good reason. Do not e-mail assignments unless you have arranged it with me because of an emergency.

Revision policy: There are no revisions on interpretive statements. If you receive a grade of C- or lower on your formal paper, you may rewrite if you meet the following conditions:

1) You take the paper with my comments to the Writing Center and consult with someone there. That person will notify me that you have been there and when.
2) Your revision shows evidence that you have attempted to deal with the problems mentioned in the comments and meet the expectations of the assignment as outlined in the paper guidelines given out in class.
3) You turn in the revision one week from the date you received the original paper back at 12:00 at my office or in my department mailbox.
4) At the time you turn in your paper, you also turn in the graded copy with my comments and the criteria sheet.

I will not have time to comment on your revision, but I will read it and see whether I can justify raising your grade to a C. **C (76%) is the highest grade possible on a revision in order to be fair to others who did not have the option to rewrite.**

**Writing:** We’ll begin with one interpretive statement on fiction and one on poetry (about 300-330 words each) - You will choose one of these to develop into a formal paper (about 1,000 words). You will also have a two-to-three-page workshop draft in preparation for this formal paper.

In the latter part of the class, you’ll write three more interpretive statements, which will serve as drafts for the take-home final. The first two of these statements will respond to questions asked by the reading/research groups (one from each group); the third and longer interpretive statement will address a question on *A Christmas Carol*. The take-home final, then, will consist of two revised drafts on works from the group presentations and one new, longer essay on the play.

If you have basic problems with writing, I will refer you to the campus Writing Center (ext. 1296 - See the Writing Center handout).

**Purpose:** to encourage the practice of writing; to show that clear, thoughtful writing takes time, patience, enthusiasm, others’ reactions, and several drafts; to use writing to examine and clarify what you think.

**A note on paper workshops:** A workshop gives you the opportunity to have a draft of your paper read by your peers before you hand it in for a grade. On the workshop day
bring a two-to-three page typed draft of your paper. Be sure to show the draft to me so that I can give you full points for the workshop. In addition to bringing your paper and discussing it with your readers, your responsibility includes being a thoughtful reader of others’ work. Workshop dates are on the schedule.

A note on paper format: written work should be typed, double-spaced, on standard 8 ½ x 11 paper. Leave about an inch margin on all sides. Number your pages. Proofread carefully both before and after you print your paper! Staple or paper clip the pages together; do not use plastic folders.

Quizzes: There will be four quizzes worth a total of 45 pts. Quizzes will cover reading (including reading we have not had time to discuss in class) as well as ideas that have come up in class lectures, discussions, presentations and performances. Quiz policy: You may make up one quiz if you miss class on the day the quiz is given if you make it up within two class days. For example, if you miss a quiz on Monday, you must make it up before class Friday. I will drop your lowest grade on the quizzes on fiction, poetry, and group presentation works if you take all the quizzes, but I will not drop the quiz on the play. The make-up quiz will be placed in a file in the English Department office (L&L 423) with your name on it. Request the quiz from the English Department staff and take it in the office.

Discussion groups: You will meet in small groups to discuss literary works. Groups will discuss questions at issue for interpretive statements and formal papers.

Purpose: to examine and try to understand multiple points of view; to arrive at conclusions based on serious consideration of various issues/options; to see how your conclusions may change depending on new interpretations; to see how literary techniques, such as point of view and metaphor, shape our responses to characters, conflicts, and issues in the works.

Reading/Research/Presentation Groups: You’ll meet with other members of your group to discuss works of literature (chosen from a list I’ll provide), develop questions and interpretations, and lead class discussion. You will also present research on your authors and the historical/cultural context in which they write. This assignment will be explained in detail later.

Purpose: to explore ways in which literary works are connected to history, politics, biography, other literary works and genres; to explore how different kinds of knowledge may change interpretations of literary works; to work on sharing authority between students and teacher; to foster both individual responsibility and cooperative, collaborative learning; to practice skills of interpreting, speaking, presenting, and engaging others in discussion.

Your grade is determined by the number of points you earn over the quarter.
Reading quizzes-----------------------------------------------50 pts. (10/10/10/20)
Interpretive statements on fiction and poetry-----------------20 pts. (10 pts. each)
Paper workshop with draft---------------------------------10 pts.
Paper-----------------------------------------------------55 pts.
Interpretive statement/draft and participating in workshop with draft handed in and graded ------------------17 pts. (10 for draft/ 7 for workshop)
Interpretive statements as workshop drafts that are not handed in and graded------------------------------------------14 pts. (7 pts. each)
Take-home final-----------------------------------------------50 pts.
R/R group presentation----------------------------------------40 pts.
Attendance and participation*------------------------------35 ts.
Total: 291 pts.

Schedule:

I will try to stay with this schedule, but I may need to revise it. That means that compensation days for attending the play may change.

Wed., Sept. 25 - Introduction
Read “So Mexicans Are Taking Jobs from Americans” and “Ex-Basketball Player” and in preparation for class Thurs., Sept. 20, write notes on your responses to the poems.

Thurs., Sept. 26 - Differences in interpretation: Reading and writing about “So Mexicans…” and “Ex-Basketball Player”

Fri., Sept. 27 - Continue Thursday’s discussion.

Mon., Sept. 30 - Point of view:
For today, read “How Fiction Works” and “The Lesson”
Group discussion of stories
Questions: Whose point of view do we get in this story? What are the narrator’s values and world view? How can we tell? What are these values and world view in conflict with? Are other points of view implicit in the stories? How can we tell? How might the story be changed if it was told from another point of view? How does the chosen point of view make the story? With what characters does the reader seem to sympathize? What point of view do readers
tend to resist? How does the narrative create that sympathy or resistance?

Wed., Oct. 2 - Point of view/close reading:
“A Man of Integrity”
Consider the questions at the end of the story. Go through the story and mark evidence that supports different possible interpretations.

Thurs., Oct. 3 - “Tidings of Comfort and Joy” (magic realism and satire)
Consult the handout on magic realism and satire. What elements in “Tidings” might be called “magic realism”? What is satirical about “Tidings”? Who or what is being satirized? (Keep in mind what you’ve learned about point of view and close reading.)

Fri., Oct. 4 - Reading quiz on fiction (10 pts.)
For today, read “Supertoys” (packet). What would be some good questions to ask about this story?

Mon., Oct. 7 - Interpretive statement due on one or more of the pieces of short fiction on the interpretive statement handout
A lecture on poetry: speaker, situation, and figurative language in “That Time of Year” (book) and “What the Gypsy Said to Her Children” (packet)

Wed., Oct. 9 - Read “How Poetry Works” before class today. Also read “Barbie Doll” (packet) and “The Unknown Citizen.”
Lecture: speaker, situation, historical context, tone in “Barbie Doll” and “The Unknown Citizen”

Thurs., Oct. 10 - Group work: discussion of poems for writing assignment: “In Westminster Abbey”; “Discovery of the New World”; “Witch” (all in packet)
Interpretive statement assignment handed out
Explain the presentation assignment and options for literature groups.
Give me your first and second choices by Monday, Oct. 14.

Fri., Oct. 11 - group work on poems
Mon., Oct. 14 - Reading quiz on poetry (10 pts.)
Hand in choices
Discuss use of quotes

Wed., Oct. 16 - Instructional study day / no regular class
Interpretive statement on one of the poems on the interpretive statement handout due at 10:00 at my office or in my department mail box. If this date is inconvenient for you, hand the paper in to my department mail box
Tues, Oct. 15 by 4:00.

Thurs., Oct. 17 - What makes a good formal paper?: A student writes on “Assembly Line”

Fri., Oct. 18 - Discussion of summary and analysis

   Groups assigned/first brief organizing meeting

   I will try to return your interpretive statement on poetry today. Bring your first interpretive statement (the one on fiction) and decide which one has the most potential to be developed into a formal paper. Hand in the one you want to revise.


   Some interpretive statements will be handed back with additional comments.

Wed., Oct. 23 - Library day - Meet in fishbowl. More interpretive statements will be handed back with additional comments. You can use this time for group work.

Thurs., Oct. 24 - Library day - Meet in fishbowl. More interpretive statements will be handed back with additional comments. Groups one and two meet with me for a progress report and to discuss questions and/or problems.

Fri., Oct. 25 - Library day - Meet in fishbowl. More interpretive statements will be handed back with additional comments. Groups three, four and five meet with me for a progress report and to discuss questions and/or problems.


Wed., Oct. 30 - Paper and group preparation day

Thurs., Oct. 31 - First Group presentation

   Papers due if you’re in the third, fourth and fifth groups

Fri., Nov. 1 - Second Group presentation

Mon., Nov. 4 - Third Group presentation

   Papers due if you’re in the first and second groups

Wed., Nov. 6 - Fourth Group presentation

Thurs., Nov. 7 - Fifth Group presentation
Fri., Nov. 8 - Quiz on groups’ works/ review groups’ questions

Mon., Nov. 11 - Veterans’ Day holiday

Wed., Nov. 13 - A Christmas Carol, “Marley’s Ghost” and “The First of the Three Spirits”

Thurs., Nov. 14 - A Christmas Carol, “The Last of the Three Spirits” and “The End of it All”

Fri., Nov. 15 - Theatre visit: Brenda Hubbard, director of A Christmas Carol will give us an inside view of the production. Meet by the elevator on the first floor of the Tower Theatre.

Mon., Nov. 18 - Robert Douglas-Fairhurst’s introduction to A Christmas Carol

Wed., Nov. 20 - Quiz on A Christmas Carol (text) and theatre visit
Discussion of visit

Thurs., Nov. 21 - Common writing problems and how to fix them

Fri., Nov. 22 - Workshop - Bring typed draft (one-to-two pages of your first essay for the take-home final. This draft will be on one of the questions from one of the group presentations.) You will hand this one in for feedback and a grade.

Mon., Nov. 25 - Time off for attending play

Wed. - Fri., Nov. 27-29 - Thanksgiving holiday

**This coming week attend CWU’s production of A Christmas Carol, Thurs., Dec. 5 at 7:30 p.m. If attending Thurs., Dec. 5 is impossible, see the play Friday, Dec. 6 or 7 at 7:30 or Dec. 8 at 2:00 p.m.

Mon., Dec. 2 - Workshop - Bring typed draft (one-to-two pages of your second essay for the take-home final. This draft will be on one of the questions from one of the group presentations). Give the draft you read with the worksheet back to the writer. Be sure to show me your draft before you leave class.

Drafts/interpretive statements handed in Nov. 22 will be handed back today.

Wed., Dec. 3 - Time off for attending play

Thurs., Dec. 4 - Review of A Christmas Carol (text) and our talk with Professor Hubbard
See A Christmas Carol at 7:30 p.m. in McConnell Theatre
Fri., Dec. 5 - Discussion of production of *A Christmas Carol*

*Workshop:* Bring a draft of your take-home final answer to one of the assigned question options on *A Christmas Carol.* Give the draft you read with worksheet back to the writer. Be sure to show me your draft before you leave class.

*Another performance of A Christmas Carol* (if you missed Thursday’s), 7:30, McConnell / Two more performances over the weekend: Saturday at 7:30; Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Finals week: Mon., Dec. 9 at 9:30 - Quiz on CWU production of *A Christmas Carol*
(Regular scheduled final time is 8:00-10:00, but we won’t need two hours for the quiz.)

Take-home finals due **Monday, Dec. 9 at 4:00 p.m. at my office (L&L 403E) or in my English Dept. mail box.** If you turn the paper in at the department, be sure to get a date stamp from the staff.