

**Introduction to Literature & the Humanities**  
**ENGM 113 (ITV Course)**  
**Fall 2006**  
**Wednesday 7:00-9:45 p.m.**  
**3 Credits**  
**Torrey 4 (On Campus)**  
**Call In: 1-800-696-1127**

**Instructor: Gerard NeCastro**  
**Office: 4 Kimball Hall, U of Maine at Machias**  
**Office Hours: TR 11-1, W 6-7 at ITV, & by appt.**  
**Phone: 207-255-1293; Fax 207-255-4864**  
**necastro@maine.edu**  
**<http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>**  
**<http://www.courses.maine.edu> (For Blackboard)**

### **Course Description**

This is a course in reading the texts that have shaped the cultural landscape of the modern world. Whereas most courses of this variety treat works of literature as stand-alone entities, this course looks at works of literature in the artistic, philosophical, and political context of their times. Covering works chronologically from the late medieval period to the present, we will focus on artistic, political, and social background as prelude to discussion of literary texts. In other words, in preparation for our discussions of works by authors such as Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Voltaire, Wordsworth, Dickinson, and Eliot, we will cover the works of Giotto, the Limbourg Brothers, Leonardo, David, Constable, Van Gogh, and Picasso as well as the general political and social background of their respective eras. Though we will give much energy to covering these big names, we will also save much of the course for lesser-known figures and figures out of the European mainstream. Prerequisites: Composition (English 101)

### **Learning Objectives**

All students have some background in literature and the humanities. The aims of this course are to build upon the background students already have and to help students to unlearn anything that has inhibited them in their previous studies in the humanities. (See also Weekly Overviews in the Course Packet for more specific objectives.)

Students in this course will develop a fuller understanding of:

- the various types or genres of literature;
- the cultural and historical contexts of various works of literature;
- the inter-relationship between literature and other fields of knowledge.

Students will also develop a fuller understanding of

- the importance of literature;
- the importance of beauty;
- the importance of history;
- and the importance of self-reflection and self-knowledge.

Students will also enhance a variety of skills that will be transferable to other areas of academic learning:

- thinking critically (thinking independently about concepts);
- synthesizing knowledge from various fields;
- writing effectively;
- researching efficiently;
- using the internet and web-based communication.

### **How This Course Works**

The primary objective for the course is for students to be able to appreciate literature. Appreciating literature does not simply mean enjoying it or understanding what happens in it. To appreciate literature is to understand how it works and what it meant in the age it was written. In order to do understand how it works, we must look at it closely: we do not simply react to it, but try to examine the reasons we have reacted to it as we have. Sometimes, when we look at a work closely, we actually change our perspective on it or the world from which it came.

The best way to look at a work closely is to read it in its historical context. So, as we read and discuss each of the works, we will also talk about the times in which each work was written. We will touch upon political, social, philosophical, scientific, and theological history as we attempt to understand these works. In almost all cases, we will make correspondences between the works of literature we are covering and works of art of the same era.

When you read a work carefully and react to it, you should trust your reaction. Your next step is to try to understand why you reacted that way. If you can identify specific parts of the work that led to your reaction, then you will be able to explain your position on the work.

The next step is to try to understand the work as the original audience might have understood it. As we read a given work, we will see it somewhat differently than the original audience. When we see how the original audience might have seen the work, however, we sometimes change our opinion of the work, the writer, or the original audience.

The purpose of this class is **not** to learn what I have to say about a handful of works of literature. If you do so, you may pass the course on paper, but you will have missed the point. The point of taking this class is for you learn how to appreciate literature on your own. Many people come to this class perfectly able to remember what someone else said about something. That is fine, but I want you to be able to leave this class able to say something of your own.

### **How This Course Works: A Few Practical Notes**

**Schedule.** Try to read what is on the syllabus for each week so that you will be able to follow our discussion. We will try to keep on schedule, though we may occasionally get a bit behind.

**Cancellations.** In the event that we need to cancel a class, we will usually make up the class via videotape, perhaps with some web supplement. In general, all classes should be available on videotape at your site: if you can not make it to class, you can always watch the video at a better time.

**Class Participation.** I love to hear what you have to say about course materials (I already know what I have to say). Whether you are in the classroom or at a distance, please do not hesitate to speak up. Distance students only need to call 1-800-696-1127. Chris will answer the phone and connect you to me. There is always a great deal to say that does not get said in class, so part of our participation will take place on-line on our Blackboard site.

**Blackboard:** As some of this class is run via the web, that is, on Blackboard software, it is a good idea to get used to it quickly. There is some assistance at the end of this Course Packet to help you to get started. The first step is to go to <http://www.courses.maine.edu>. Though you might have some initial problems, one phone call to the Help Line (1-800-696-4357) should solve them for you. At first, it may seem intimidating, but soon it becomes as easy as washing your hands.

**UMaine E-Mail (Hoarde).** When you register for this class, you are automatically entered into the Blackboard program. If you have not otherwise specified an e-mail address, you will be given a "maine.edu" e-mail address. You can access this mail from any internet connection at <http://mail.maine.edu>. (You can find out what your e-mail address is by going to the Class Roster (under Communication) in the Blackboard site. You are welcome to use your UMaine account as long as you like. If you prefer, however, to receive your e-mail under another account, please go to Personal Information (under Tools) in Blackboard and change your e-mail account.

### **Required Texts**

Introduction to Literature Course Packet.

William Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Signet.

Voltaire. *Candide*. Signet.

Mary Shelley. *Frankenstein*. Signet.

Supplementary Course Material Will Be Available At <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

You will also receive a free note-taking packet to help you organize your notes on the works of art we cover.

### **Suggested Texts and Aids**

Hacker. *A Writers Reference*. Or any good college writing handbook.

*Merriam-Webster's Tenth Collegiate Dictionary*. Or any good college dictionary (not a paperback).

A Bible. (Most any version will due, but not all Protestant Bibles include all the books in the Catholic Bible.)

A Book of Mythology. (Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* or H. S. Robinson and K. Wilson's *Myths and Legends of All Nations* are good tools.)

Plenty of paper and pencils, and enough computer disks.

Time: Time to read and reflect; Time to write and even more time to re-write.

A sense of humor.

## Course Requirements and Grading

15% Essay #1\*  
15% Essay #2\*  
10% Cooperative Project\*\*  
30% Quizzes (Three of four quizzes: 10% each.)\*\*\*  
20% Course Research Project\*\*\*\*  
10% Preliminary Work For Class Project\*\*\*\*\*  
xx% Attendance at all class meetings.\*\*\*\*\*

\*These will be relatively short essays. These topics will be distributed on the same day as your quizzes. You will only need to complete only two essays. If you choose to work on a given topic, the essay is due by one week after the quiz is given. Everyone must complete at least one of the first two topics.

\*\*Quizzes will be given at four separate classes. These will be given at the beginning of class and will take 10-15 minutes each. We will drop the lowest quiz score. The maximum score on a quiz will be 10 points.

\*\*\*Information about the Cooperative Projects will be available on Blackboard the first week of class. These will be opportunities for you to expand your horizons by looking at literature in different ways than you might normally.

\*\*\*\*Further information on your Course Project is included in the early pages of the Course Packet and in the pages between the weekly readings. (Approximately 2000-2750 words.) Though the Course Project may involve disciplines and arts beyond literature, literature must be the major component of your work.

\*\*\*\*\*All of these preliminary assignments must be completed before I will read your course project; in other words, no credit will be given for a project unless all the preliminaries have been completed. Any preliminary assignment not completed at least six days before the project is turned in will result in a lowered grade for the project.

\*\*\*\*\*Please see the Attendance Policy below.

### Grading

Though I think of grades in letter terms, not numbers, I offer this translation for your assistance. You will notice that I will sometimes give a split grade, e.g., B / B+ . It simply means that you are somewhere in that vicinity.

A+ = 97-100	B- = 80-82	D = 63-66
A = 93-96	C+ = 77-79	D- = 60-62
A- = 90-92	C = 73-76	F = 0-59
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-72	FF = 0 (See Policy on
B = 83-86	D+ = 67-69	Plagiarism)

### Attendance Policy

In this class, as in all of your classes, you are expected to attend all of your class meetings. I take attendance at the UMM site, as do all of the site coordinators. When students do poorly in this class, the biggest reason is that they do not attend class. As I hope you will do well in the class, I hope that you will attend faithfully.

Though I expect that you will attend class, whether you are an on-campus or a distance student, on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 9:45, I know that it will not always be possible. If you need to attend one or more (or all) class meetings via tape delay, that is perfectly fine as well. I encourage you to take advantage of the live sessions, though, as most students seem to be far more attentive under live conditions. If that is not possible, I hope you will ask your questions via email, telephone, the Blackboard Conference, or even in person.

Unless other arrangements have been made, all on-site students are expected to attend the entire class every week. If you leave class early, you will need to furnish written proof that you watched the video; otherwise, you will be marked as absent.

I strongly advise you not to get behind and not to skip any class meetings (live or via tape). Learning is most effective in a community, even a techno-community. Do not try to fool yourself.

### **Class Conduct**

I expect you to be fully attentive, courteous, and professional at all times. This means that I expect that you will:

- be punctual for all class meetings, as we begin on time every week;
- be attentive to the instructor and to all other members of the class;
- ask questions when you do not understand what others, including me, say;
- keep your attention focused on the topic at hand;
- do your best to assist others in their learning.

I expect that you will not:

- take breaks during class (I expect that you will take care of personal needs before and after class);
- engage in private conversations when others have the floor;
- distract others with your eating or drinking;
- read newspapers or anything that is not pertinent to the class;
- do work for other classes;
- pack up early—we work the full period in this class.

### **Late Policy**

All late work will be downgraded one full grade per week after the deadline, the minimum penalty being a half grade. I do make exceptions, but I have two conditions: the student must request an extension at least twenty-four hours before an assignment is due; the student must turn in a draft of the work-in-progress, which must demonstrate that the student has made a substantial effort. Quizzes must be taken at class time.

Since this is a large class, I ask that you do your part to submit your work on time. As I usually do not begin to grade until I receive all the assignments, you will be doing your peers a dis-service by submitting your work late. You will have ample time to work on your papers, so arrange your schedule as needed. Do not wait until the last day to get started: start immediately. If you do so, you can consult me about any questions you have before it is too late. In any case, I would much prefer that you ask for an extension than you hand in sloppy or incomplete work.

### **Getting Help With Writing**

We are not born with an innate ability to write, and we are certainly not born with an ability to write about literature and other arts. In recognition of this fact, we offer three resources that will help you with writing in the course. First, I will help you. We can do this in person, or via email, phone, or Blackboard. Second, we will have a teaching assistant for the course; this is most likely a senior who has done well in this course and has a great deal of experience writing. Third, the UMM Writing Center is equipped to assist you both online and in person. Get started by going to my site, <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro>, and clicking on the link for the Writing Center. Please take advantage of these resources: there is no reason to be shy about them; they can make a big difference.

### **Policy on Plagiarism**

Any student found guilty of willful plagiarism (claiming another's work to be one's own) will be dropped from the course immediately and given a grade of F. The student's name will then be submitted to the student's advisor, the Student Affairs Officer, and the Academic Dean with a recommendation that further action be taken.

Occasionally a student will accidentally forget to include a reference for a work that has been used, quoted, or paraphrased in the student's paper. In this case, the student's work will not be assigned a grade until the proper citations have been submitted to me.

Often these problems can be avoided by consulting the proper reference materials, such as *A Writer's Reference*. See also the handouts on writing at the beginning of your Course Packet.



### **How to Succeed in This Class**

Naturally, this course is built for your success. Here are ten tips that will do much to ensure your success:

1. do all work conscientiously, and hand it in punctually;
2. ask questions when you do not understand the point or the assignment;
3. take your writing seriously, always with an aim to improve it;
4. read assigned material before class;
5. when you are reading, jot down important points and items you do not understand;
6. attend all classes and participate in all of them;
7. begin early on your longer assignments;
8. be creative, i.e., try to do things in such a way that no one would think of;
9. read directions and follow them as best you can;
10. if you have any sort of problems that will affect your work, let me know.

### **Aids to Your Success**

Please take advantage of your resources. There are a lot of resources all around you. Whether it is me or our teaching assistant or our online help or the UMM Writing Center or the week-by-week instructions in the course packet or your site coordinator or other members in the class, you have a lot of help available to you.

I have tried to design the course and the materials in the course packet with your success in mind. The only thing, though, that will make you succeed in this course is you. If you do the work and ask for help when you need it, you will do well.

If you find at any point in this course that you need help in any area, contact me or UMM ITV (255-1241 or 1-800-696-1127) immediately.

### **Course Invitation**

This class is your class: its success depends on you. If everyone puts a sincere effort into it, it will surely be a lively, energetic class. So, I will depend on you.

If there is anything that will affect your performance in this class, you should let me know as soon as possible. If it is a serious matter, you should also let the Office of Academic Affairs know as well (255-1224). Everyone here at UMM (and the UMS) wants to see you succeed, and we will do everything we can to help you. So please let us help you in whatever ways we can.



## Tentative Course Schedule

Readings listed are all in the Course Packet, and they follow in the order in which we will read them. The heading "Preparation For," means that you should come to class with that assignment completed. If you do not understand an assignment, please be sure to ask. The average reading assignment for a given class is designed to take three to six hours. Writing and revision time for essays and projects will add to this time.

### Week One, August 30: Introduction

#### Preparation For Class

If you receive your packet before class begins, please take time also to review the material in the Course Packet listed under Writing In This Course and Week 1. If it arrives a day or two late, you will not need to worry about week one readings. They are so short that we can put them on the screen.

You have several small assignments to do between this week and next. They are tasks designed to make sure that we are all prepared to get moving at a good pace. See the sheet entitled "Getting Started," which you will find at the end of this syllabus. This will lead you along the path.

Please look for some course materials posted at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>. (Look under Course Resources.) Follow the index for the appropriate subject. The subjects follow in the order in which we cover them.

### Week Two, September 6: The Vision Of Love

#### Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Short Medieval Selections, including the pieces on Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Dante. *La Vita Nuova (The New Life)*.

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

Take Course Survey On-Line. See Blackboard Instructions.

Return Sheet Titled "Getting Started."

### Week Three, September 13: Chaucer And The Structures Of Love

#### Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed Under Week Three, Especially

Chaucer. General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*. Course Packet.

Chaucer. *The Miller's Tale* from *The Canterbury Tales*. Course Packet.

Chaucer. *The Book of the Duchess*. Course Packet.

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

### Week Four, September 20: The Limits Of Allegory

#### Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Boccaccio. "The Tale of Griselda." Course Packet.

Petrarch. Completion of "The Tale of Griselda." Course Packet.

Chaucer. Completion of "The Tale of Griselda." Course Packet.

Mirandola. "On the Dignity of Man"

Luther. Speech at the Diet of Worms. ("Here I Stand")

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Quiz #1 Will Be Given.** It will cover mostly Dante, Chaucer, and Griselda, and there may be a question or two on the short medieval selections. **There may** also be an art or general history question or two.

### Week Five, October 27: The Renaissance World

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Montaigne. "Of Repentance."

Shakespeare Sonnets 18 and 130.

Petrarch. Selections.

Plot Summaries of *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Selections from *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Act I

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

### Week Six, October 4: Shakespeare's Ironic Vision

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today Especially

Ovid. The Story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Read Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Acts II-V

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project Proposal Due.** Please Submit This Via Blackboard. Please be sure to post your Project Proposal on the Discussion Board on Blackboard so that others in the class can give you some feedback. When you go to Blackboard, you will see a Forum on the Discussion Board labeled Course Proposals. Simply open a new thread and add your proposal. The Course Project Proposal is an informal piece of writing that explains in one or two paragraphs what you think you would like to explore in your Course Project. Remember that there are several pages of handouts at the beginning of the Course Packet to help you select and develop your topic.

### Week Seven, October 11: Twisted Visions

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Michelangelo. Poetry.

Cervantes. *Don Quixote*. Selections.

Donne. Poetry. Selections.

Marvell. "To His Coy Mistress."

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Quiz #2 Will Be Given.** It will cover *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Luther, Mirandola, *Don Quixote*, and the poems of Donne, Michelangelo, and Shakespeare. **There may** also be an art or general history question or two.

### Week Eight, October 18: Justifying The Ways Of God To Man

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Milton. *Paradise Lost*. Selections.

Pope. *Essay On Man*.

Barker. Selections.

Read Voltaire. *Candide*, Chapter 1.

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project Update Due.** Please Submit This Via Blackboard. You will find a separate Forum on the Discussion Board labeled Project Update. Submit your work there. The Update is simply an informal way of explaining how your project is coming along. You may, for example, have found that your topic is shifting away from the original idea. Or you might note that your subject has led you to consider some things you had not previously considered.

### **Week Nine, October 25: The Bright and Dark Sides of the Enlightenment**

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Jefferson. *The Declaration of Independence*.

Read Voltaire. *Candide* (Entire Work).

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project Bibliography Due.** Please Submit This Via Blackboard. You will find a separate Forum on the Discussion Board labeled Course Project Bibliography. Submit your work there. Simply list whatever sources you have found related to your topic. List the name of the source and the author. Say also what is useful about the source. (Yes, you can continue to add and delete sources as you continue.)

### **Week Ten, November 1: Romanticism And Its Limits**

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Keats. "Ode On A Grecian Urn."

Blake. Poetry Selections.

Wordsworth. "Tintern Abbey."

Read Shelley. *Frankenstein*. Chapters 1-12.

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project First Paragraph Due.** Please Submit This Via Blackboard. You will find a separate Forum on the Discussion Board labeled First Paragraph. Submit your work there. Though your first paragraph may change between this point and your final draft, gathering together the ideas for your first paragraph will give you the focus that you will need.

**Quiz #3 Will Be Given.** It will cover Pope, Milton, Barker, Keats, Blake, Jefferson, *Candide*, Keats, Wordsworth, Blake, and the first half of *Frankenstein*. There may also be an art or general history question or two.

### **Week Eleven, November 8: Playing God?**

Preparation For Class

Read Shelley. *Frankenstein*. Chapters 13-24.

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project Outline Due.** Please Submit This Via Blackboard. You will find a separate Forum on the Discussion Board labeled Outline. Submit your work there. You need not follow the formal outline pattern very carefully, but your outline should give a clear indication of where your project is headed.

### **Week Twelve, November 15: The Crisis In Western Thought**

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Maupassant. "The Necklace."

Gilman. "The Yellow Wallpaper."

Neitzsche. "The Madman."

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

**Course Project Due.** Please Submit This Via Your Center.

**There Will Be No Class On November 22**

### **Week Thirteen, November 29: Modernism & Postmodernism**

Preparation For Class

Read Selections in Course Packet Listed For Today, Especially

Eliot. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

Stein. "Portraits of Three Artists."

Naylor. "Cora Lee."

Read and View Selections for This Week at <http://www.umm.maine.edu/faculty/necastro/introlit>

### **Week Fourteen: December 6: Finishing**

If all goes well, we will cover the last of our course material in Week 13. Chances are, though, we will run a bit behind schedule. So we will likely use the beginning of the course to finish anything we have not yet completed. After this, we will complete the quiz.

I hope we can take a significant part of this class period for students to give presentations of course projects. Those not in Machias can call in at the appropriate time. We can handle any illustrations or graphics you have from the broadcast (UMM) site.

**Quiz #4 Will Be Given.** It will cover the second half of Frankenstein, Maupassant, Gilman, Nietzsche, Marx, Wollstonecraft, Freud, and Darwin, as well as Eliot, Stein, and Naylor. There may also be an art or general history question or two.

### **Week Fifteen: December 13: Finishing--Just In Case**

If all goes well, we will not have class this week. It is during the final exam period at UMM and at most other campuses. If, however, we have to miss a week of classes due to weather, illness, or technical difficulties, we will use December 13 for our final class meeting.



*Don't Panic. You Have Been Working Hard All Semester.*