

## **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT WAC GOALS, PROCEDURES, AND ASSESSMENT**

I. Goal: The goal for writing-intensive courses in the English Department is for students to produce good literary-critical research papers. Such papers exhibit all the characteristics one expects of a well-written paper in any humanities discipline: a clear thesis/purpose, coherent presentation of ideas, substantial and logical support for the thesis statement, factual accuracy, appropriate use of secondary sources, and relatively few of the most egregious errors in grammar and usage.

Beyond these generic expectations, good literary-critical papers exhibit certain discipline-specific characteristics: a minimum of plot summary; sensitivity to tone, especially irony; knowledge of literary devices such as metaphor, symbolism, alliteration, etc.; knowledge of the basic conventions of the genre being analyzed; the ability to distinguish between author and narrator or speaker; accurate use of information presented in lectures, discussions, and assigned readings, and the ability to observe the conventions of MLA style

### **II. Writing Courses**

With only a few exceptions, all English courses are writing-enrichment courses, as defined by the WAC Guidelines approved by the faculty.

ENG 2110 British Literature I, 17-30 pp. (one 2-7-page paper, seven 1-2-page papers), 65% of course grade (Leverett)

ENG 2120 British Literature II, 5-7-page paper plus midterm and final that are at least 60% essay, 50-60 percent of course grade (Christian)

ENG 2210 American Literature I, 15-20 pp., 60% of course grade (Walter Carney)

ENG 2220 American Literature II, 9-12 pages plus three essay exams, 90% of course grade (Colonnese)

ENG 2310 World Literature I, 5-7-page paper plus midterm and final that are at least 60% essay, 50-60 % of course grade (Christian)

ENG 2320 World Literature II, 15-20 pages, 60% of course grade (Walter Carney)

ENG 3420 Women's Literature, 30-35 pp., 65% of course grade (Wright)

ENG 3440 American Diversity, 20-25 pp., 60% of course grade (Walter Carney)

ENG 3550 African American Literature, 20-25 pp., 60% of course grade (Walter Carney)

ENG 3710 Chaucer 26-36 pp. (three 5-7-page short papers; one 8-10-page research paper; one 3-page article summary and response), 80% of course grade (Leverett)

ENG 3730 Medieval Romance, 23-31 pp. (three 5-7-page papers, one 8-10-page research paper), 85% of course grade (Leverett)

ENG 3740 Shakespeare, 15-18 pp. (three 5-7-page short papers; one 3-page translation and analysis), 70% of course grade (Leverett)

ENG 3820 19<sup>th</sup>-Century American Lit., 9-12-page research paper plus essay exams, 75% of course grade (Colonnese)

ENG 3920 19<sup>th</sup>-Century British Lit., 10-15-page research paper plus writeup of oral report, 50% of grade (Wright)

ENG 4020 Modernism, 9-12-page research paper, plus essay exams and journal, 80% of course grade (Colonnese)

ENG 4030 Contemporary Literature, 9-12 page research paper plus essay exams and journal, 80% of course grade (Colonnese)

ENG 4140 Southern Literature, 25 pp. (one 10-page unresearched paper, one 15-page researched paper, plus essay questions), 55% of course grade (Wright)

### III. Rubrics

#### 1. Rubric used in 2210, 2320, 3440, and 3550

##### **Grammar and Usage: 25**

Are there many Dirty Dozen errors? Are the sentences clear and expressive? Is the writer's voice apparent, or at least developing? Are there many word choice errors, malapropisms, or awkward phrases? Is the paper representative of formal academic writing or of casual speech?

##### **Structure and MLA: 25**

Is there a clear thesis statement? Are the paragraphs, including the introduction and conclusion, well-developed and well-structured? Is there a clear reason why the paragraphs are arranged as they are, or is there a disturbing randomness to this argument? Does the writer observe the conventions of MLA usage in citations and the Works Cited page? Are quotations and other uses of reference material properly introduced, cited, and discussed?

##### **Content: 50**

Does the writer demonstrate a thorough comprehension of the subject? Do they omit major points, or do they cover the essential elements of the issue? Does the writer manage competing points of view fairly? Does the writer show good judgment in the way in which sources are assessed and used? Do they use the best possible evidence? Is there a clear relationship between each piece of evidence and the paper's claim? Is the evidence arranged persuasively?

## 2. Rubric used in 4020

### RUBRIC FOR ENG 4020 MODERNISM

#### RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF LITERATURE PAPERS

1. Audience/Purpose (The introduction engages the audience. The thesis statement establishes a meaningful purpose for the paper, and focus is maintained throughout the paper on the stated purpose. Word choice and tone are appropriate.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

2. Organization/Coherence (Paragraphs are divided and ordered logically. Effective transitions clarify the relationships among paragraphs, sentences, and words. Conclusions effectively summarize the ideas stated in the thesis.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 2 =

3. Support (Explanations are clear and thorough. Logic is persuasive. The thesis is supported by specific textual references. Plot summary is kept to a minimum.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 2 =

4. Interpretation (Interpretations take into account the tone and content of the literature. The writer recognizes irony and metaphor and makes appropriate distinctions between narrator or speaker and author.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

5. Accuracy (The writer accurately uses knowledge gained from lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. Extra-literary [e.g., historical] facts are accurate. The writer reveals knowledge of the basic conventions of the genre under analysis.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

6. Grammar (Relatively few Dirty Dozen errors appear.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

7. Style (The writer uses precise diction and varied sentence structure. The writing is clear and easy to understand, pleasant to read. Conventions of MLA style are observed in parenthetical source citations and on Works Cited pages.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

8. Use of Secondary Sources (The appropriate kind and number of secondary sources are used. Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries are incorporated clearly, appropriately, and gracefully.)

5 4 3 2 1 x 1 =

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