

Professor Rebecca Wiseman  
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Office: HW 321  
Office hours: Wednesdays 2:00-3:00  
& by appointment

**ENGB05: Critical Writing About Literature**  
Mondays & Wednesdays 9:00-10:30, BV 361

Welcome to English B05: Critical Writing about Literature. This course is intended to help you become a stronger critical thinker and a better analytical writer. By the end of the semester, you will have learned to think analytically about literature, to structure written arguments so that they are nuanced, persuasive, and clear, to support those arguments with well-chosen, well-deployed textual evidence, and to interpret constructive criticism from outside readers – both the instructor and your peers – in order to improve your written work. These four skills are crucial to your success as a college-level writer.

Throughout the term, we will be examining and practicing different writing skills (paraphrasing, quoting, explicating, analyzing, and researching), discussing a variety of library research techniques, bibliographies, and MLA-style citation guidelines. Ultimately, you should feel comfortable developing your own voice, and should consequently gain more confidence in your own readings of both primary and secondary sources. In order to pass this course, your class attendance is expected. Please refer to the attendance policy for more information.

**Required Texts (available for purchase at the UTSC Bookstore):**

*Writing Essays about Literature: A Guide and Style Sheet* (8th Edition) by Kelley Griffith  
Publisher: Wadsworth Cengage Learning  
**ISBN-13:** 978-1-4282-9041-9 **ISBN-10:** 1-4282-9041-9.

*How to Read a Poem* by Terry Eagleton  
Publisher: Blackwell Publishing.  
**ISBN-10:** 1405151412; **ISBN-13:** 978-1405151412

*De Niro's Game* by Rawi Hage.  
Publisher: Anansi Press.  
**ISBN-10:** 0887848133; **ISBN-13:** 978-0887848131

*Additional texts will be available on Blackboard, under "Course Materials."*

**Required Written Work**

**Reading responses.** These are short (250-300 word), **emailed** responses to the assigned readings. The topic of each response is up to you – you might choose to discuss a passage in one of the texts that you find interesting, troubling, confusing, or bizarre. Or you might pose a series of critical questions to help focus your reading and thinking. These should be polished pieces of writing, free of typos and grammatical errors, but they need not be written in a particular format (don't worry about using "five-paragraph form," for example). Due October 3 and October 22.

**In-class explication essay.** This assignment will be written **in class** on September 26. You will be asked to perform your own explication (argumentative analysis) of a poem. A revision of this essay, completed outside of class, is also required.

**Argumentative literary analysis essay.** This assignment will be written **in class** on October 24. Using techniques discussed in the course, you will perform an analysis of one aspect of *De Niro's Game*. A revision of this essay, completed outside of class, is also required.

**Annotated bibliography.** In preparation for your research paper (see below), you will compile a list of four sources related to your research question and provide critical commentary (annotations) on each of the sources. Due November 21.

**Peer review.** One of the goals for the course is to make you adept at giving and receiving constructive feedback on writing – both your own writing and your peers'. You will read and respond to the paper drafts of two of your peers. These responses must be well-written and thoughtful, and will be followed up by discussion during class. Due November 28.

**Research paper.** This assignment will require you to propose your own research question, perform independent research, and, finally, complete a polished essay of 8-10 pages. Due date TBA.

### **Grade Breakdown**

In-class explication paragraph: 10%

Revision of in-class explication paragraph: 5%

In-class literary analysis essay: 15%

Revision of literary analysis essay: 5%

Peer review: 10%

First draft of research paper: 10%

Annotated Bibliography: 10%

Final draft of research paper: 20%

Attendance, participation, and email responses: 15%

### **Course Policies**

**Attendance and Participation.** Students will prepare thoroughly for class and bring their textbooks at all times. Distracting behavior is not allowed (chatting online, leaving cell phones on, text-messaging, etc.). B05 is a small community, as each class does not exceed 25 students, so any non-academic behavior will be distracting to others. Accruing more than two unexcused absences will lower your attendance/participation grade.

**Email Policy.** You are welcome to email me with any questions or concerns related to the course. Please include your full name and section number in every email. The use of a professional tone is expected. Note: Assignments due by email must be *received* by me no later than the start of class on the due date.

**Late Submission of Work.** In most cases, work turned in late will receive a late penalty. One-third of a letter grade will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. Exceptions will be made in cases of illness and family emergency, at my discretion. Please contact me as soon as possible if you have concerns about turning in a particular assignment on time.

**Using Turnitin.com.** Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing

so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

**Academic Integrity.** Plagiarism is a form of cheating and is a serious academic offense. It may take different formats: taking the ideas and/or work of another person and imply that they are one's own. This applies equally to information gathered from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, friends, casual acquaintances, strangers, and from the Internet. It pertains to papers, paragraphs, and sentences, as well as to modification thereof. When doubt regarding the necessity for a citation, please ask me. One of the objectives of this course is to help students learn how to include citations properly and how to distinguish one's voice from others. Please note that it is a UTSC academic offense to pass off as new a paper one did in another course, without the prior consultation of the instructor. Penalties for proven cases of plagiarism range from a zero on the assignment, failure in the course, to suspension from the university. See the current Scarborough calendar for additional details (under the code of behavior on academic matters). For a detailed discussion of what constitutes plagiarism, see "How Not to Plagiarize" at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

**Accommodation.** The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs. I encourage you to speak with me about your individual needs.

### **Schedule**

#### **Monday, September 10**

Introduction to the course

#### **Wednesday, September 12**

In-class diagnostic essay; Klinkenborg, "Where Do Sentences Come From?" (BB); Griffith, Chapter 5

#### **Monday, September 17**

Eagleton, *How to Read a Poem*, pp. 25-47

#### **Wednesday, September 19**

No Class; Office Hours Canceled

#### **Monday, September 24**

Eagleton, *How to Read a Poem*, pp. 102-142; poetry explication workshop

#### **Wednesday, September 26**

In-class poetry explication

**Monday, October 1**

Joyce, "The Dead," pp. 224-259 (BB); Griffith, Chapter 3

**Wednesday, October 3**

Joyce, "The Dead," pp. 259-273 (BB)

Reading response due via email

**Monday, October 8**

Thanksgiving: University Closed

**Wednesday, October 10**

Joyce, "The Dead," pp. 273-288 (BB); Griffith, Chapter 12

Revision of in-class poetry explication due in class

**Monday, October 15**

*De Niro's Game*, "Roma"

**Wednesday, October 17**

*De Niro's Game*, "Beirut"

**Monday, October 22**

*De Niro's Game*, "Paris"

Reading response due via email

**Wednesday, October 24**

In-class literary analysis essay

**Monday, October 29**

Developing research questions; thesis workshop

**Wednesday, October 31**

Griffith, Chapter 9; documentation and plagiarism

Research paper topic due via email

**Monday, November 5**

Library Activity: Details TBA

**Wednesday, November 7**

Griffith, Chapter 10; revising and editing

**Monday, November 12**

Literary analysis essay revision due in class

**Wednesday, November 14**

Using secondary sources

**Monday, November 19**

Annotated bibliography introduction and workshop

**Wednesday, November 21**

Annotated bibliography due in class

**Monday, November 26**

Introduction to peer review

First draft of research paper due in class

**Wednesday, November 28**

Peer review sessions

Peer review reports due in class

**Monday, December 3**

Last day