

Literary Explorations II

Spring 2020 Course Syllabus & Policies

Teacher: Mr. Michael Dean

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Office hours: Walk-ins on Thursday (C-Day) 1:20 to 3:00 or by appointment (email me to arrange).

Course Description:

Literary Explorations II is a continuation of Literary Explorations I and will guide you through notable examples of American short stories, novels, and other forms of literature. Not surprisingly, you will be expected to read, interpret, and discuss works of historical and cultural significance. You will also be asked to share your ideas through formal, informal, and creative writing opportunities. In all cases, the class will stress the need for thoughtful planning, critical thinking, and meticulous drafting. Your job is not simply to understand literature but also to actively engage it.

Meeting Days/Times

Time	Room	Schedule
10:00 – 10:55am	A113	A, B, D
3:20 – 4:15pm	A119	A, C, D

Required Materials

Texts¹

My Ántonia by Willa Cather

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

Additional Materials

Additional readings and supplementary texts will be provided electronically and as printed handouts.

SSLs and Outcomes

- Students will understand conventions of poetry, drama, and fiction as genres and be able to explain their uses and effects [English A.1-3, B.2-4, E.1; SSL IV.A-D].
- Students will evaluate the influence of historical context on form, style, and point of view [English A.4, A.7-8; SSL II.A].
- Students will work collaboratively to come to an understanding of readings [English A.5-6, C. 1-2, E.2, E.5; SSL I.A-B].
- Students will develop greater autonomy as readers and writers by generating and responding to their own substantive questions about authors and literary works [English B.1, D.1-3, E.3; SSL I.B].
- Students will experience writing as an incremental and recursive process by drafting, critiquing, and revising creative and expository works [C.3-5; SSL I.A, II.A, III.A, IV.A-D].
- Students will reflect upon literacy learning as a lifelong endeavor and set goals for themselves as literacy learners based on their strengths, needs, and aspirations [English E.3; SSL II.A, III.B, V.C].

Student Expectations

¹ Readings subject to change, but I will notify you in advance.

Participation and Attendance

One of your primary responsibilities as a student is being present and prepared for class. Not only does your presence in class give you the opportunity to engage and explore the class material, but it also allows your fellow classmates to benefit from your thoughts on our readings and their artistic work. As such, you are expected to participate in class discussions, to offer compelling insights, and to ask difficult questions depending on the circumstances. Students will also seek out help during office hours on major projects and essay assignments.

Academic Honesty Policy

Please refer to the Academic Behavior Code on page 10 of the Student/Parent Handbook.

Laptops

The default position for your laptop in this class is closed. This means, from the moment class starts, unless I ask you to use it, I don't expect to see it open. We will use the laptops frequently for in-class work and research and even for online readings, but to the greatest extent possible, this will be a laptop-free class.

If you have a special need that requires accommodation in this area, please see me.

This policy likewise extends to all electronic devices such as phones, tricorders, telegraphs, etc.

Book Returns

During this course, you will be given a number of texts from the English Department's collection. It is your responsibility to treat these books carefully and to make sure they are returned when asked to do so. Late returns or lost textbooks will result in a penalty to your participation grade, and you will be expected to replace lost textbooks.

Assessment Practices, Procedure, and Processes

Assignment Descriptions

ESSAYS

During our class, you will be responsible for completing four essays (a formal document typically between 3 to 5 pages in length). Each essay will have a different focus and will cover material from the class. It is my expectation that final submissions are essays that have gone through more than one draft and are not a product of procrastination.

All final essays will be submitted through Google Classroom. Additionally, you are required to draft your essay in Google Docs, meaning that I will be able to see historical changes to your draft that demonstrate your effort to create multiple drafts before submission. Essays that are not submitted using Google Docs without a draft history will receive reduced credit.

HOMEWORK

"Homework" refers to non-essay assignments completed in and out of class. All homework must be completed by the date assigned. A homework assignment can be submitted late for half credit, but after three days, the assignment will not earn any credit.

PRESENTATIONS & PROJECTS

Occasionally, we will have special projects and presentations. These

assignments will typically ask you to radically change your thinking or to engage with your peers through public speaking. More detailed information will be provided in future handouts.

“EXAMS”

At the end of one of our units, you will be given a timed assessment in class that will reflect the material we covered. I will give you guidance ahead of these assessments about the range of content covered and the precise format. You may, for example, be asked to look at a passage of literature and write a response based on concepts we have discussed. In other instances, you may be asked to answer short response questions about historical context of a class topic. If you have accommodations regarding in-class assessments, please contact well in advance so that I can make arrangements.

ONLINE REFLECTIONS

For most class periods, you will be asked to respond to a question posted in our Google Classroom. These responses are informal and reflective and typically encourage you to consider some of the ideas we’ve discussed or read about. Some online responses will be required and will be worth homework points. Others will not be directly graded, but will be a strong factor of your participation grade for the quarter. More detailed information about reflections will be provided in another document.

PARTICIPATION

A participation grade will be awarded at the end of each quarter. I will take into account many factors when considering your participation grade. Having meaningful contributions in class helps, but sometimes participation also involves asking questions or seeking out extra help when it’s needed.

Grade Scale

Your grade will be weighted as follows:

Essays	60%
Homework / Daily Work	5%
Midterm and Final Exam	10%
Participation	10%
Presentations and Projects	15%

English Department Grading Guide

A = Exceeds course requirements (90-100%)

B = Meets course requirements (80-89%)

C = Credit awarded but needs improvement (70-79%)

D = Does not meet course requirements: no Academy credit awarded

Essay Revision Policy

After submitting an essay assignment, you may have the option to revise that essay for an improved grade. Any essay that was submitted *on time* and earned *lower than an A* will be eligible for revision.

To revise an essay, a student must arrange for a tutoring session at the Writing Center. After attending this session, students will make significant changes to their draft then resubmit their essay with proof of the tutoring session. Along with a writing center slip, you will submit with your new essay a "changes memo" that describes the work that you've done to improve your document. Information about what should appear on that memo can be found on Moodle.

A student who earns a C or lower on an essay **must** revise that essay and **must** also meet with me during office hours or by appointment to discuss the assignment. The conference with me must take place within one week of receiving the graded paper. Avoiding a required revision will strongly impact a

quarter participation grade.

Once a student has revised and resubmitted their essay, the original grade of the assignment will be averaged with the grade of the revised draft. Students have one week once their essay has been returned to complete a revision.

Late papers cannot be revised.

Late Work Policy

“Homework” can be submitted late for half credit up to three days after the due date. In some instances, homework assignments are necessary for a class activity or are entirely dependent on the timely submission of the work. In those few instances, the assignment will not be eligible for late credit.

Major essay assignments are always submitted electronically. Consequently, the electronic submission method will determine whether an essay is late. It is your responsibility to make sure that an essay is submitted on time. Technological mishaps, faulty hard drives, viruses, and other events will not be considered valid excuses. Keep in mind that if an assignment is due at 12:00 am and you submit it after that exact point, **the electronic submission platform will flag it as late and it will be counted as late.** Please avoid potential mishap and submit your essays with plenty of time to spare. Screenshots, computer logs, witness testimony will not prevent the paper from being late.

The first day an essay is late you will lose the opportunity to revise it. For each day after the first, your essay will lose a letter grade. After five days, the essay will receive a “zero.”

Grade “Bumping”

Officially, the English Department does not round or “bump” quarter or semester grades, and I adhere to this policy. Please do not contact me at the midterm or near the end of the semester with requests to increase a grade.

Response Time on Assignments

It is my intent to return all assignments that receive a grade within two weeks of their submission date.

Policies and Expectations

Winning Strategies for Students

CONSISTENT ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

All students should be prepared and on time for class. The most effective students will use their enrollment as an opportunity to expand their knowledge about a variety of skills and to improve their ability to write.

RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

This is a learning environment, and the class is made up of your peers and colleagues. As such, you will always treat your classmates with the utmost respect and courtesy. Likewise, I expect to receive the same consideration. While it is common to refer to a class by a teacher's last name, when speaking to me directly, please call me "**Mr. Dean.**" I won't respond to anything else.

TIMELINESS AND HONESTY

As mentioned above, you are expected to complete your assignments on time and on your own. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Likewise, essays that are written shortly before a deadline will likely not be as successful as drafts that have gone through more revision.

EFFORT IN WRITING

For written assignments, I expect that the copy you submit for assessment will not be the first draft, but instead, a product of time and careful revision. You typically will get two weeks to write a major essay, and I expect you to use that

to create multiple drafts.

Faculty Expectations

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

I'm here to help you, and yes, I want you to do well in my class. Never be afraid to ask questions or approach me for advice or extra help. Email is a fantastic way to contact me outside of class and you can always make an appointment to see me during my office hours. But remember, I expect you to take ownership of your education. If you're confused, talk to me. If you need clarification on an assignment, ask.

FLEXIBILITY AND RESPECT

Just as I expect you to treat each other with interest, compassion, and civility, I strive to do the same for you.

HIGH STANDARDS

Grades in my class are not "given," they are **earned**. At IMSA a "B" means that you have met expectations for a class. A "C" grade means that you did not meet expectations, and an "A" grade means you exceeded expectations. I am happy to spend time with you helping you improve your performance and meet the standards you set for yourself.