

English 679HA: Honors Program Tutorial

Fall 2009 (#35270)

TTh 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Parlin 105

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Course Description

According to the Honors Thesis Manual, a thesis is “a sustained examination of a central idea or question, developed in a professional and mature manner under the guidance of a faculty supervisor and a second reader.” That sounds easy enough, but how does one get there from here? This course offers something of a roadmap. Over the course of the term we will examine literary criticism from the “inside out” and hone skills essential to a successful honors thesis. Along the way, we will address a number of questions, both practical—How do I use the *MLA Bibliography*? What’s the difference between a footnote and an endnote?—and theoretical—What does it mean to make an argument about literature? Who has authority in an act of interpretation?

Course Objectives

This course will: first and foremost prepare students to write an honors thesis; interrogate methods of literary and cultural interpretation; consider what it means to make literary arguments and conduct literary research; help students to improve their research, critical thinking, reading, and writing skills.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Method

Participation (15% of final grade)

Needless to say, students are expected to be active participants in both class discussions and thesis reading group meetings. (This is, after all, an honors seminar.) Attendance is mandatory; please let us know in advance if you need to miss a class meeting.

Bibliographies, Annotations, and Critical Review (30% of final grade)

One of the most important functions of this course will be to introduce you to the scholarly conversation that attends your thesis topic. Over the course of the term you will: produce three bibliographies of secondary texts relevant to your thesis (totaling at least 30 references); provide annotations for 10 of these texts; and write a 3 to 5-page review of the text that seems most relevant to your project.

Thesis Prospectus (25% of final grade)

In early November you will submit to your reading group, thesis director, second reader, and tutorial professors a 4 to 6-page thesis prospectus.

Symposium Presentation (30% of final grade)

This course will culminate in a day-long symposium at which you will make a twenty-minute presentation (i.e., 8 double-spaced pages) from your thesis-in-progress. The first part of the presentation (i.e., ~ 250 words) will be a précis of your thesis project.

NB: Plus/minus grades will be assigned for the final grade of the course. Grades will be determined on the basis of the following rubric:

A = 94-100
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69
D = 64-66
D- = 60-63
F = 0-60

The University does not recognize the grade of A+. Per the English Honors Program Manual, one must earn at least an A- grade in this course in order to register for E679HB.

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to abide by the University Code of Academic Integrity:

“The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.” Any work submitted for academic credit must be your own.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (471-4641 TTY).

Common courtesy

Please silence your cell phones, refrain from texting, and limit your use of laptop computers during class.

Course Texts

Required Core Texts

William Shakespeare, *King Lear*. (The Quarto and the Folio Texts) Stephen Orgel, ed. (Penguin, 1999)

978-0140714906

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*. J. Paul Hunter, ed. (W.W. Norton, 1996)

#978-0393964585

Required Secondary Texts

Wayne Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research* (Third Edition) (University Of Chicago Press, 2008)

#978-0226065663

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say// Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (Norton, 2005)

978-0393924091

Marjorie Garber, *A Manifesto for Literary Studies* (University of Washington Press, 2003)

#978-0295983448

All additional materials are available via our course Blackboard site (Bb):

<https://courses.utexas.edu/>.

Course Schedule

R 27 August

“The great work begins”

M 31 August - F 4 September

Individual Conferences with Professors Hutchison and Kevorkian

T 1 September

Wayne Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research* (31-101)

Discussion of 2008-09 Honors Theses (Bb)

R 3

Booth, *The Craft of Research* (cont.)

T 8

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

R 10

Anne K. Mellor, “Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*” (274-286)

Shelley, *Frankenstein* (cont.)

T 15

Library Re-orientation (Meet in PCL I.124)

R 17

Library Re-orientation (cont.)

T 22

Research Day

R 24

Research Day

F 25

**Lecture: Elizabeth Richmond-Garza, “Love in a Time of Terror,”
Tom Lea Rooms, Harry Ransom Center, 3 pm**

First Reading Group Meeting Deadline

M 28

Bibliographies due by 5 pm

T 29

Booth, *The Craft of Research* (101-170)

Discussion of research process

W 30 September – S 3 October

Actors from the London Stage: *King Lear*

R 1 October

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/ I Say* (1-132 + xviii)

T 6

William Shakespeare, *King Lear*

R 8

Stephen Greenblatt, “The Cultivation of Anxiety: King Lear and his Heirs”
Kiernan Ryan, “*King Lear*, A Retrospect, 1980-2000” (Bb)
Shakespeare, *King Lear* (cont.)

M 12

Annotations due by 5 pm

T 13

Discussion of faculty research proposals (Bb)

R 15

Writing Day

T 20

Writing Day

R 22

Writing Day

Su 25

Prospectus draft due to Reading Group

T 27

Reading Group discussion of prospectuses

R 29

Reading Group discussion of prospectuses (cont.)

T 3 November

Writing Day

W 4

Prospectus due by 5 pm

R 5
Discussion of prospectus-writing process and abstracts of 2008-09 theses (Bb)

M 9 - F 13
Individual Meetings with Professors Kevorkian and Hutchison

T 10
Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" (Bb)
Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (Bb)

R 12
Betsy Erkkila, "The Poetics of Whiteness: Poe and the Racial Imaginary" (Bb)
Eliza Richards, "Outsourcing 'The Raven': Retroactive Origins" (Bb)
Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" (Bb) (cont.)
Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (Bb) (cont.)

T 17
Several ways of looking at "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (Bb)
Wallace Stevens, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (Bb) (cont.)
Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" (Bb) (cont.)

R 19
Writing Day

T 24
Critical review due

R 26
Thanksgiving

T 1 December
Marjorie Garber, *A Manifesto for Literary Studies*
Looking ahead

R 3
Writing Day

M 7
Symposium 9 am – 5 pm (PAR 208)

Other Important Dates

28 September 2009

Undergraduate Research Fellowship application due

2 October

Rapoport-King Thesis Scholarship application due

7 December

679HB registration form due in PAR 114 by 5:00 p.m.

1 February 2010

George H. Mitchell Award nomination form available

29 March

Complete penultimate draft of thesis due to supervisor and second reader

TBA April

Undergraduate Research Week

16-17 April

Formal Thesis Defense

7 May

Signed, bound thesis due in PAR 114 by 5:00 p.m.

11 May

English Honors Colloquium

21-22 May

University Commencement Ceremonies