

Writing About Literature – English 1315

Semester Fall 2025

Instructor Josh Ibarra

Course Section 1315.004 = 8 – 9:20AM (LANG 201)
 1315.003 = 11 – 12:20AM (LANG 323)
 1315.005 = 12:30 – 1:50PM (LANG 314)

Office Hours By request. Most available on Fridays.

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Course Description

This course offers reading, discussion, and writing as means of critical thinking, using text from poetry and drama as sources for essay topics developed across multiple drafts.

Textbooks*

David Auburn's *Proof*

Bertolt Brecht's *Life of Galileo*

Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen*

Shelagh Stephenson's *An Experiment with an Air Pump*

*I will provide all poetry selections via PDFs on Canvas

Supplies

A good, one subject notebook, writing utensils and spare loose-leaf paper is perhaps all you'll need. You are free to bring an e-reader of your choice or utilize a laptop for following along with class discussion.

Participation

I use a 10-point sliding scale to evaluate your participation in class discussions and activities, including peer review sessions and paper workdays. Note that merely sitting in class earns you a D- in participation (5~ points), but consistent and/or flagrant disruptions and issues will set you back even further. **I cannot award a grade of A to any student who refuses to participate in class discussions and activities.** Show up and demonstrate active listening skills; pay close attention to what others have to say, mull it over some and then speak up to add to their ideas or raise pertinent questions. Your participation total is calculated at the end of the semester.

Evaluation

- Daily Work 20%
- Participation 10%
- Papers (Short and Position) 40%
 - SP1, SP2, Rewrite, Synthesis/Position Paper
- Final Exam 30%

Daily Work

Daily work and class participation count as 30% of your course grade. Daily work may include submitting planning documents and works-in-progress during scheduled workdays or taking pop quizzes. Participation typically involves being involved in class discussions, workshops, and Q&A sessions. Bring books and all pertinent materials (like your notebook) to class to make sure you're ready to capitalize on easy opportunities to score both daily work and participation points.

Discussion Questions

Discussion questions help guide your reading and allow you to practice framing insightful responses to complex questions. I will usually offer you DQs at the top of class and allow you some time to prepare a response, but will often take some time in class prior to the assigned reading to preview the reading and clue you into what I may ask you about beforehand. Take notes about what I say and ask questions if you think it will help you better prepare for the discussion. Sometimes I will ask for you to submit your responses to Canvas, but most other times I will simply do my best to keep track of your responses (and other contributions) during our live, in-class discussions. Both will be rated on a simple two-point scale.

Essential Competencies

Essential competencies for this course include the ability to:

- read and analyze literary texts
- write clear, concise, and appropriate prose to respond to a variety of assignments
- discuss—in class and in groups—literary texts
- use word processing and presentations software and e-mail

Disability Accommodation

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have disabilities and have not registered with ODA, I encourage you to register. Please present your written request for accommodation to me no later than the fourth class day.

Course Workload

Attending university is different from attending high school in that you are expected to do more work outside of class and to take responsibility for making sure you are prepared to do well and participate in your courses. On average, you should expect to spend 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class; however, if you begin to feel underprepared, you may need to spend more time working to do well. When you need additional help in this course, come to office hours, visit the UNT Writing Lab, and see your TAMS academic counselor.

Requesting Rewrites

I encourage you to treat each and every assignment as important as the next one. This means that the onus is on you to prepare accordingly for each and every one, as much as possible. That being said, I understand that stuff happens and that you may not always be able to turn in your best work all of the time, so I've built one rewrite opportunity into this class to take the place of any subpar efforts you make for either Short Paper 1 or Short Paper 2. I will return your final drafts of these papers with feedback and a grade after I receive them, but it is your responsibility to seek clarification and/or respond to them with thoughtful revisions in order to receive credit for your rewrite. You must also submit a Revision Proposal for approval prior to submitting your new, revised draft.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

While scholarly cooperation is an important part of academic life, learning to 1) do your own work accurately and completely and 2) attribute the work of others when you use and build on it is paramount to the trust integral to an academic community.

In English 1315/1325, students are expected to complete all coursework on their own, except when their instructor clearly assigns them to work with a partner or group. Therefore, students should avoid the following:

- **discussing their responses to assignments with one another outside of class**
- **asking other students for "peer reviews" not assigned as part of class**

Moreover, English 1315/1325 students should avoid inadvertently sharing their work by keeping printed work secure, printing all of their work themselves, creating all 'templates' themselves, and password-protecting all electronic access (computers, clouds, Google docs, emails etc.) to files related to their coursework. Further, students should retain an editing/revision history for all files. Your instructor may also ask you to follow a naming convention for all course files.

Additionally, students should understand the UNT and TAMS policies covering violations of academic integrity standards.

UNT Policy 06.003: Student Academic Integrity defines "cheating" as the following:

"the use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to:

1. use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes, or other assessments;

2. use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
3. use, without permission [from the instructor], of tests, notes, or other academic materials belonging to instructors, staff members, or other students of the University [Note: this item includes the use of materials from *former* students of the university, such as students who have previously attended TAMS];
4. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor;
5. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment” (UNT Policy 06.003, p. 2).

Further, the policy defines fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty in the following ways:

- **Fabrication:** “falsifying or inventing any information, data, or research outside of a defined academic exercise.” (UNT Policy 06.003, p. 2).
- **Plagiarism:** “use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:
 1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.
 2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.” (UNT Policy 06.003, p. 3).
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** “helping or assisting another in the commission of academic dishonesty.” (UNT Policy 06.003, p. 2).

ANY use of ChatGPT or other generative AI writing tools (GrammarlyGO, GPT-3, GPT-4, BERT, or others) to produce assignment responses—including, but not limited to, “editing” essays or responses OR generating essays or responses for this course—is prohibited and constitutes cheating. Any student in English 1315 found cheating, fabricating, plagiarizing, facilitating fabrication/cheating/plagiarizing, OR engaging in any other type of academic dishonesty addressed in UNT Policy 06.003 or the TAMS Handbook will fail the course.

Further, the instructor will report academic dishonesty to the UNT Office of Academic Integrity; these reports will become part of the student’s permanent academic record.

*On a personal note, please understand my philosophy as a writer and a writing instructor as it pertains to the hard line I am drawing against AI in the classroom: I have full faith in you and your abilities and truly believe that you are capable of learning to do whatever an AI can do (and even do it better, with all of the verve and insight that makes you uniquely *you*). It is ultimately a matter of effort, care, and persistence on your part to rise to this challenge. You*

must be willing to confront difficulty, to make mistakes, get stuck, and be at a loss. Always remember that these are good things in life, and not to be avoided.

Attendance

- Attend class regularly. You alone are responsible for any material covered and any assignments scheduled in your absence, so please contact me and your counselor as soon as you know you can't make it. After two absences, your final grade will drop by one letter. If you exceed four absences, you will receive an F.
- NOTE: Arriving late or leaving early without my permission can be logged as absences. Sleeping during class, going off task, distracting others, using your phone/electronics irresponsibly, and coming to class unprepared can also be logged as absences.

Devices

- I encourage you to employ hard copies and physical notebooks for personal use whenever possible, but you are free to use tablets and laptops during lecture. You'll likely be tempted to see what else you can get done from behind those screens, but *please stay on task*. I reserve the right to revoke your device privileges and even count you absent if I notice they are becoming a distraction for you.

Assignments

- Assigned readings should be done by the day they're listed on the class calendar. This means you'll need to read them **BEFORE** you come to class unless instructed otherwise.
- All assignments should be submitted on time. *Late assignments are late.*
- Prepare all major class assignments using GoogleDocs.
- Save and keep track of all versions of your essays, both rough and final drafts.
- I will ask for GoogleDocs links and request editor's permissions for some assignments.

E-mail

- Use your UNT e-mail account for this class and check your e-mail daily for course announcements and emergency updates. For each e-mail you send me, use a clear subject line prefaced by your course and section info—for example, "English 1315.004: Question about Thursday's DQs." Proofread and sign your e-mail.

Taking Notes

- I expect you to take notes during class discussions and lectures in a physical notebook, but digital notes are fine too. You should take notes outside of class as you read our selections to ensure you are prepared to participate fully in class discussions.

Canvas

- I will ask you to upload your notes, daily work, and other assignments directly to Canvas at the end of most class days. Further, we will use Canvas extensively if UNT closes for severe weather or some other reason. You can access Canvas at unt.instructure.com/ using your EUID and password.

CLASS CALENDAR

Week 1

- August 19 Intro to the course + syllabus; intro to poetry (what is it?), professor Q&A
21 Rhythm and meter + other devices; apply to Poetry Group 1 (Frost)

Week 2

- 26 Finish PG1 together; talk about Short Papers (& explication), learn about Brecht/drama
28 *Galileo*, Scenes 1 - 3; SP1 planning party: annotations/outlines due end of class

Week 3

- Sept 2 *Galileo*, Scenes 4 - 6; practice leading peers thru yr poem; prof Q&A abt poems/SP1
4 *Galileo*, Scenes 7 - 8; bring a rough draft to share? Prof critique and feedback!

Week 4

- 9 *Galileo*, Scenes 9 - 11; **SP1 due date!** SP1 process memo
11 *Galileo*, Scenes 12 - 15; look back at character development, big ideas (themes)

Week 5

- 16 Start PG2 (Sarton?); practice analysis skills — lead me through them (in groups)!
18 Finish PG2; continue leading me through, prof Q&A

Week 6

- 23 *An Experiment...* Prologue & Act 1, Scene 1; SP2 planning party (i.e. pick and plan)
25 *An Experiment...* Act 1, Scenes 2 & 3; SP2 workday

Week 7

- 30 *An Experiment...* Act 2, Scenes 1 & 2; SP2 peer review / class critique?
Oct 2 *An Experiment...* Act 2, Scenes 3 - 5; talk about **SP2 due date**. SP2 process memo!

Week 8

- 7 *Proof*, Act 1, Scene 1; midterm reflection: compare last few plays, char. dev. & themes
9 *Proof*, Act 1, Scenes 2 & 3; talk about rewriting (aka, the Revision Proposal)

Week 9

- 14 *Proof*, Act 1, Scene 4 & Act 2, Scene 1; examine feedback & create action item list
16 *Proof*, Act 2, Scenes 2 - 4; work on **Revision Proposal**, start revising?

Week 10

- 21 *Proof*, Act 2, Scene 5; Revision workday (bring old draft, printed out)
23 **Revision due! Organize submission, write reflection;** talk Synthesis Papers

Week 11

- 28 *Copenhagen*, Act 1 (first half); making/supporting claims, look at Synth Paper exs.
30 *Copenhagen*, Act 1 (second half); more exs., organizing evidence & finding Insight

Week 12

- Nov 4 *Copenhagen*, Act 2 (first half); talk topics, **submit a proposal for Synth paper**
6 *Copenhagen*, Act 2 (first half); Synthesis workday — bring books, draft intro & bodies

Week 13

- 11 Synthesis Peer Review: introductions and first bodies
13 Finals Prep: bring all books, collab. on vocab/themes/passages

Week 14

- 18 Synthesis workday — bring books, notes, drafts; draft more bodies and conclusion
20 Synthesis Peer Review: bodies and conclusions

Thanksgiving Break

- 25 No class!
27 No class!

Week 15

- Dec 2 Last minute checks: **Synthesis/Position Paper due!** Process memo?
4 Final Finals Prep? — bring all books/notes! Reflect and say *adios**~

Week 16 - Finals

- 6 - 12 Visit <https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall.html> for times and dates.