Introduction to Women’s Writing



20623

Ms. Kassia Jackson Waggoner

Office: Reed 402

Office Hours: Monday 11:00-12:00 & Tuesday 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

Email: kassia.d.jackson@tcu.edu



Required Materials:

*The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

*Herland* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston

*Bastard out of Carolina* by Dorothy Alison

*A Short History of Women* by Kate Walbert

Access to Pearson Learning Studio:

Supplementary essays, short stories, and links as well as assignment sheets can be found there.

WARNING: Due to the nature of the course, we will be reading A LOT. Readings were assigned based on a variety of factors in order to give you a wide range of perspectives of women writers both canonical and otherwise. In addition to the novels listed above, several short stories and essays are included on the syllabus. Because this may be your only Women’s Writers course in your college career, it is my responsibility to ensure you are able to read as widely as possible from the works of these women.

Course Overview:

Often times, women’s writings and contributions to the literary world have gone unnoticed or overlooked throughout history. What does it mean to be a woman in today’s society in comparison to the past? What are the specific issues plaguing a woman in America today, and are they different than her predecessors? In this class, we will explore the literary works of women, both canonical and contemporary in an attempt to answer these questions. We will also take a critical look at these novels through the lens of feminism through our supplementary readings of women’s essays. Finally, we will explore the media’s influence over the perception of women and their work. Texts have been selected in hopes of providing a diverse range of women authors and topics, such as women’s familial relationships and issues of class, race, and/or sexuality.

**Course Goals and Outcomes:**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of literature as it impacts and/or reflects society and the individual through class discussion, research, and exam questions.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how literature also constructs human cultures.

**Course Specific Goals**

Provide close-readings of the text through in class discussion, quizzes and article summary assignments.

Interact with the text culturally and communally through various mediums: blogs, infographics, and youtube.

Identify common themes and motifs within the texts through class discussion to create a working definition of a “Wise Woman.”

Assignments:

**Reading Quizzes** (10%):

You will be randomly quizzed over the reading material to ensure that everyone is keeping up with the reading assignments. These quizzes will not be announced. If you are absent on a quiz day, you cannot make up the quiz unless it is a university approved absence. I will drop the two lowest quiz scores.

**Article Summaries** (10%):

Over the course of the semester, you will write one 3-6 page article summary. You will be given three opportunities to complete a summary, one for each of the first three sections of the course, but you only need to write one. You will select the book and the article discussing the text on your own. This assignment is designed to help you engage with the critics and to add your own voice to the mix. You will summarize the main points of the article, but you will also decide whether or not you agree with their analysis based on your own interpretation of the text in question. We will sign up for units on the second day of class time. These are due on the dates marked under “daily assignments,” but can be turned in any time during the unit before the official due date to the dropbox. So feel free to work ahead. Refer to ecollege for further details.

**Exams** (40%):

We will take 2 exams over the course of the semester, which will be worth 20% each. One will be over the first two units of class, the other over the remaining two. The exams will be in three parts: 1. Short identification (characters and authors) 2. Quote identification and 3. Essay Questions. You will be given your choice of 1 of 3 essay questions to answer. Answers should be at least five paragraphs long, written coherently, and refer to the texts whenever possible/necessary.

**Blogs** (25%):

You will focus on an aspect of our readings and relate it to today’s society (the news, music, film, etc). You will be given several prompt options to write about throughout the semester. Everyone will post to the class blogsite a total of five times throughout the semester. The blogs will be graded individually based on the subject matter, the appearance, outside source material, connections to our books or films, and the length (300-500 words) of the post. More information can be found on PLS.

**Wise Woman Video (10%):**

Jane Addams explains: “ Now is the time for a faint realization of this type, with her faculties clear and acute, from the study of science, and with her hand upon the magnetic chain of humanity. Then the story of Cassandra will be forgotten, which now constantly meets and stirs us with its proud pathos.” (“Cassandra” 39).

You will be placed into a group of three to create a 2:30-3:00 minute video describing your definition of a “Wise Woman” and providing a modern day example(s) of who you consider to fit your description. Your video should contain visual evidence to support your point.We will look at some examples in class, and we will spend time in the NMWS to work with “experts” with this technology. We will have a video premier, in which I will ask your group to explain your rhetorical decisions regarding the makings of the video. You will be graded according to the rubric on PLS.

**Infographic (5%):**

You will create an infographic presenting information about a topic in class you found interesting or want to pursue further in the form of visual argument. For example, you may decide to focus on a particular issue in women’s education like how many girls major in the sciences, women in the media such as how many female directors are making films, or women’s wealth/ prosperity in relation to men. Examples will be provided in class along with an assignment sheet and rubric.



Grades:

You will receive a letter grade score on your papers and tests, which is converted to the 4.0 scale as shown in the chart below. Because I grade on 4.0 scale, I do not use gradebook. So, I have included the 4.0 scale below, as well as the weights, so that you can calculate your own grade as we go. I will round a final grade of 3.8 to a 4.0 at the end of the semester. Likewise any final grade that falls in between the markers listed below will be rounded up or down accordingly. So, a 3.4 is still a B+ but a 3.5 will be rounded to an A-. If you ever have questions about a grade, please come and meet with me after class or in my office

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | 4.00 |  |
| A- | 3.67 |  |
| B+ | 3.33 |  |
| B | 3.00 |  |
| B- | 2.67 |  |
| C+ | 2.33 |  |
| C | 2.00 |  |
| C- | 1.67 |  |
| D+ | 1.33 |  |
| D | 1.00 |  |
| D- | 0.67 |  |
| F | 0.00 |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quizzes | 10% cumulatively |
| Article Summary | 10% |
| Exams | 40% (2 at 20% each) |
| Blogs | 25% collectively |
| Wise Woman Video | 10 % |
| Infographic | 5% |

**Course Policies: University**

TCU Disability Statement approved Fall 2007

Updated Spring 2011

**Disabilities Statement:**

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator*. Guidelines for documentation may be found at <http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp>.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

**Academic Conduct Policy:**

**Refer to the TCU undergraduate catalog (**[**http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current\_year/undergraduate/**](http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/)**), also quoted below:**

**Academic Misconduct** (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) – Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

* Cheating: Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself;
* Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another’s work without giving credit therefore.
* Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

**Course Policies: Technology and Media**

Please turn cell phones and any other electronics off during class. You’ll be notified in advance if you should bring laptops to class for work; otherwise, assume you won’t need them. Texting, checking Facebook, etc. from your phone or computer means you’re not engaging in the daily activities of our course. If your use of technology in the classroom becomes a distraction to the rest of the class, you may be asked to leave class.

**Course Policies: What I Expect From You**

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend class every day and participate fully in discussions and activities. Only official university absences are excused. Students representing TCU in a university-mandated activity that requires missing class should provide official documentation of schedules and turn in work *in advance*. Absences due to illness, sleeping, and long weekends are NOT excused–they will affect your participation grade. Absences due to conditions beyond your control (severe illness or injury, family or personal emergencies, etc.) should be confirmed through Campus Life. **Six absences may constitute grounds for automatic failure of the course.**

**Late Work:** I do not accept late work, so please be responsible and keep up with the due dates. If a paper or assignment is turned in late without an official university absence or a note from student health center, it will be given a zero. Problems with technology (i.e.: computer crash, printer malfunction, internet connectivity issues, etc.) are not acceptable excuses for submitting late work; always have a back-up copy of your work. I recommend dropbox or icloud.

**Professionalism:** All students have the right to freedom of speech, but no one has the right to disrupt other students' relative freedoms to education, peace, and order. Students whose behavior distracts others will be asked to leave and will be counted absent.

**Course Policies: What You Can Expect From Me**

**Office Hours / Email:**

During my office hours, I will be at my desk and available to talk with you about any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the course. Please stop by and see me during these hours–that time is yours. While I’m happy to schedule an appointment if you cannot make my office hours, please realize that I am making a special trip to campus to meet with you and please be respectful of that by giving me 12 hours notice if you cannot make the meeting for any reason. I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week; I do not check and respond to emails over the weekend. Make sure that you understand upcoming assignments in advance in case I am unable to respond to an email just before an assignment is due. Please also keep in mind that some questions are more difficult to answer over email; if you need to talk extensively about an assignment or other course concerns I suggest you come to my office hours or set up an appointment.

**Pearson Learning Studio:**

You will need to have access to the Pearson Learning Studio website for our course. You will find important information there, such as assignment sheets, reading materials, rubrics, and grades.

**TCU Resources**

**Mary Couts Burnett Library** | [www.lib.tcu.edu](http://www.lib.tcu.edu) | [reference@tcu.edu](mailto:reference@tcu.edu) | 817-257-7117

The Library provides resources and services for the research and information needs of the TCU community. Ammie Harrison is the dedicated research librarian for English and Film, Television & Digital Media. Her email is [a.harrison@tcu.edu](mailto:a.harrison@tcu.edu).

**Center for Writing** | Reed 419 | [www.wrt.tcu.edu](http://www.wrt.tcu.edu) | 817-257-7221

The William L. Adams Center for Writing is an instructional service with the mission of helping members of the TCU community improve their writing. Consultants offer feedback on writing projects to students, staff, and faculty from all academic disciplines. Consultants work with writers on projects such as essays, theses, dissertations, books, letters of application, articles, and other creative, personal, and academic projects. In addition to serving as a friendly audience, consultants address any issue a writer would like to discuss, though consultations often focus on topic generation, organization of ideas, style, clarity, and documentation. Go to their website to see their hours and make an appointment.

**New Media Writing Studio** | Scharbauer 2003 | [www.newmedia.tcu.edu](http://www.newmedia.tcu.edu) | [newmedia@tcu.edu](mailto:newmedia@tcu.edu) | 817-257-5194

The New Media Writing Studio (NMWS) is available to assist students with audio, video, multimedia, and web design projects. The Studio serves as an open lab for use by students during posted hours and has both PC and Mac computers outfitted with a range of design software. A variety of equipment is available for checkout to students whose teachers have contacted the Studio in advance. See their website for more information and a schedule of open hours.

**IC Computer Lab** | Mary Couts Burnett Library | [www.ic.tcu.edu](http://www.ic.tcu.edu)

The Information Commons computer lab is an open use lab available to all TCU students. Access is first come, first served, with the exception of four multimedia stations that can be reserved for use at specific times if requested. Assistance is available from the Information Commons desk staff during all open hours, with additional support from either the full-time Computer Services Librarian or the full-time Computer Lab Assistant during most hours.

**TCU Computer Help Desk** | Mary Couts Burnett Library (first floor) | [www.help.tcu.edu](http://www.help.tcu.edu) |

817-257-5855

The Help Desk provides support for TCU related computing accounts and services.



Daily Schedule:

\***Please note that the following information is subject to change. If such a change occurs, I will notify you in class or through email.**

* **Anything not marked “homework” refers to an in-class activity**
* **Homework is marked the class period before it is due.**
* **Due dates are marked in purple and are listed on the day they are due.**



Unit One: Definitions of Women and their Work

**Week 1**

T 1/14: Intro to the course syllabus and other materials

Women’s Writing is controversial and not always ordinary: diaries, letters, recipes, scrapbooks, etc.

Homework: Ms. Tippen’s Assignment

Jane Addams’ Bread Givers Speech (pdf on ecollege*)*

TH 1/16: class discussion with Ms. Tippen

Homework: Begin reading *The Awakening*

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. “On Divorce: Speech Before the Judiciary Committee of the New York Senate, 1861.” *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric. Vol II*. New York: Greenwood, 1989. Print. 235-249. (on ecollege)



**Week 2**

T 1/21: class discussion/ presentation on Chopin

Homework: Finish *The Awakening*

“Caged Bird” by Maya Angelou (on ecollege)

TH 1/

23: class discussion: types of women featured by Chopin

Homework: Gloria Naylor’s “The Two” & Sojourner Truth’s “Ain’t I a Woman?” pdfs on ecollege & The Black Community and the Downlow/ Barbara Jordan (webliography articles)

Blog #1 due by midnight



Unit 2: On Race and Class

**Week 3**

T 1/28: class discussion: Women’s roles in society

Brave New Voices: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcdONSoq7EQ

Wise Women assignment explanation/ Creating our own definitions

Homework: Sandra Cisneros’ “Eleven” and “Never Marry a Mexican”

Th 1/30: Watch “Women of Color” and class discussion

Homework: Read Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Supplementary Reading: Jim Crowe (pdf on ecollege)

Last Day to turn in an Article Summary for Unit 1



**Week 4**

T 2/4: Class discussion: “A Girl Like Me”

Homework: Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery”

Th 2/6: class discussion/ Short film

Homework: Begin Reading *Bastard Out of Carolina*

Allison, Dorothy. “From Two or Three Things I know For Sure” *Available Means: An Anthology of Women’s Rhetoric(s).* U of Pittsburgh P, 2001. Print. (pdf on ecollege)



**Week 5**

T 2/11: class discussion

Homework: Continue reading *Bastard Out of Carolina*

TH 2/13: class discussion

Homework: Finish reading *Bastard Out of Carolina*



**Week 6**

T 2/18: class discussion over *Bastard*

Homework: Amy Tan’s “The Rules of the Game” (pdf on ecollege)

“Fewer women Chess Grandmasters” (webliography)

Blog # 2 due by midnight

TH 2/20: discussion/ Review for exam

Read *Herland*

Last day to turn in an Article Summary for Unit 2



Unit 3: On Education

**Week 7**

T 2/25: Exam 1

Homework: Finish Reading *Herland*

Genesis Creation and Original Sin *(found on ecollege)*

TH 2/27: Creating A New Garden of Eden/ The Fall and Women’s Role

The State of Education then and now: TCU’s “Brochure”

Homework: Flannery O’Connor’s “Good Country People” (pdf on ecollge)



**Week 8**

T 3/4: class discussion/ Group meeting

Homework: Carson McCullers’ “Like That” and “Sucker” (pdf on ecollege)

TH 3/6: class discussion

Homework: Begin reading *A Short History of Women*

Blog #3 due by midnight



**Week 9**

T 3/11: Spring Break

Be safe and have fun! ☺

Th 3/13: Spring Break



**Week 10**

T 3/18: class discussion

Homework: Finish reading *A Short History of Women*

TH 3/20: class discussion

How has facebook/ twitter impacted women writers?

Group meeting for project

Homework: Leslie Marmalo Silk’s “Lullaby” and Cynthia Ozik’s “The Shawl”



**Week 11**

T 3/25: class discussion/ Group meeting

Homework: Watch the imovie/ movie-maker tutorials online (found on the webliography or click on this website) http://www.newmedia.tcu.edu/resources.html

Last day to turn in an Article Summary for Unit 3

TH 3/27: New Media Writing Studio

Wise Woman Project: Note that these two days are the only time we will have as a class to work with “experts” in the studio, so please use your time wisely!



**Week 12**

T 4/1: New Media Writing Studio

TH 4/3: Wise Woman Presentations

Pizza Party BYOD (Bring your own Drink)



Unit 4: Portrayals of Women in the Media

**Week 13**

T 4/8: Wise Woman Presentation/ reflections

Homework: Read “Hollywood’s Female Trouble” hyperlink below:

[Huffington Post Hollywood's Female Trouble article](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/xaque-gruber/hollywoods-female-trouble_1_b_1401363.html)

TH 4/10 Miss-Representation

Homework: Read Susan Douglas’ “Narcissism as Liberation” & Sharon Rainer’s “My First Black Barbie” (pdfs on ecollege)

Blog # 4 due by midnight



**Week 14**

T 4/15:

Miss-Representation Continued/ Pin-up adds/ Dove Campaign for Real Beauty

Hollywood’s influence

Homework: Ntzake Shange’s excerpts from *For Colored Girls who have considered suicide/when the raibow is enuf* (pdf on ecollege) & Huffington Post Review of For Colored Girls and “Who Should Have Directed For Colored Girls?” hyperlinks below:

[review](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jenee-darden/film-review-tyler-perrys-_b_774437.html)

[televisual article](http://tvisual.org/2010/10/22/who-should-have-directed-for-colored-girls/)

Blog #5 due by midnight

TH 4/17: Watch For Colored Girls



**Week 15**

T 4/22: Watch For Colored Girls (finish)

Th 4/24: discussion over the movie vs. the poems /

Creating Info graphics



**Week 16**

4/29 Review

5/1 Dead Day

Infographics due to the dropbox by 12:00am



**Week 17**

Finals Week

Exam 2 TBA