

Kutztown University
ENG 502 Introduction to English Studies: Traditions, Boundaries, Change
Fall 2009, Wed 6:00-8:50pm

Professor: Dr. Kevin Mahoney
Office: LY 237
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Hours: Monday: 1:00-2:45pm
Tuesday: 1:30-2:30pm
Wednesday: 1:00-2:45pm
Thursday: 1:30-2:30pm

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Course Description and Rationale

This course provides beginning graduate students with an introduction to the history, traditions, issues, problems, and debates of English Studies. From the perspective of the outsider or newly initiated, the proliferation of areas of interest within English Studies can be confusing if not daunting. It is the goal of this course to familiarize new graduate students with the historical development of English Studies and the shape of English Studies today. Designed as one of the core courses for all English MA students, this course will include studies of the profession, experience in writing professional documents (such as conference proposals, abstracts, book reviews, thesis proposal), practical guidance in relevant research methods, and inquiry into the major theoretical and disciplinary issues and challenges of English Studies. This is a required course of all English MA students.

While there was a time when “English Studies” referred almost exclusively to the study of British and American literature, during the waning decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, English Studies has grown to encompass a range of additional “fields” or areas of interest including Composition and Rhetoric, Creative Writing, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Textual Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Multicultural Studies, Professional Writing, Literacy Studies, Discourse Analysis, and Multimedia Literacy. However, many if not most students beginning graduate study in English are not aware of these diverse tendencies and fields that characterize “English Studies.” This course, then, begins English graduate students’ initiation into the profession. Over the course of a semester students will be invited to confront and attempt to answer questions such as: How have various theorists and scholars defined “English Studies?” How do we account for disciplinary change over time? What are the relationships among the various theoretical approaches and fields within “English Studies?” What counts as scholarship in these new and complex fields?

This course will approach “English Studies” as an on-going conversation, not as an unchanging object of study. In the spirit of Kenneth Burke’s metaphor of a “parlor,” this class will be an attempt to catch the “tenor of the argument” for/over/with “English Studies.” It will be useful to keep in mind the following passage from Burke’s *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action* as we begin our inquiry:

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them

got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument, then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him [or her]; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself [or herself] against you, to either the embarrassment of gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress (110-111, *brackets mine*).

In fact, our course will begin with several stories or narratives about English Studies told from several different vantage points. You **will not** be asked to judge which story is “correct” or which story has the most “credibility.” Rather, you will be asked to consider the *differences* among the stories as well as places in which there are repetitions, similarities, and synergies. We will be inquiring into *how* these stories differ and *what may account* for these differences. Put another way, we will not be trying to put English Studies in a box. Rather, we will be mapping its coastlines, mountains, and valleys. Along our journey we will be paying attention to seminal texts, key figures, significant institutions, defining moments, and influential concepts. In short, we will be studying “English Studies” like we study other texts.

Class Blog

You'll notice I've given you a web address for a blog at the top of the syllabus. A blog is an on-line space in which people can post their writing, comment on other people's writing, and save on-line conversations in archives. In many ways, it's a web version of the kind of on-going email conversations you may have with friends or family (you know, all those messages that read “Re: Subject line here”). With a blog, however, your writing does not remain in your inbox. It is posted to the web for anyone, yes ANYONE, to read: other students, faculty, friends, your parents, a woman in St. Louis, or a guy in Tokyo. Not only can anyone read your writing, they can *comment on it*. Therefore, when you write on a blog it's instantly public. As part of the writing you will do for this course, you will be posting messages and comments to our class blog. Our class blog will be one record—yet another story—of our conversation about English Studies.

Required Textbooks and Supplies:

- Berlin, James. *Rhetoric, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies*. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2003.
- Graff, Gerald. *Professing Literature: An Institutional History*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987.
- Nelson, Cary and Stephen Watt. *Office Hours: Activism and Change in the Academy*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Nicholls, David, ed. *Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures, 3rd ed.* New York: MLA, 2007.
- Ostergaard, Lori, Jeff Ludwig, and Jim Nugent, eds. *Transforming English Studies: New Voices in an Emerging Genre*. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2009.
- Russo, Richard. *Straight Man: A Novel*. New York: Vintage, 1998.
- Scholes, Robert. *The Rise and Fall of English: Reconstructing English as a Discipline*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1998.

Activated KU email account

- WordPress.com account (more on this in class)
- A notebook for class notes

- Some of the readings listed on the syllabus are on eReserve in the library. To access these readings, refer to the directions attached at the end of the syllabus.
- Folder to keep copies of all your papers, assignment sheets, and syllabus

Major Writing Assignments and Grading:

Your grade in this class will be based on the following projects. I will provide you with detailed assignment sheets for each paper.

• “An Academic Self I” [Due 9/9]	10%
• Review of English Studies on the Ground [Due 9/23]	10%
• Annotated Journal [Due 9/23]	10%
• Book Review [Due 11/4]	10%
• Draft of Personal Study Plan [Due 11/19]	10%
• Conference Proposal [Due NO LATER THAN 12/9]	10%
• Blog Posts [Due weekly]:	10%
• Participation	10%
• Critical Reflection:	
<u>“An Academic Self II: Another Narrative of English Studies” [Due 12/16]</u>	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Note on Grading:

You will be graded on a plus/minus system on each paper. However, Kutztown University does not currently use a plus/minus grading system for calculating your GPA. I use the plus/minus system throughout the semester to provide you with a better sense of your performance in the class.

General Guidelines for Papers:

- Unless otherwise noted, all papers (with the exception of blog postings—see below) must be word-processed or typed, double-spaced, stapled (**not paper-clipped or folded**), and follow MLA style guidelines. **I will not** accept papers that are not stapled.
- For each paper you hand in you should include the following information in your header:
 - your name
 - the assignment name/paper number (e.g. Paper #1)
 - the date you are handing in the paper
 - a title
 - course name and section number
 - my name
- **Save all your work!** I can’t stress this point enough.

General Guidelines for Blog Postings:

- To receive full-credit for your blog writing, your posts should be thoughtful, engaged, and significant. Just a few sentences here and there will not be considered significant. You should also plan on completing all the blog assignments posted on the syllabus. You can use 250-500 words/week as a guideline.
- While posting to the blog is more informal, you should still adhere to some general guidelines. An article by Rebecca Blood, “Weblog Ethics,” (link posted on course blog page) will introduce some of the issues you will need to consider in your postings. Consider “Weblog Ethics” to be a baseline for ethical posting. We will, however, complicate and extend our notions of ethical writing over the course of the semester.

- You should post to the blog **at least the day before class** to ensure that there will be adequate time to read and respond to your postings.
- Blatantly offensive, vulgar, or harassing language will not be permitted. I will delete any such postings and you will be given a zero (0) for that week. Persistent harassment will be treated as a violation of the Student Code of Conduct (see your student handbook, *The Key*) and dealt with accordingly.
- The same guidelines for plagiarism hold for blog postings.

Late Papers and Email Copies:

- To receive full-credit you **must** hand in your assignments in class on the due date. For each day your assignment is late, you will be graded down by a third of a letter grade. An “A” becomes an “A-;” an “A-” becomes a “B+,” and so on. If you do not hand in an assignment, you will receive a zero (0).
- **Emailing papers/assignments.** If you cannot make it to class on the date an assignment is due, or if you need to hand in an assignment on a non-class day, you may email it to me. To be accepted, you must send it as an attached **Microsoft Word** file. **DO NOT** paste your assignment in the body of an email message, and **DO NOT** send it as a Microsoft Works file. Make sure your name is on your assignment and you “sign” your email. Never send an email with an attached assignment without a short message telling me what you are sending. Assignments received by **5pm** on the due date will not be marked late.
 - **YOU MUST PROVIDE ME WITH A HARD COPY OF YOUR ASSIGNMENT THE NEXT CLASS PERIOD.** I will not consider your assignment handed in until I receive a hard copy from you in the format outlined above.
 - **The only purpose of emailing me the assignment is to avoid any additional late penalties.** I will not read your assignment until you give me a hard copy.

Class Policies:

- It is crucial that you attend every class to do well. Unlike a lecture class, this course depends on active discussion and in-class work. Occasionally, I will give short assignments in class that are not listed on the syllabus. If you need to be absent, **it is your responsibility to find out what happened in class from another student.**
- If you are not in class when I hand out paper assignments you will need to go to the course website to download a copy of the assignment or come to my office to pick up a hard copy of the assignment. **I WILL NOT carry extra copies of assignment sheets around with me.** To download assignment sheets, go to the course website at <http://englishstudies.wordpress.com> and click the “Course Materials” link.
- If you are not in class when I hand back your papers, you can pick up your paper in my office, 237 Lytle Hall.
- You should be prepared for each class. This includes **completing all the reading and writing assignments** due on that day. **Reading is NOT optional.** Active reading entails taking notes on the reading, reflecting on the reading, and coming to class prepared to have something to say about what you have read. If I notice that people are coming to class without reading, I will give quizzes at the beginning of each class.
- Turn off or set to silent all cell phones prior to class.
- Respect your classmates.

Special Note on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarizing one of your papers or a significant portion of one of your papers will result in **failure of the course**. In addition to failing the course, I will notify the University of the violation. If you have not already, please review the

University's Academic Dishonesty policy at the following web address: <http://www.kutztown.edu/admin/conduct/>. The university subscribes to an anti-plagiarism service for checking student papers against material posted on the Internet—this includes websites that require payment to download papers.

Academic Dishonesty as defined in the student handbook, *The Key* (next page):

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty involves any attempt to obtain academic credit or influence the grading process by means unauthorized by the course instructor. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following situations and examples.

1. Providing or receiving unauthorized assistance in course work and lab work, or unauthorized assistance during examinations or quizzes.
2. Using unauthorized notes, materials, and devices during examinations or quizzes.
3. Plagiarizing the work of others and presenting it as one's own without properly acknowledging the source or sources. At its worst extreme, plagiarism is exact copying, but it is also the inclusion of a paraphrased version of the opinions and work of others without giving credit. It is not limited to written materials. It includes the wrongful appropriation in whole or in part of someone else's literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, or computer-based work.
4. Presenting material to fulfill course requirements that was researched or prepared by others (such as commercial services) without the knowledge of the instructor.
5. Falsifying or inventing data to be presented as part of an academic endeavor.
6. Gaining unauthorized access to another person's or the University's computer system. Violations include tampering with or copying programs or data or access codes associated with coursework.
7. Possessing or arranging for someone else to possess course examination or quiz materials at any time without the consent of the instructor.
8. Altering or adding answers on exercises, exams, or quizzes after the work has been graded.
9. Making fraudulent statements, excuses, or claims to gain academic credit or influence testing or grading.
10. Taking examinations or quizzes for someone else or arranging to have someone take examinations or quizzes in place of the person registered for the course.

Special needs:

Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 610-683-4108 or in Stratton Administration Center 215 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Y

You can also visit Disability Resources and Services office on-line at:

<http://www.kutztown.edu/admin/humandiversity/disabilityservices/>

Course Calendar

Week	Class Day	Readings and Assignments
Week 1		
	Mon 8/31	Opening Day—Classes begin @ 6pm
	Wed 9/2	<p>Introductions and discussion of the organization of the course. What is “English Studies?” Why “English Studies?” Overview of writing projects. Introduction to the blog. Discussion of Annotated Journal.</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● McComiskey, “Introduction,” in <i>English Studies</i>, 1-65 ● Nicholls, David, “Preface” to <i>Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures</i>, vii-viii. <p>In Class: MLA Conventions, the Purdue OWL, and Key Databases</p> <p>Assignment: Please visit the class blog at http://englishstudies.wordpress.com and get acquainted with its layout and contents</p>
Week 2		
	Wed 9/9	<p>DUE: Paper #1 “An Academic Self I”</p> <p>Reading: all from <i>Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doris Sommer, “Language, Culture, and Society,” 3-19 ● Susan Jarratt, “Rhetoric,” 73-102 ● David Bartholomae, “Composition,” 103-125 ● Charles Bernstein, “Poetics,” 126-139 <p>Assignment: Annotated journal (draft) and blog post</p>
Week 3		
	Wed 9/16	<p>DUE: DRAFT of Review of English Studies on the Ground</p> <p>Reading: all from <i>Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leah Marcus, “Textual Scholarship,” 143-159 ● Jerome McGann, “Interpretation,” 160-170 ● Jean Franco, “Cultural Studies,” 209-224 <p>In Class: The UPenn CFP listserv and Writing Conference Proposals</p> <p>Assignment: Annotated journal (draft) and blog post</p>

Week 4		
	Wed 9/23	<p>DUE: Annotated Journal and Final Draft of Review of English Studies on the Ground</p> <p>Reading: <i>all from Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Donadey with Françoise Lionnet, “Feminisms, Genders, Sexualities,” 225-244 • Kenneth Warren, “Race and Ethnicity,” 245-259 • Susan Stanford Friedman, “Migrations, Diasporas, and Borders,” 260-293 • <i>Suggested Reading (i.e. not required):</i> Bruce Robbins, “Epilogue: The Scholar in Society,” 312-330 <p>In Class: The UPenn CFP listserv and Writing Conference Proposals</p> <p>Assignment: Blog post</p>
Week 5		
	Wed 9/30	<p>Reading: Graff, <i>Professing Literature</i>, 1-144</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 6		
	Wed 10/7	<p>Reading: Graff, <i>Professing Literature</i>, 145-262.</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 7		
	Wed 10/14	<p>Reading: Scholes, <i>The Rise and Fall of English</i>, 1-102</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 8		
	Wed 10/21	<p>Reading: Scholes, <i>The Rise and Fall of English</i>, 103-180</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 9		
	Wed 10/28	<p>DUE: Draft of Personal Study Plan</p> <p>Reading: Berlin, <i>Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures</i>, xi-94</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 10		
	Wed 11/4	<p>DUE: Book Review</p> <p>Reading: Berlin, <i>Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures</i>, 95-180.</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>

Week 11		
	Wed 11/18	<p>Reading: Ostergaard, Ludwig, and Nugent, eds., <i>Transforming English Studies: New Voices in an Emerging Genre</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jim Nugent and Lori Ostergaard, "Introduction: Preservation and Transformation," 3-20 ● Group presentations. Each Student will NOT be required to read the entire book. The class will be divided into groups of at least three (3) students. Each group will be responsible for one of the sections of the book. The sections of the book are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Part I: Negotiation and Collaboration ● Part II: Disciplinary Enactment ● Part III: Curricular Design ● Part IV: <i>Kairoitic</i> Approaches <p>I will provide you with guidelines for your presentations. In general, each group will have about 30 minutes to provide a summary and discussion of each of the essays in its section. Each group should also leave enough room to respond to questions.</p>
Week 12		
	Wed 11/25	No Classes—Thanksgiving Break!
Week 13		
	Wed 2/02	<p>Reading: Nelson and Watt, <i>Office Hours: Activism and Change in the Academy</i> (all)</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p>
Week 14		
	Wed 12/9	<p>DUE: Conference Proposal</p> <p>Reading: Russo, <i>Straight Man: A Novel</i> (all)</p>
Week 15		
	Wed 12/16	<p>DUE: An Academic Self II: Another Narrative of English Studies</p> <p>Exam Time</p>