



Syllabus for English 2B: *Critical Thinking and Writing through Literature*

Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2024
Course ID & Section #: D7064
Instructor's name: Karyn-Lynn Fiset
Day/Time: M/W, 5:00 - 7:05 p.m.
Location: B-Yard
Course units: 4

Contacting Your Instructor

For Individual Inquiries: Please use a "Burning Question" form to reach out to me at any point during the semester.

Questions Regarding the Course Itself: I will put 5-10 minutes aside per class (or more, as needed) for questions/ clarifications/ announcements that will benefit the group.

Important Dates

Last Day to Add a Class - 1/19
Last Day to Drop without a "W" - 1/26
Census Date - 1/29
Lincoln's B-Day - 2/16 (Campus Closed)
President's Day - 2/19 (Campus Closed)
Last Day to Petition to Graduate - 3/7
Spring Break - 3/11 – 3/16 (no classes)
Del Norte Center Open House - 3/28
Last Day for Student Initiated Withdrawal - 3/29
Last Day for Faculty Initiated Withdrawal - 3/29
Cesar Chavez Day - 4/1 (Campus Closed)
Final Exams - 5/4 – 5/10
Semester Ends - 5/10
Del Norte Center Commencement Ceremony - 5/10

Required Materials

- *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley (Norton Critical Ed.)
- *Beyond Feelings*, by Vincent Ryan Ruggiero (9th Ed.)
- Weekly readings, to be distributed in class. Please come to every class with any materials needed for that week.

Catalog Description: This course offers instruction in analytical, critical, and argumentative writing, critical thinking, research strategies, information literacy, and proper documentation through the study of literary works from major genres, while developing students' close reading skills and promoting an appreciation for the aesthetic qualities of literature. This course fulfills the requirements for both Critical Thinking and Writing (English 2A) and Why Literature Matters (English 4) by covering all significant material and objectives from both courses.

A Personal Note and a Request From Your Instructor (Or, a Meandering

Statement of Philosophy for ENG 2B): A warm welcome to you, dear Scholars! It is a gift to have you here! I suspect lots of you believe you *must* be here; unlike ENG 1A, ENG 2B is not “required” for many of our students, but you might still perceive it as yet another obstacle on your academic journey. As a former college student, I sure *get it* if you feel this way. (At first, I wasn't thrilled about the math classes I was “required” to complete as an undergrad either, until I learned to see the material in ways that were applicable to my own interests—such as when Sister Mary Margaret, my nun-professor, who understood my love of art, demonstrated the relationship between the Pythagorean Theorem and a sculpture in our campus gallery. Mind blown. She was a good nun). As your instructor, I expect a bit of grumbling, especially about writing. First, that's Karma doing its thing. Second, it's what all writers do. We grumble because writing is hard and it takes a lot of practice and a lot of time. It can also feel scary to commit to paper the thoughts that bang around in our brains, and to put these out there for others to read and respond to. Even the most esteemed scribes will tell you so. But, as a human—and fellow traveler—I'd like to make a humble request: Let's do our best to reframe our thinking about what writing is, and what it can be, so that we might **find joy in the process and in the limitless power of all kinds of rhetorical expression**. I may never be able to offer you what Sister Mary Margaret offered me (a new way of thinking about math!), but over the next 16 weeks, I hope that you will remain open to the possibility that your work in this course may very well intersect with what's most important to you. I hope you will feel comfortable sharing your passions and your prose, so that we can find those intersections together.

Will you write essays? Yes. Will they be thesis-driven? Yes. If there's one thing pretty much every essay in every modality has in common, it is the thesis, the main point, the central idea—the glue. But here's the fun part: We have a few months to practice skills that will help you blast away any preconceived notions you have about almost all other aspects of the essay, and to break out of the predictable (and, let's be honest, sometimes *boring*) structures you may be used to, like those used in the typical 5-paragraph essay. This is not to say you won't rely to some extent on what you've learned in the past, but that you now have an opportunity to go beyond the fundamentals, reflect upon how and why what you've learned may or may not serve you or your audience, and apply some new ideas and approaches to our craft.

To that end, ENG 2B is a process-oriented, not a product-oriented class. Why so? You'll likely end up with more engaging and polished products if you dedicate some time to each step in the process—same as you would in building a cabinet, or painting a portrait, or developing a business plan. Be patient with yourself, and allow yourself to experiment and mess up along the way. Shake off the notion that anything need be perfect; no piece of writing is ever finished. It can always be tinkered with.

Our big-picture purpose is straightforward: It's to help you become a better thinker and communicator. To achieve that, I'll ask you to **flex your curiosity, creativity, and especially your sense of wonder**. Aim to engage deeply with our texts, and compose from a place of inquiry, and you might even enjoy the process, *and* create products that you can feel confident about.

Perhaps the most important component of our process in ENG 2B involves connecting **critical thinking to works of literary import**; (it's in the title of the course). Richard Paul and Michael Scriven suggest critical thinking relies on “universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness. It entails the examination of those structures or elements of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem, or question-at-issue,

assumptions, concepts, empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions, implication and consequences, objections from alternative viewpoints, and frame of reference.” In this course, we will parse this definition, and the work of Paul and Scriven and many other scholars, and will focus on:

- **Analysis of thinking** by focusing on the parts or structures of thinking ("the Elements of Thought")
- **Evaluation of thinking** by focusing on the quality ("the Universal Intellectual Standards")
- **Improvement of thinking** by using what you have learned ("the Intellectual Traits")

When I argue you'll be able to take much of what you learn in this class and apply it elsewhere, this is what I mean. The three skills above are infinitely transferable—relevant to nearly every discipline and every line of work you might choose to pursue. Reflect on your progress honestly, openly, and critically, and you'll soon learn the power of your mind knows no bounds.

Prerequisites

ENG 1A - College Composition

English 2B counts as a second course in a sequence and assumes students have been introduced to research, source evaluation, documentation, and analytical argumentation by completing English 1A or its equivalent.

Course Student Learning Outcomes:

- Write logical, well-developed, thesis-driven essays that respond to questions at issue raised by literary works.
- Evaluate, use, and document evidence from primary and secondary sources to support, develop, or validate judgments.
- Discuss the shaping influence of major historical, intellectual, and cultural contexts on literature.
- Utilize literary terms and concepts effectively in their written work.

Our Objectives, in More Detail:

1. Critically read, analyze, compare, and evaluate a variety of complex literary and non-fiction texts.
2. Demonstrate understanding of formal and informal fallacies in language and thought.
3. Identify a text's premises and assumptions in various social, historical, cultural, psychological, or aesthetic contexts.
4. Analyze and employ logical and structural methods such as inductive and deductive reasoning, cause and effect, and logos, ethos, and pathos.
5. Compose thesis-driven arguments to suit a variety of rhetorical situations, including interpretation, evaluation, and analysis, supporting them with a variety of appropriate textual evidence and examples and demonstrating appropriate academic discourse and the conventions of literary analysis.
6. Find, analyze, interpret, and evaluate primary and secondary sources, incorporating them into written essays using appropriate documentation format without plagiarism.
7. Use style, diction, and tone appropriate to the academic community and the purpose of the specific writing task; proofread and edit essays for presentation so they exhibit no disruptive errors in English grammar, usage, or punctuation.
8. Identify key elements of major genres in order to analyze and interpret texts.
9. Define common literary terms and apply these to analysis of specific texts.

Skills to Practice as You Work Toward these Objectives:

- Analyzing argumentative claims.
- Responding to texts with persuasive critical essays.
- Locating, synthesizing, and documenting sources for use in response to arguments.

- Demonstrating the capacity to read, analyze and evaluate non-fiction texts in support of academic inquiry and argumentation.
- Utilizing flexible strategies for writing expository and argumentative college-level essays.
- Incorporating primary and secondary sources into essays using appropriate documentation format.

Evaluation & Grading Policy

Graded Assignments and Point Values

Each major assignment in this course will be graded according to how well it reflects the specific 1) purpose, 2) skills and knowledge, and 3) outcomes, which will be provided for you. Points will be configured into a percentage and a corresponding letter value, shown below for all graded work. Please read our assignment sheets and rubrics carefully, and if at any point you have questions about course assessment or your progress, please ask.

- **Process Work (20%):** This is the prep work you will do for each of our formal essays, and will include engaging in F2F and online discussions, various reading strategies (such as Think Aloud/ Talk-to-the Text, note-taking, summary practice, etc.), source evaluation and analysis, brainstorming, outlining, paragraphing, peer review/ workshopping, and more.
- **Reflections (10%):** Throughout the semester, you will be asked to reflect on your thinking and learning habits, and/or on your process, and I will periodically collect these reflections. Some may be only a few sentences long; others may be 1-2 pages. Your first reflection will be a Literacy Narrative, which will offer you an opportunity to share what and who shaped your attitudes about reading and writing. It is also good practice for our formal essays.
- **Formal Essays (40%):** You will write two formal essays this semester: an analytical essay, and a research essay that builds upon it. Both will be thesis-driven, and require a substantial amount of time and labor. We will write multiple drafts of these essays; all drafts are required in order to receive a passing grade.
- **Source Annotations (10%):** For all outside sources, you will submit an annotated bibliography that not only summarizes, but analyzes these sources according to the following: timeliness, credibility (authority and accuracy), effectiveness of argumentation, relevance and purpose.
- **Special Projects (20%):** Every student will have the opportunity to get creative, and design one “special project” this semester that demonstrates proficiency in all of our course outcomes (see above). This assignment requires that you use your critical thinking and writing skills to present a product in *nearly** any modality other than the essay (a lecture, persuasive speech, talk show, radio broadcast, panel discussion, other kind of presentation, etc.). We will crowdsource a comprehensive list of options and examples at mid-term, keeping in mind our technological limitations inside PBSP. Students can work alone, in pairs, or in small groups—pending approval—but all assessment/grading will be individual. Although we will not have a final exam in this class, your special project will function as such; you can expect to spend several hours on it. **Please note: One of your primary goals in ENG 2B involves demonstrating a deep level of awareness of and respect for your audience, and so: you may use documents as a supplement to your project, but simply standing before the class and reading from these documents is not acceptable.*
- **A Note About Revision:** Revision is mandatory, and your final revisions will count for two-thirds (or 66%) each formal assignment grade; you may revise more than once, and at any point in the semester. Revision is where the learning happens—the process by which you confront all of the choices you consciously or subconsciously made in crafting your original draft(s). As such, revision takes time, and an eagle-eye for both the bigger-picture, and the details. It also requires that you open yourself up to feedback from others, including fellow students. The conversations we have concerning your writing will focus on observations, impact, overall effectiveness, and questions—not judgments akin to “like” and “dislike.” The point is not to deem work good or bad, but to analyze how successfully that work

accomplishes its objectives. As well, feedback allows you and your peers to receive a fresh perspective on your writing, and to help each other problem-solve.

***Instructor Feedback:** I will be reading everything that you turn in and making comments where appropriate—but will limit global comments to formal assignments. This is to help avoid your biasing or prioritizing my feedback over that of your peers and other readers, and also to keep you from caving under the weight of. However, if at any point you desire more detailed comments from me, or some clarification, please ask.*

Submitting Your Work

Please be prepared to submit your work **in class on the day it is due**. We will conduct several workshops, and these require all individuals' participation. In addition, I ask that you write legibly, and double-space your work, leaving room for margin notes. If using pencil, press hard enough that your peers and I can read your writing; if I cannot read it, I will return it to you ungraded and ask you to re-submit. (Late penalties will apply).

Letter Grade Weight Breakdown per CR Faculty Handbook (These are the letter grades that will be given on your assignments, as well as on your transcript after the course ends; each assignment will include an additional grading rubric that will outline the requirements and expectations).

Letter Grade and Percentage Values	Grade Description
A (100 – 94%)	Defined as “Excellent” – fulfills all requirements and exceeds expectations.
A- (93 – 90%)	Defined as “Excellent” – fulfills all requirements and exceeds expectations.
B+ (89 – 87%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
B (86 – 84%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
B- (83 – 80%)	Defined as “Good” – fulfills all requirements and meets expectations.
C+ (79 – 77%)	Defined as “Satisfactory” – fulfills most requirements and meets some expectations.
C (76 – 70%)	Defined as “Satisfactory” – fulfills most requirements and meets some expectations.
D (69 – 60%)	Defined as “Poor” – fulfills some requirements; does not meet expectations.
F (59 – 0%)	Defined as “Failing” – does not fulfill requirements and expectations.

Course Policies

Participation: This class is normally a mix of informal lectures, small group work, individual brainstorming, writing, and class discussion—meaning that you’d all be contributing, in many ways, and often.

Different Types of Participation: I respect and understand that some of us feel more comfortable sharing, while others might hold back. I encourage everyone along that spectrum to step outside of their comfort zone and strike a balance. If you typically don't talk a lot in class, try to reach out a bit more often, even if it's difficult. On the other hand, if you typically dominate, make an effort to allow and encourage others to share their thoughts. Carefully and attentively read your peers' work when they're willing to share; think before firing off your responses.

Mutual Respect: On that note, mutual respect of others is the standard by which we will conduct ourselves in this class. We will honor one another as individuals and will value each person's right to express their own opinions and beliefs, while at the same time respecting the **productive potential of the whole group**. If we disagree, we will not argue or judge. Instead, we will ask questions of ourselves first, and then of others, so that we might better understand the stakes. It is my goal to encourage an environment where we feel comfortable—but challenged—and motivated to listen with as much enthusiasm as we talk (or in this case, write).

As a member of this class, you agree to:

- Stay present and awake;
- be an active participant;
- listen carefully when others are speaking;
- respond to others' contributions;
- think about new, and challenging ideas;
- recognize that there are no easy solutions to complex problems;
- consider the personal meaning of subjects discussed;
- support a democratic classroom process;
- observe confidentiality;
- ask questions, if confused, and at appropriate times;
- show up prepared
- adhere to all other class norms.

Attendance: Your attendance is essential to your success in this class. You and your classmates will rely on each other to assist you through the process of grappling with and coming to a fuller understanding of our readings, the contexts in which they were written, and ways of responding. If you neglect to show up, you let down your peers, and yourself. Aside from missing out on key concepts, assignments, and access to other resources, you will also miss in-class discussions as they take place. Certain in-class assignments simply cannot be made up, and you might miss something important (e.g. how to avoid plagiarism, which could result in your failure of the course). Further, if you aren't consistently engaged, you will end up doing *more* work trying to get back on track. Ultimately, I ask that you observe the courtesy of giving your teacher, your peers and yourself some dedicated time to focus on higher learning. If you must miss class, please let me know as much in advance as possible so we can craft a plan for you to catch up when you return.

Time Commitment: Much of your work will be done outside of class, independently. Plan to spend *at least* 2 hours in outside prep time for every credit hour, per week on this course. Working solo requires a great deal of *self-motivation and planning*. It also demands you understand the difference between “doing homework” and “studying.” Not only will you read and write on your own, you will also devote a considerable amount of attention to annotation, organizing and revising your thoughts, and then, your writing. Like most college writing courses, this one involves a great deal of dedication and a high level of effort. I advise you to pace yourself, and invest the time necessary week-by-week, and to be relentless in maintaining good academic habits throughout the term. If you are not prepared to do this now, I gently suggest you take this class when you are able to make that commitment.

Late Work: I will not accept late work without penalty except in the most rare, extreme, and thoroughly documented cases. Otherwise, expect any late work submitted to be docked 10 percent, or a full letter grade, per

calendar day. I will not accept any assignment that is turned in more than 5 days late, and will not accept multiple late assignments at once; nor will I accept late work after Week 14. If you must use the mail system, please do.

Academic Dishonesty (From the College): In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee.

From Your Instructor: Much of your college education will involve making use of work done by other scholars. Your own work will benefit from and build on other people's ideas, especially in this course. By following the laws and etiquette that govern academic work, you may borrow what others have written, which allows you to further develop and support your thoughts.

The rules of citation, and the laws of copyright, **require you to give credit and acknowledge this borrowing *anytime* you make use of any facts, ideas or language (including short phrases, and also including AI-generated language) that did not originate with you.** Ideas or language not credited to a source and documented with attention to detail are assumed to be yours. Allowing your reader to make this assumption when it's not true means you are committing plagiarism.

It is possible to plagiarize simply by failing to either cite your sources accurately or use quotation marks appropriately, but **carelessness is not an acceptable reason for failing to name (or cite) your sources properly.** When in doubt about plagiarism, please ask *before* submitting work that potentially violates this policy and puts your grade at risk.

Formatting Guidelines:

- All written work must be double-spaced.
- Leave 1-inch margins on all sides of the page.
- Write legibly.
- You do not need a title page. Write your name, my name, the class, and the date in the upper left corner of the first page of your assignments.
- Number each page and include your last name before the page number.
- Staple your work if possible.
- All assignments using outside sources should thoroughly credit those sources.

Check Your Work: The strategies below will help you to complete your class assignments ethically and honestly. This list is not complete, but provides some of the most common expectations in college and beyond.

1. **Ask Your Professor:** If you are unsure what help or resources are allowed, ask your professor to clarify their expectations and instructions.
2. **Cite Your Sources:** When you use outside sources to support or expand your work, you must (1) say where the source material came from, (2) enclose in quotation marks any language taken from the source, and (3) cite the work in your assignment and on a separate reference page. Make sure the use of outside sources is allowed by your professor.
3. **Turn in Original Work:** Self-plagiarism is submitting the same work for credit in two different classes without professor permission. To avoid self-plagiarism, (1) only turn in work that you do for that class and (2) ask for permission before using work done in a different class.

4. **Do Your Own Work:** Cheating is getting or giving help on assignments that isn't allowed by your professor; this includes using AI to complete any work in this course. It also includes sharing classwork with other students, past or present, and buying or using work that isn't your own.

Disruptive Behavior: Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee.

Solidarity Statement: The power of student voices is crucial in inspiring positive social change, and I stand in solidarity with you when you use yours. So: please don't hesitate to share your ideas (comments, concerns, questions, etc.) about how to help create a supportive and compassionate classroom and campus environment. I dedicate myself—and hope you will dedicate yourselves—to upholding and modeling an open, safe, and united learning community in which all members thrive. If at any time you feel we can do better to achieve this goal in our classroom, or at CR, please speak out.

Inclusive Language in the Classroom (From the College): College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is inclusive and respectful.

Name and Pronoun Preferences: Please let me know if you have a preferred first name, nickname, or D.J. name that you would like to be called by that does not appear on my official roster. Likewise, please let me know if you have preferred pronouns that you would like us to use when referring to you.

College-wide Information

Educational Accessibility & Support

College of the Redwoods is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified students who could benefit from additional educational support and services. You may qualify if you have a physical, mental, sensory, or intellectual condition which causes you to struggle academically, including but not limited to:

- Mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, bipolar disorder, and ADHD
- Common ailments such as arthritis, asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, and diseases
- Temporary impairments such as a broken bone, recovery from significant surgery, or a pregnancy-related disability
- A learning disability (e.g., dyslexia, reading comprehension), intellectual disability, autism, or acquired brain injury
- Vision, hearing, or mobility challenges

If you believe you might benefit from disability- or health-related services and accommodations, please let me or Tory Eagles know as soon as possible so that we can contact DSPS for you.

Student Support

Good information and clear communication about your needs will help you be successful. Please let me (or your other instructors) know about any specific challenges that might affect your participation in class. College of the Redwoods wants every student to be successful, and so do I!