

English 200:43  
Spring 2012  
MWF 2:30-3:30  
Oddfellows 106

Quinn  
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Office Hours:  
MWF 12:30-1:30  
TTh 1:30-3:00 and by app't

## Reading Literature

Description: The purpose of this course will be to model the study of literary texts in some historical, cultural, and literary contexts. The case study text for the course will be Ralph Ellison's **Invisible Man**, which appeared in 1952. We will read and write about this book slowly and carefully. We will surround our study of it with literary and non-literary supporting texts, which provide insight into the conventions and traditions to which Ellison was reacting and with which he was interacting when he wrote **Invisible Man**. In addition to the **novel**, which is the centerpiece of the course, we will read short stories, poetry, essays, and a play. Students will write papers that will explore the formal, thematic, and historical relations of **Invisible Man** to the contextual material provided. A literary/critical **vocabulary** and set of concepts and critical approaches, crucial to the meaningful study of literature, will be introduced and used consistently throughout our discussions of texts and your written work

### Required Texts (Please purchase bookstore editions)

- *Invisible Man* by Ellison
- *Eight Men* by Wright
- *Notes from the Underground* by Dostoyevsky
- *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*.

Additionally, there will be short handouts and readings on Sakai throughout the course.

### Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

January 18	Introduction and a poems
January 20	Read "The Lynching of Jube Benson," and "On Being Crazy" (handouts)
January 23	Read Introduction and Prologue to <b>Invisible Man</b> ; first paper assigned
January 25	Read Chapter One of <b>Invisible Man</b>
January 27	Presentations on <b>Irony</b> and <b>Point of View</b> (read sections in Bedford); go over sample papers for first paper assignment
January 30	Read Chapter Two of <b>Invisible Man</b>
February 1	Presentations on <b>Figures of Speech: Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Metonymy, Synecdoche</b> (read sections in Bedford)
February 3	Read Chapter Three of <b>Invisible Man</b>
February 6	Read Chapters Four and Five of <b>Invisible Man</b>

- February 8 Read Chapters Six and Seven of **Invisible Man**  
 February 10 First papers due at beginning of class; continued discussion of **IM**
- February 13 Read Chapters Eight and Nine of **Invisible Man**: Second Paper Assigned  
 February 15 Read Chapter Ten of **Invisible Man**  
 February 17 First papers returned; discussion; Presentations on **Bildungsroman**,  
 the **Picaresque**, and **Allegory** (read sections in Bedford)
- February 20 Read Chapters Eleven and Twelve of **Invisible Man**  
 February 22 Read Chapter Thirteen of **Invisible Man**  
 February 24 Read Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen of **Invisible Man**
- February 27 Read Chapters Sixteen and Seventeen of **Invisible Man**  
 February 29 Read Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen of **Invisible Man**  
 March 2 Second Paper due at beginning of class; brief reports on papers and  
 continued discussion of **IM**
- March 5 Read Chapter Twenty of **Invisible Man**; third paper assigned  
 March 7 Second Papers returned and discussed; Presentations on **Theme**,  
**Archetype**, and **Symbol** (read sections in Bedford)  
 March 9 Read Chapters Twenty-one, Twenty-two of **Invisible Man**
- March 12 Read Chapters Twenty-three, Twenty-four of **Invisible Man**  
 March 14 Finish **Invisible Man**  
 March 16 Presentations on **Antihero**, **Pathetic Fallacy**, **Parody**, **Tone** (read sections  
 in Bedford)

### **Spring Break March 17-25**

- March 26 Read **Notes from the Underground**, pages 1-48; fourth paper assigned  
 March 28 **Notes from the Underground**, finish  
 March 30 Read "In Darkness and Confusion" by Petry (handout or Sakai)
- April 2 Continued discussion of "In Darkness and Confusion"  
 April 4 Presentations on **Meter**, **Rhyme**, **Rhythm**, **Stanza**, **Enjambment**,  
**Alliteration** and **Assonance**; poetry handed out  
 April 6 Poetry continued
- April 9 Poetry, continued  
 April 11 Third paper due; short presentations  
 April 13 Read "The Man Who Lived Underground" in **Eight Men**
- April 16 Continued discussion of "The Man Who Lived Underground"  
 April 18 Review sections in Bedford on **Allegory** and **Archetype**. Continued  
 discussion of "The Man Who Lived Underground"  
 April 20 Read "The Man Who Killed a Shadow" in **Eight Men**

- April 23 Read "The Man Who Went to Chicago" in **Eight Men**  
 April 25 Read "Dutchman" by Amiri Baraka (handout)  
 April 27 Continued discussion of "Dutchman"
- April 30 Review of terms and concepts for exam; fourth paper due at beginning of class

**Your final exam will be on Monday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m.** The exam will be will ask for explanations and examples of the terms and concepts from Bedford and applications of them to the literature we have read. You are expected to be fully familiar with all of the terms and concepts we have covered.

#### Grade Distribution:

Paper One	15%
Paper Two	20%
Paper Three	20%
Paper Four	20 %
Final Exam	10%
Participation	15%

Papers: For each of the papers you will be provided with a detailed handout, with specific instructions and guidelines. Papers will increase in length and complexity as the semester wears on.

Class participation is an important part of your grade and will be taken very seriously as a requirement for the course. Some participation will be structured and assigned, but, for the most part, you are responsible for your own level of participation in class. If classroom participation is difficult for you, remind yourself that writing papers and/or taking exams are also difficult for some people; yet, students are routinely required to write papers, take exams, and get graded on both. See the attached handout for the standards by which you will be graded for class participation.

#### Rules and Regulations:

1. You are expected to complete the reading for each class session and to participate actively in discussion of the reading. You must have your book or handout with you in class on the days we discuss these.

Failure to have your text with you will count as an absence from the class. Class participation will be graded on the basis of the criteria below.

2. **All assigned work for the course must be completed by the end of the semester if you are to pass the course. Failure to complete any of the written work will result in failure for the course. This applies to those taking the course for credit/no-credit as well as those on a grade basis.**
3. Attendance is a baseline requirement; unexcused absences will factor into your class participation grade. Anyone who misses an excessive number of classes will fail the course.
4. All papers must be word-processed and follow standard academic paper format. They must be spell-checked and carefully proofread.
5. Late papers will only be accepted in documented emergency circumstances.
6. I do not read rough drafts of student papers; drafting papers and polishing and proofreading them is your responsibility. Should you need a considerable amount of assistance with your writing, you should go to the Learning Commons and get matched with a tutor. I will be happy to discuss your papers with you in my office in terms of clarifying the assignments, but I will not help you write your papers. This is a selective private liberal arts college, and you are all qualified students, able to do your own work.

#### Criteria for Grading Papers:

1. An **A** paper will be
  - polished and error-free
  - insightful, going well beyond the obvious and well beyond what was said in class
  - thoroughly developed and logically structured
2. A **B** paper will be
  - well-written overall, but with some minor lapses
  - above average in insight, but less original than the **A** paper
  - competently developed but a little less thorough than an **A** paper
3. A **C** paper will be
  - competently written but with a number of minor or a few major lapses
  - average in insight and originality
  - readable in terms of organization and structure but in need of more coherence
4. A **D** paper will be
  - error-ridden and un-proofread
  - below average in insight and originality
  - disorganized and hard to follow

5. An **F** paper will be
- unreadable because of writing errors
  - inaccurate and/or otherwise irresponsible in content
  - incoherent

**Important:** Any instances of plagiarism, whether intentional or "accidental" will automatically result in a failure on the assignment and notification of the Honor Committee. You will not be allowed to rewrite a plagiarized paper. If you are not clear about the definition of plagiarism, read the relevant section in *The Compass*.

### Criteria for Grading Class Participation:

A participation is marked by its active nature, its consistency, and its quality. An **A** participant doesn't wait to respond to questions that the instructor poses but initiates discussion by coming prepared with questions, ideas, observations about the reading assigned that day. This participant will also be consistently engaged in class discussion, always letting me know that she/he has engaged the reading thoroughly and thoughtfully. Finally an **A** participant will not try to substitute **quantity** of participation for **quality** (being consistent is not the same thing as dominating a discussion). To earn the highest grade for your participation, you will want to make it possible for others to participate productively too (this is not a competition); thus, habits such as interrupting others and taking up too much conversational space will not enhance your grade. It will also do you no good to participate if you haven't done the reading. I expect participation to be firmly grounded in careful and thoughtful reading. As the **A** reader reads, she or he **prepares** to participate in a class discussion with other readers.

A **B** discussant is less consistent than an **A** in initiating discussion but is active in responding to questions or problems posed by the professor and other students. To get a **B** in participation, you will need to be in class and talk regularly--more, certainly, than once during a class session once a week or so. Regular means regular. This level of class participation will also communicate clearly to me that you have done **all** the reading for the day and that you have done it thoughtfully. This level will also include productive discussion habits, such as engaging the ideas of others, not dominating, listening carefully, etc.

A **C** grade for participation means that you have contributed in an **average** way to the discussion. Your contributions have been less frequent than those of the **B** participant or have let me know that you are not always keeping up with the reading or have, in some way, interfered with good discussion--for instance, a "dominator" would get credit for participating often but would get knocked down to a **C** for taking over and not engaging others in discussion. In short, you have not been silent or absent or altogether uninvolved, but your involvement did not work consistently to make the class a productive learning experience.

A **D** grade means that you were there physically most of the time and maybe even piped up three or four times during the semester but that's it. It's just the grade it should be--a minimal passing grade.

An **F** grade should need no explanation.

