



**MERCER**  
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
ENG202	Introduction to Literature: Novel	3.0
Hours:	Co- or Pre-requisite	Implementation Semester & Year
3 Lecture		

**Catalog description:** Study of novels from various periods selected for their intrinsic value and as representative types of fiction.

**General Education Category:**  
**Goal 6: Humanities**

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**Required texts & Other materials:** Titles selected for the course should offer students a wide selection of novel genres, authors, and periods. Below is a list of the kinds of novels taught in the course:

- o Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah*. ISBN-10: 9780307455925; ISBN-13: 978-0307455925
- o Atwood, Margaret. *Oryx and Crake*. ISBN-10: 0385721676; ISBN-13: 978-0385721677
- o Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. ISBN-10: 038549081X; ISBN-13: 978-0385490818
- o Austen, Jane. *Emma*. ISBN-10: 0141439580; ISBN-13: 978-0141439587
- o Eggers, Dave. *Zeitoun*. ISBN-10: 0307387941; ISBN-13: 978-0307387943.
- o Hamid, Mohsin. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. ASIN: B004S2VZXC
- o Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go*. ISBN-10: 9781400078776; ISBN-13: 978-1400078776
- o Martel, Yann. *Life of Pi*. ISBN-10: 015602732 ISBN-13: 978-0156027328
- o Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. ISBN-10: 0062420704; ISBN-13: 978-0062420701
- o McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. ISBN-10: 0307387895 ISBN-13: 978-0307387899
- o Plath, Sylvia. *The Bell Jar*. ISBN-10: 0060837020. ISBN-13: 978-0060837020
- o Powers, Kevin. *The Yellow Birds*. ISBN-10: 0316219347; ISBN-13: 978-0316219341
- o Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. ISBN-10: 0393644022; ISBN-13: 978-0393644029
- o Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I: A Survivor's Tale*. ISBN-10: 0394747232; ISBN-13: 978-0394747231
- o Spiegelman, Art. *Maus II: Here My Troubles Began*. ISBN-10: 0679729771; ISBN-13: 978-067972977
- o St. John Mandel, Emily. *Station Eleven*. ISBN-10: 0804172447; ISBN-13: 978-0804172448
- o Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*. ISBN-10: 0393927946; ISBN-13: 978-0393927948
- o Whitehead, Colson. *The Underground Railroad*. ISBN-10: 0345804325; ISBN-13: 978-0345804327
- o Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. ISBN-10: 0374500010; ISBN-13: 978-0374500016.

## Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

*Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:*

1. **Close Reading:** interpret novels from the Romantics to the contemporary period, focusing on elements of literary style as well as character and plot development. [Supports ILG 1, 6, 8; PLO 1, 3]
2. **Literary Strategies and terminology:** demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive ways novelists use a variety of literary strategies to shape the reader's response to and engagement with extended narrative in various novelistic genres, be that fiction and non-fiction. [Supports ILG 1, 6, 8, 9; PLO 1]
3. **Synthesis of Texts:** create original essays using course texts and scholarly research, synthesizing readings to create original interpretations [Supports ILG 1, 4, 6, 10, 11; PLO 2, 3, 4]
4. **Critical Analysis:** analyze novels using the most appropriate critical framework(s) (e.g., psychological, historical, philosophical/ethical, feminist, sociological, etc.) [Supports ILG 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11; PLO 3]
5. **Literary Context:** use textual evidence and research into major historical and social changes such as political, economic, or cultural shifts to evaluate novel's role as product of a historical moment, challenge to hegemony, and/or shaper of culture. [Supports ILG 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; PLO 1]
6. **Documentation of Sources:** use correct MLA documentation format for citing literature in essays [Supports ILG 1, 4, 10; PLO 2]

## Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

**Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English.** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

**Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology.** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

**Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities.** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

**Institutional Learning Goal 7. History.** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

**Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective:** Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

**Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action.** Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

**Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy:** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking:** Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

## **Program Learning Outcomes for Liberal Arts (PLO)**

1. **Concept Knowledge.** Understand the vocabulary, methods, and major concepts presented in the humanities, social sciences, and the natural sciences.
2. **Communication.** Articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively, both verbally and in writing.
3. **Critical Thinking.** Perform a series of thinking tasks including speculation, analysis, and synthesis (i.e., abstract reasoning).
4. **Research Methods.** Utilize research materials and methodologies.

## **Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:**

**Note: Some units below are thematic rather than sequential; instructors may work on these concepts throughout the course, especially as they overlap and flow together with the various novels assigned.**

### **Unit I Introduction to the Novel: Historical Background** [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 5]

#### **Learning Objectives**

**The student will be able to:**

- Understand the historical and technological beginnings of the novel – which include, but are not limited to, the earliest extended narratives: romances, histories, memoirs, and “lives.”
- Comprehend the development of “personal reading” product of and reaction to the advent of modernity.
- Describe some of the most popular novel forms (e.g., epistolary, domestic, gothic, and adventure, science fiction, and mystery novels).
- Appreciate the various artistic directions of the novel has developed since the 19th century.

### **Unit II How Stories Begin** [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]

#### **Learning Objectives**

**The student will be able to:**

- Understand first literary terms, fundamental to understanding the opening of a novel – which may include, but are not limited to, *exposition*, *frame narrative*, *setting*, *theme*, and *motif*.
- Appreciate the artistic/literary choices a novelist makes to bring the reader into the world of the text.

### **Unit III Freytag’s Pyramid** [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]

#### **Learning Objectives**

**The student will be able to:**

- Understand the structure of *Freytag’s Pyramid*, the five-part structure for narrative making that is still used by novelists as well as screenwriters – developed by German literary critic and philosopher Gustav Freytag (b. 1816. d. 1895).
- Map *Freytag’s Pyramid* on novel or extended narrative.
- Comprehend how Freytag’s structure of extended narrative is an interpretative exercise, depending on the shape of a given novel’s plot.

- Recognize the components of Freytag’s structure: exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and dénouement.
- Appreciate the critical differences between *comedy* and *tragedy* – especially as these terms determine a story’s meaning.

#### **Unit IV What is a Narrator? [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]**

##### **Learning Objectives**

##### ***The student will be able to:***

- Understand the meaning of “narrator” and the various points of view from which a story can be told: first-person, second-person, third-person limited, and third-person omniscient.
- Appreciate the use of an “unreliable” narrator.
- Comprehend how authors often use a particular kind of narrator to either engage or distance a reader from the story’s action and characters.
- Grasp that the narrator is more than a voice in a story but a series of artistic and strategic choices made by the author.

#### **Unit V Who is an Author [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]**

##### **Learning Objectives**

##### ***The student will be able to:***

- Appreciate the place of the author vis-à-vis their literary creation – considering questions such as *What is the relation of the text to the author? Does the author’s intent really matter, or do books gain a life and meaning of their own? How important is to know why an author wrote a novel or under what conditions?*
- Recognize the content and utility of the book review, especially what a literary critic does as reviewer.
- Consider the interesting relationship between the author and the first-person narrator, as crafted in non-fiction novels (e.g., to what extent is the narrator in an autobiographical version of the author?)

#### **Unit VI Character, Conflict, and Setting [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]**

##### **Learning Objectives**

##### ***The student will be able to:***

- Understand the fundamentals of character – especially the definition of “antagonist” and *protagonist*.
- Appreciate the critical difference between *flat* (quickly describable) or *round* (more developed, complex) characters – and how author’s develop these kinds of characters for artistic and literary ends.
- Grasp how the struggle of the protagonist and the antagonist contribute to conflict – and, therefore, how conflict is the driver of plot.
- Comprehend the dynamics of setting and how the place, time, and social context in which a story occurs (or a scene) contribute to the interplay between the antagonist(s) and protagonist(s), and therefore the plot’s suspense and/or tension.
- Identify choices authors make in imagery (an appeal to the senses – usually sight) to craft realistic settings for characters and narrative action – and therefore evoke engaging narratives for the reader.

## **Unit VII How Stories End** [Supports Course SLOs 1, 2, 4]

### **Learning Objectives**

#### ***The student will be able to:***

- Understand the concept of “narrative closure.”
- Recognize how the novel’s dénouement determines the story’s greater meaning.
- Appreciate the critical differences between *comedy* and *tragedy* – especially as these terms determine a story’s meaning.

### **Evaluation of student learning:** [Evaluates SLOs 1-6.]

Achievement of the course objectives will be evaluated by the following tools. The weighted percentage of these means of assessing student learning will vary slightly among different instructors, but the greatest emphasis should be on formal written work.

**Attendance and participation (10%).** Students are expected to come to class having read the material and prepared to discuss it. Students will also participate in informal small group work, opportunities for discussion leading, and peer review of essay drafts. At the end of the semester, students will form groups to present a novel.

**Midterm and final exams (20%).** Exams given on key literary concepts. These tests are completed in class and may include identifications as well as short essay responses to questions that challenge students to apply literary terms.

**Formal Written Work (70%).** Students will submit three formal essays (each 5-6 pages, minimum). All formal essays require not only a critical engagement with the novels read in class but also library research to bring depth and validity to the projects. Formal essays should demonstrate careful, text-based close reading, use of an appropriate critical lens, location of the novel(s) within their social context, analysis of the characters in a variety of socially-defined categories, and integration of scholarly sources.