

**Core 180: Responding to Literature** (3 Credits)  
Dordt College & Southwest Christian High School  
6th Period -- Room 8  
Spring 2016

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**Mission of Southwest Christian:** The mission of Southwest Christian High school is challenging students to grow in knowing, loving, and serving God and others. (II Peter 3:18)

**Mission of Dordt College:** As an institution of higher education committed to the Reformed Christian perspective, the mission of Dordt College is to equip students, alumni, and the broader community to work effectively toward Christ-centered renewal in all aspects of contemporary life.

**Course Description:**

Core 180 will develop your ability to read carefully and analyze critically the assigned poems, essays, stories, plays, and novels. The purpose is to teach you how to understand and enjoy literature and explore how the worldview of the reader and the author impacts the experience. The goal is to help you become a more thoughtful reader so that you can enjoy a lifetime of literature.

**Method of Instruction:**

Most of the class time will be spent in discussion of the readings for the day. However, there will also be times of lecture and group work. Occasionally you will do some peer evaluation of classmates' writing about literature.

**Course Goals:**

- i. Learn to read and interpret literature to the extent that you can better understand the worldviews that it promotes. (RO)
- ii. Improve your ability to write and talk about literature, broadening your capacity to contribute to the academic discussion about a work. (CR)
- iii. Develop your understanding of the different genres and how they work, as well as how we interpret them. (CS, CD)
- iv. Understand and evaluate how literature comes out of a cultural context and conveys a perspective true to that context and then assess if that perspective rings true relative to a biblical worldview. (RO, CR)
- v. Enjoy the beauty of language when used well and glimpse the Creator's gift of creativity to his image bearers. (CS, CD)

\*Curricular Goals from The Educational Framework of Dordt College (in summary)

*Religious Orientation* (RO): Developing a worldview based on God's Word, students must live a life of Christian discipleship by which they transform the culture in which they live.

*Creational Structure* (CS): Students must recognize that creation is diverse yet unified and that they can develop this unity by working cooperatively in helping fellow image bearers.

*Creational Development* (CD): Students must understand how the world has developed, how it continues to develop, and how they can impact that development for good to God's glory.

*Contemporary Response* (CR): Students must apply their learning through transformational action.

**Required Materials:**

1. Gioia, Dana, and X. J. Kennedy, eds. *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Ninth ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005.

2. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Puffin Books, 1995.
3. Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. New York: Random House, 1959.
4. Assorted texts and materials provided electronically and in print from the professor.

### **Expectations:**

As this is a college course you should not be shocked by the heavy workload. You will read a substantial amount of literature, but there will be some reading days. There are some important things you need to know.

- Be here. Make sure to attend every class. If you must schedule an appointment, don't choose this period to be absent. If you must be gone, make sure you talk with me before your scheduled absence. If you have an unexpected absence, take care of any missed work as soon as you return.
- Be prepared. Make sure that you get all assignments completed before class begins on the due date. If you are not discussing the works read intelligently, I will assume that you did not read the material.
- Be kind. Practice Christian brotherhood. Treat your classmates with the respect and courtesy they deserve as fellow image bearers.
- Be careful. Always follow the expectations for any assignment, including the expectations for formatting. To do your best work consistently you will need to avoid procrastinating. The added benefit of working ahead is that you may avoid a crisis should something come up that gets in the way of completing your work in a timely manner.
- Be honest. We will discuss academic integrity in one of our first sessions. It is not optional. The Southwest Minnesota Christian High School policy on cheating is as follows:
  - “A student who cheats will be required to do the following: 1. Serve a detention
  - 2. Redo the assignment for “0” credit (Test, papers, exams may be given ½ credit)
  - 3. If the cheating involves the use of computers or the Internet, these privileges may be restricted according to policy.”

### **Assignments and Grading:**

Although this class is primarily focused on reading quality literature, many times you will be responding in writing. It is your job to bring your writing to a college level. Some of the work will be shared with classmates for peer editing. You may also choose to have someone outside the class help you with proofreading. Make sure that anyone who gives you feedback only points out the rough spots. It is your task to make corrections, which, if necessary, can be done in discussion with the editor or with me.

Your work will be weighted according to the following system:

- Daily-10% This includes participation and attendance.
- Assignments-20% You will be asked to complete journal entries, quick-write responses, worksheets, presentations and other small assignments.
- Papers-35% This includes essays and papers of different lengths. Each will have different point values dependent on the extent of work required.
- Assessments-30% Any quizzes over selections read or assessments over a group of selections fall into this category.
- Final exam-5% The final exam will be comprehensive.

Your percentage grade will fall into the following grade ranges:

A 96-100	B+ 89-91	C+ 80-82	D+ 71-73	F 0-64
A- 92-95	B 88-86	C 77-89	D 68-70	
	B- 83-85	C- 74-76	D- 65-67	

### Course Outline:

This schedule may change at the discretion of the professor.

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1 1/4-1/8	Introduction, What is a story? What is its context? "Writing from a Christian Worldview" Timothy J. Keller Short Story roots: Fable, Parable, and Tales; Updike	Two paragraph response to Updike; comparison exercise
Week 2 1/11-1-15	Setting, Point of View, Character, Theme, Symbol	Story responses for each story element
Week 3 1/19-1/22	Tone and Style, Evaluating a Story, Flannery O'Connor	Response to O'Connor story
Week 4 1/25-1/28	Flannery O'Connor on Flannery O'Connor Critics on Flannery O'Connor "How One Story Illuminates Another"	Flannery O'Connor analysis
Week 5 2/1-2/5	"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty"	Analysis/Comparison: "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty"
Week 6 2/8-2/12	Epics and the Great Journey: excerpts from <i>Beowulf</i> and <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> ; oral tradition, ballads	
Week 7 2/16-2/19	Reading a Poem; speaker, poetic devices, form; explicating a poem	Explications of poems
Week 8 2/22-2/26	Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes and critics on their work	Analysis papers on Dickinson and Hughes
Week 9 2/29-3/4	Additional poems; poetry project	Poetry project
Week 10 3/7-3/11	"Race and the African American Writer," James Baldwin; Reading a Play; <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> , Lorraine Hansberry	
Week 11 3/15-3/18	Film version of <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	Comparing a work of literature and the movie
Week 12 3/21-3/24	Reading a Novel; <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , Jane Austen; writing a literary analysis	
Week 13 3/29-4/1	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , Jane Austen	
Week 14 4/4-4/8	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , Jane Austen	
Week 15 4/11-4/15	The Poetry of England	Literary Analysis
Week 16 4/18-4/22	<i>Hamlet</i> , William Shakespeare	

Week 17 4/25-4/29	<i>Hamlet</i> , William Shakespeare; introduce <i>Hamlet</i> project options	
Week 18 5/2-5/6	<i>Hamlet</i> , William Shakespeare	Hamlet project
Week 19 5/9-5/13	Project presentations; Poetry revisited	
Week 20 5/16- 5/20	Finals Week	

**“Wherever you are--be all there.”     Jim Elliot**