

## Introduction to the English Major: Discussion Section

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ENG 220 Discussion Section  
CRN: 12092  
Lillis 275  
Fridays: 9-9:50 am

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This syllabus covers information you will need to succeed in the overall course, but more specifically in the Discussion Section and that portion of your grade for English 220 (20%). This discussion section is designed to help you develop some fundamental skills and techniques you will need in the English major. We will focus on close-reading, developing arguments, and ways of both interpreting and creating meaning in texts. This is also a space for you to ask questions, to clarify points from lecture, and to explore our texts in a more “active” learning environment.

### *Required Course Work:*

**Reading:** It should go without saying that reading will be essential to the English major. In order to succeed in this course, you will need to fully engage yourself in the readings and complete them prior to each lecture. Since our discussion section occurs each Friday just prior to the lecture, I will expect that you have completed Friday’s reading by the time our lecture begins. Quizzes will most likely include material from Friday’s readings.

**Reading Quizzes (15%):** Almost every class meeting will begin with a quiz. The quiz will review readings you did for Mondays and Wednesdays, and will ask about the reading you are to have done for the lecture after Friday’s discussion section. This means that quizzes will cover the readings for the entire week of readings prior to and including the Friday on which you take your quiz. They will also cover lecture materials from the previous three lectures.

**Informal Note Taking (30%):** You will be required to take notes on each and every reading and lecture for the course, including introductory materials since Professor Laskaya has requested that you read them. Notes should include the full week’s worth of readings—M, W, and F. They should also include notes from the lectures you have seen since our last discussion section—F, M, and W—prior to our discussion meeting. I will personally check your notes while you take the quiz each Friday. You may use your notes to help you on your weekly quiz, to develop your Formal Papers, and to help you study for exams, so good notes are a significant part of your success in this course.

**Formal Note Taking Assignment (10%):** This assignment is a way for me to get to know your note-taking style, and it gives us a chance to think about how to take the best notes you can for success in the course. More information to be given on the assignment sheet.

**Close-Reading Assignment (10%):** More information to be given on the assignment sheet.

**Freewriting (5%):** You will have the opportunity to turn in four freewriting assignments, each of which will revolve around your formal papers. For the 1.1 and 2.1, the assignment will prompt you to think about our texts and develop ideas for your paper. One or both of these freewrites may be substituted for a 20-minute conference with me, as long as the appointment is made in advance. For the 1.2 and 2.2, the assignment will ask you to reflect on the first draft of your paper and my feedback, and think about ways to improve it. Both of these freewrites are to be written. This is a chance for you to engage with the course material by thinking freely and openly about it and by engaging in questions through written communication. Freewriting exercises are a method by which you actively engage in the course material, even if you don't get a chance to participate in discussion. More details will be given in class and via Canvas.

**Discussion Participation (30%):** While the lecture is extremely valuable because Professor Laskaya presents you with essential information on the period and readings in the course, the discussion section provides you a chance to learn these concepts in an alternate way by participating in "active" learning. We will discuss the readings and the historical context, you will have a chance to ask questions and clarify ideas, and we will talk through strategies for thinking about the texts and contexts in your writing assignments and exams. Engaged participation in the discussion section is, therefore, essential to your success—and the success of your classmates—in the course. Your participation in discussion will be evaluated each week as part of your discussion section grade. Points for participation amount to about 6 points per week, totaling 60 points for the term. I reserve the right to adjust participation points as I think is appropriate. See Canvas for further details.

### ***Policies:***

**Attendance: Attendance is required.** We only have nine meetings this term, and every one will be crucial to your success in the course. You will be allowed one "excused" absence; subsequent absences will result in a lower section grade (each day absent will drop the grade by one whole letter). Note that I do not otherwise distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please see me if you feel you have an extenuating circumstance. **Excessive tardiness** will count as an absence.

**Late Work:** Because this section meets only once per week, late work will not be accepted. Be sure to see the Lecture Syllabus for the policy on late submissions for Formal Papers.

**Assignment Formatting:** All assignments, except for freewrites, must be submitted according to MLA formatting rules: 12 pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins, double spaced, sources cited, etc. I do not accept documents in Pages or formats other than .doc, .docx, or pdf (pdf allowed on a case by case basis—please talk with me if you prefer pdf).

### **Cell Phone and Electronics Use**

This is a small, discussion-based class. As such, cell phones are highly disruptive. The ringer must be turned off *before* the start of class. You may not text, answer, or make calls in class. Any use of cell phone during class time will result in an automatic absence for the day. Other electronics are not allowed in the classroom per Professor Laskaya's policy.

**Your continued enrollment in this course signifies your acceptance of the terms of this syllabus, the lecture syllabus, and Canvas.**

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## Schedule

- 10/2: Syllabus and Introductions  
Formal Note-taking Assignment due **Monday 10/5**: Deliver to me BEFORE lecture.  
Syllabus Email (see details on Canvas) due **Monday 10/5** BEFORE lecture.
- 10/9: Close-reading practice; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Freewrite #1 Due **Monday 10/12**: Deliver to me BEFORE lecture in Pac 123  
\*\*If you choose to conference instead of write for Freewrite #1, you must schedule with me by *the end of today*.
- 10/16: Review *Beowulf*; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Formal Paper 1.1 Due by 10:00 am via Canvas.
- 10/23: MIDTERM Prep; NO QUIZ; Notes Due at beginning of section.  
Freewrite #2 Due **Monday 10/26**: Deliver to me BEFORE lecture in Pac 123  
Close Reading Assignment Due **Wednesday 10/28** by 10:00 am via Canvas.
- 10/30: Review of Bayeux Tapestry and questions from Midterm; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Formal Paper 1.2 Due by 10:00 am via Canvas.
- 11/6: Review Historical Context; Discuss SGGK; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Freewrite #3 Due **Monday 11/9**: Deliver to me BEFORE lecture in Pac 123  
\*\*If you choose to conference instead of write for Freewrite #3, you must schedule with me by *the end of today*.
- 11/13: Review SGGK; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Formal Paper 2.1 Due via Canvas by **Monday 11/16** by 5:00 pm.
- 11/20: Discuss Chaucer, *Miller's Tale*; Quiz; Notes Due during quiz  
Freewrite #4 Due **Monday 11/25**: Deliver to me BEFORE lecture in Pac 123
- 11/27: Thanksgiving Break—No Class  
\*\* Notes Due next class meeting during quiz  
Formal Paper 2.2 Due via Canvas **Monday 11/30** by 5:00 pm.
- 12/4: Final Exam Prep; Practice Quiz; Notes Due during quiz
- FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:15-12:15 in Pac 123