

ENGL 461 | Feeling Medieval

Prof. Myra Seaman | Spring 2015

policies

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CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION [10% of course grade]

[including 1 required out-of-class meeting]

A seminar, as the small size of this class reflects, differs from traditional upper-level classes: even more than in other English courses, the seminar is generated by the students. The course schedule and assignments will, to some extent, structure the discussion that we have in this class, but how that discussion happens and the various directions it takes are determined by you, collectively. This, needless to say, requires your active presence and engaged participation in the discussion each class meeting, as is true of any course. Beyond that, however, the seminar requires a different kind of preparation: don't imagine yourself preparing to come to class to respond to my questions and prompts, but instead come prepared to influence the direction of the discussion yourself. Your texts should be filled with your notes and responses before you arrive, and you should have generated some questions and comments that you think might encourage productive conversation in class. Ideally, I should be able to participate in the daily discussion to the same extent that each of you does.

A completely optional opportunity for the class will be two "after-parties" where those who are

available and interested will head out in the evening for some food and drink and relaxation together, to extend our classroom experiences and relationships beyond the confines of Maybank 300.

Before coming to class each day, you should do the following:

- **Read** the assigned material listed on the schedule.
- **Respond** with a blog post aimed at encouraging discussion among class members.
- **Prepare for textual engagement in class** by bringing to class copies of the day's reading (s).

I realize that there may come a time when you will need to miss class. My compromise: you are granted three absences for the semester, no questions asked (I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences). Beginning with your 4th absence, you will lose 5% of your course grade—that is, one half of a letter grade—*per absence*. If you miss a class, you are responsible for that day's work, including turning in (on time) any work due, understanding assignments, and getting the gist of class discussion. Needless to say, if you're not in class, you're not accruing participation points. Make sure you are in class, ready to begin discussion, when class is scheduled to start. Because I take roll at the very beginning of class, tardiness gets recorded as absence unless you approach me after class to confirm your attendance.

Required meeting: Many of you will find yourselves coming to meet with me regularly outside of class, but for those of you who wouldn't automatically do so, I am requiring an out-of-class meeting early in the semester so you can discover how painless and even—if I do say so myself—enjoyable it is. As part of your in-class participation for the course, you will need to meet with me at some point during the first 3 weeks of the course (that is, by the end of January). The meeting is informal and has no specific content. Simply show up and chat with me for 10-15 minutes. This can happen spontaneously during my office hours (office hours: TR 1:15-2:15). If those windows don't suit your schedule, then you'll need to email me in advance to arrange an alternative meeting time.

BLOG PARTICIPATION [10% of course grade]

Before every class, you will post a response on the course blog. Frequent and informal student writing such as blog commenting has a number of goals:

- to prepare everyone for a productive in-class discussion of the material;
- to encourage both written and spoken informal discussion of the material;
- to allow for those who are less active in-class participants the opportunity to participate in alternate ways;
- to provide low-stakes opportunities for students to experiment with a range of types of written responses to the material.

These responses should be 6-8 sentences long. Your comment will be most successful if it encourages readers' attention and responses in new directions. This means you will need to read others' responses before writing and posting your own. (This also means that the sooner you post, the less likely you are to find someone already having written what you would like to.)

Your posts may be formal analyses or they might be more personal and reflective. Your main aim will be to present an observation or provocation that might encourage others in the class to enter a conversation with you. These and all posts on the blog will need to be in academic English (rather than textspeak).

You will, of course, be expected to comment on others' posts. Each substantial, worthwhile comment will earn you extra points on that week's blog post grade. If you'd like a comment to count as your own post that week, just be sure that it fulfills the length and other requirements of the weekly post.

(For some help with the logistics of blogging, see [Get Blogging!](#))

CRITICAL WRITING + PRESENTATIONS [55% of course grade]

30% for final project (24% for extended researched analysis, 6% for creative response)

Scholarly Essay Presentation (10% of course grade): Throughout the semester we will be reading and discussing together in class five scholarly articles/book chapters that relate to the central themes of the course. For each essay, 2-3 students will take responsibility for directing the first 15 minutes of class discussion of the assigned reading. These presentations should include a précis and response to the essay, followed by questions geared toward generating class discussion of the reading, all of this in relation to the larger course concerns. Each student will make one presentation throughout the semester. Students will sign up for these presentations on the second day of class.

Mid-term Paper (10% of course grade; due **February 26**, right before Spring Break): This 5-page paper will provide a close reading of one or two texts studied in the first half of the semester, produced in conjunction with at least 3 secondary sources.

Annotated Bibliography (5% of course grade; due **April 2**): This bibliography is produced as part of your research for your final extended research analysis. The bibliography must contain at least 10 secondary sources (7 of these must be critical resources such as articles or book chapters; bear in mind that if you use two chapters from one book, that counts for two sources, with each one listed separately on the Annotated Bibliography). Only 1 of your sources may be an article assigned for class discussion, and only 1 of your sources may be an unsponsored website. We will spend class time looking at sample annotated bibliographies and discussing research strategies.

Final Project: extended researched analysis (24% of course grade) + **creative response**

(6% of course grade)

The **extended researched analysis** (due **April 27**) will be on a topic you develop to suit your interests, based on the ongoing focus of the course materials and discussion. You may find that a blog post and the comments it generates leads you toward a question you'd like to pursue in further depth, or you might investigate a particular theme or text addressed by the course, or you might make connections between fifteenth-century experiences and attitudes to something from another time and/or place, including our own. (24% of course grade=1% for research paper proposal+1% for research paper draft+22% for final research paper)

The **creative response** (presented in class on **April 21 and April 23**) is intended to encourage you to consider, beyond the confines of the traditional literary analysis or research paper, how you might express to a similarly informed audience your engagement with the texts and related concepts and ideas we are studying this semester.

A more detailed assignment sheet for both parts of the Final Project will appear on the blog early in the semester.

Since the deadlines for formal written work are so clearly spelled out on the syllabus, late projects will not be accepted except in very extraordinary circumstances. Due dates for the critical writing projects are days when our class does not meet; these papers will be due at 11 p.m., in OAKS, on the indicated date.

EXAMS [25% of course grade]

You will take two exams—a midterm (10%) and a final (15%). I will provide exam structure guides and study guides for each exam.

RESOURCES

Office hours are reserved for you to drop in as suits your schedule, to discuss your writing and/or the course: TR 1:15-2:15. Should that not work with your schedule, please email me to arrange an alternative time. Emailing is the most efficient way to communicate with me outside of class; I would discourage contacting me by phone except during office hours.

[The Writing Lab](#) is located on the first floor of Addlestone Library, within the Center for Student Learning. Here you will find many resources for your writing (for this and other classes): handouts, reference books, sample bibliographies, and consultants who have been trained to assist you in generating materials for your essay, organizing your ideas and materials, revising and editing your writing, and any step in the writing process. You can find information, including hours and schedule, at the link above.

Academic accommodation for a documented disability can be arranged through the [Center for](#)

[Disability Services](#): (843) 953-1431, Lightsey Center, Suite 104. If you are approved for accommodations, you should let me know as soon as possible so we can organize appropriate arrangements.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students, needless to say, must follow the College of Charleston's academic integrity policy, which forbids cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism. Any case of suspected cheating or plagiarism (on any written response for the course) will be sent to the College's Honor Board, and any student found guilty will receive a grade of XF, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty.

"Recycled" papers written for other courses are not acceptable in this class.

College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity, from the [Student Handbook](#):

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
D-	60-63	0.7
F	0-59	0.0
