



LIT390: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PAPER

Spring 2018

ROOM: 112 Old Building

TIME: Tuesdays 13:30-15:30

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-13:00, Thursdays 14:00-16:00 and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Zora Neale Hurston described research in her autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942) as “formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose” (143). This course focuses on developing this “formalized curiosity,” or the methodology of writing a literature research paper. Specifically, we will learn and practice the fundamental literary research skills, including locating, identifying, understanding, and incorporating scholarly sources and identifying and joining scholarly conversations. The course will also provide instruction and practice in the writing process for research papers, including identifying a topic, pre-writing, organizing, drafting, incorporating and documenting sources, and editing. Our course will involve classroom meetings as well as individual conferences. There is no final exam in this course.

In particular, this course has three essential goals. Students should:

- **Learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas** (e.g., critically evaluate literary research methods, tools, and texts)
- **Learn to apply course material** (e.g., produce writing that demonstrates your ability to integrate effectively literary research methods, tools, and texts)
- **Develop skill in expressing yourself in writing** (e.g., sharpen your critical writing and analysis skills, particularly in regard to your writing about literature and incorporating scholarly sources)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Zora Neale Hurston, *The Complete Stories* (1996) ISBN: 9780061350184
- Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. 2nd Edition (2010) ISBN: 9780393933611
- E-learning/Canvas: the above required texts as well as other assigned readings and course assignment materials are available in the class e-learning site.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th or 8th Edition
 - Literary Vocabulary: http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms.html
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ACADEMIC HONESTY: Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students found to be dishonest risk failing the assignment and/or course. Other sanctions may also apply. Contact your instructor if you have questions.

PREFERRED PRONOUNS/NAMES: If you are interested in using a name or preferred pronoun other than what is recognized by the university, let me know. It is my express wish to respect people’s ability to self-define their identity and this will be supported in the course by both the professor and students.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course is offered for a limited number of students and attendance is mandatory. You are expected to:

- (1) **ATTEND CLASS:** Regular, spirited class attendance is a crucial component to passing this course. Because I am a visiting scholar I will not give incompletes at the end of the semester. You are strongly encouraged to be absent from class only when absolutely necessary;
 - (2) **ATTEND CLASS MEETINGS PREPARED:** this means bring the appropriate text(s) and DO THE READING WITH GUSTO; this is a discussion-based class and if you have not done the reading, thought a little about it, and have ready access to it, you will not be able to contribute and the class (as well as your grade) suffers accordingly. This course is what you make of it and will work best when everyone prepares and contributes;
 - (3) **COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS:** passing the course requires timely completion of ALL assignments, long and short, in-class and out-of-class. You risk failing the course if you do not complete all assignments. *It is not the instructor's duty to make sure that you have completed all assignments; this is your responsibility. No late/incomplete assignments will be accepted after the last day of class;*
 - (4) **ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LISTENING AND DISCUSSION:** silence cell phones before entering class, cease text messaging, and do not surf the web or check email during class. An inability to use technology appropriately will negatively impact your final grade: all disruptive behavior (e.g., sleeping in class, inappropriate language directed at students/instructor, perpetual lateness, leaving class frequently and/or for extended periods of time, etc.) constitutes grounds for grade reduction and/or dismissal from class.
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ASSIGNMENTS:

• Annotated Bibliography (Zotero)	200 points (20%)
• <i>They Say</i> Literature Review Paper	200 points (20%)
• <i>They Say, I Say</i> Proposal	100 points (10%)
• Final Research Paper	500 points (50%)
	1000 points total (100%)

GRADING SCALE

1000-975 points: 10	899-875 points: 8	799-775 points: 6	699-650 points: 4
974-950 points: 9.5	874-850 points: 7.5	774-750 points: 5.5	649-600 points: 3
949-925 points: 9	849-825 points: 7	749-725 points: 5	599-550 points: 2
924-900 points: 8.5	824-800 points: 6.5	724-700 points: 4.5=5	549-500 points: 1
			499 points & below: 0

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (ZOTERO): (200 points; 10 annotations) You will select (tag each source with your name and the word "annotated") and write/share (in the Zotero extra or notes section) an annotated bibliography of 10 sources related to Zora Neale Hurston in our group bibliography in Zotero: https://www.zotero.org/groups/1163733/zora_neale_hurston-litt_2123_f17. Only one student may annotate any individual source. You will need to check the "Tags" in our Zotero site to make sure another student has not already selected the source. If someone has, then you will need to select/tag another source to annotate. **Start this project early as you will need time to retrieve and read your sources!** (Note: many entries in Zotero already have full text articles attached.) See assignment description and rubric for more details.

THEY SAY LITERATURE REVIEW PAPER: (200 points, 1000-1250 words) This paper focuses on the "they say" part of the *They Say, I Say* research equation. This type of essay is sometimes referred to as a literature review, or a paper that surveys, outlines, and connects the scholarship on a specific topic. You will identify and read five **scholarly** essays that together form a "conversation" on an issue (or issues) raised in Hurston or related scholarship and write a 1000-1250-word paper (about 4-5 pages) that summarizes the important points and positions in that conversation. (Make sure all your selected essays fit the criterion for

scholarly sources.) Citations in the paper and works cited should follow current MLA guidelines. You may use any of the scholarly sources in our class Hurston bibliography in Zotero or other scholarly sources. See Dr. J if you need assistance in identifying appropriate essays. This paper provides the scholarly conversation foundation for your final paper.

THEY SAY, I SAY PROPOSAL: (100 points, typed proposal, no set length) This assignment outlines your focus on both sides of the *They Say, I Say* research equation. It asks you to introduce what you (“I Say”) have to say about a specific primary text (a short story by Hurston) by situating your argument in what “they say.” The proposal must include the following:

- **Title:** preliminary final paper title.
- **Primary Text:** identify the Hurston short story that will be the focus of your research and close reading for the final paper. If you wish to discuss two or more stories by Hurston, explain why this is necessary.
- **Scholarly Conversation Summary:** brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of the on-going scholarly conversation (“They say”) about your story and/or topic. This section provides a brief recap of your *They Say* literature review paper.
- **Thesis:** preliminary (draft) thesis statement (“I say”). Explain how your reading of the primary text will contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversation and/or fill a gap in the scholarship.
- **Outline:** final paper outline. Outline how you will arrange your evidence, which will be focused on close reading passages from your selected short story and the integration of the scholarly conversation, to support your thesis.
- **Introduction:** draft introduction (250-500 words or 1-2 typed pages) to final paper. You will draft the opening page for your final research paper. This opening should establish your topic and your thesis in the context of the critical conversation on the issue it addresses. We will workshop this draft in class.
- **Bibliography:** preliminary bibliography of at least 5 appropriate scholarly sources. Citations in the proposal and bibliography should follow current MLA guidelines.

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: (500 points, 2000-2500 words) You will write a researched close reading essay of about 8 double-spaced typed pages on one of Hurston’s short stories. Your previous assignments provide the foundation for this researched literary analysis paper. The essay focuses on your original close reading of the story (or stories) in the context of the scholarly conversation. The paper must incorporate the work of at least five scholarly sources. Book reviews and articles from non-peer reviewed sources will not be accepted as scholarly sources. This is the culmination of the course; it should be a work of substance by contributing to the on-going scholarly conversation.



Image Source: Library of Congress, Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960), Carl Van Vechten (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004663047/>)

LATE ASSIGNMENT AND REVISION POLICIES: I understand that life is full of surprises and sometimes those surprises influence your coursework and your ability to complete assignments. As a community of learners, we also recognize that we have a responsibility to the group, to our instructor, and to ourselves. We understand that every action has a consequence—even when circumstance may limit our power to act. To balance individual and community needs, we have the following guidelines for late assignments and revisions.

DUE DATES AND LATE PENALTY: *Assignments are due at the start of class unless otherwise noted on the syllabus.* Late assignments will be docked ten points for each day late.

ASSIGNMENT EXTENSIONS: Any student who asks the instructor **prior to** the due date may receive a two-day extension from the due date listed on the syllabus. After two days, the late paper penalty will go into effect. No exceptions.

Of course, the extension policy will only help students who have drafted an assignment and follow the expected practice of backing up documents. Back up all your files and you will be a much happier and successful individual. You may not be pleased when your computer explodes or thumb drive crashes, but at least you will not be despondent. Consider using Dropbox (<https://db.tt/WG1vfhY>) or GoogleDrive (<https://www.google.com/drive/>) (both free services) to back up your work. Using a cloud-based service will also help assure that you never incur late penalties as a result of forgetting an assignment on your computer at home or as a result of a malfunctioning computer.

I also strongly encourage all students to keep a personal copy of every assignment and to keep all returned assignments with my feedback. **No assignments will be accepted after the last class meeting.**

REVISIONS: This course is based on the principle that revisions take place **before** the instructor evaluates an assignment for a grade. To this end, consider dropping in during office hours or scheduling a meeting to discuss your assignments in advance of due dates. Drop in at any stage of the research and writing process: from your initial topic brainstorming to nailing down those final brass tacks.



Image Source: Library of Congress, Zora Neale Hurston, Rochelle French, and Gabriel Brown, Eatonville, Florida Lomax, Alan, 1915-2002, photographer, June 1935, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2007660101/>

Syllabus—LIT9-390*

WEEK 1: FEBRUARY 13—COURSE OVERVIEW, SCHOLARLY VS. NON-SCHOLARLY SOURCES, & ZOTERO

Introduction to course and e-learning site. Discuss the difference between scholarly and non-scholarly sources. Introduce Zotero annotated bibliography assignment (due week 6). In class readings and resources:

- How Do I Decide if a Source is Scholarly? <https://www.saintmarys.edu/library/how-do-i-decide-if-source-scholarly>
- Evaluating resources: <http://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/evaluating-resources>
- Critically Analyzing Information Sources: <http://guides.library.cornell.edu/criticallyanalyzing>
- Introduction to Scholarly vs Trade vs Popular Journals: <https://libguides.colostate.edu/howtodo/scholarlyvstopular>
- Evaluating Wikipedia: <http://libguides.lmu.edu/c.php?g=323798&p=2169061>
- Zotero: www.zotero.org
- Hurston Zotero Site: https://www.zotero.org/groups/1163733/zora_neale_hurston

WEEK 2: FEBRUARY 27—READING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES ABOUT LITERATURE AND UNDERSTANDING “THEY SAY”

Review Zotero annotated bibliography assignment. Do's and Don'ts of writing annotated bibliographies. Read prior to class:

- Hurston “Sweat” (73-85)
- “Questions to Ask while Reading a Scholarly Article” (available in e-learning platform)
- Carter “The God in the Snake, the Devil in the Phallus”
- Annotated bibliography: <http://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography>

Due: Create Zotero account & request membership to Hurston collection.

WEEK 3: MARCH 6—MLA CITATION AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM OF WHAT “THEY SAY”

Review MLA citation and what constitutes and how to avoid plagiarism. Read prior to class:

- *They Say / I Say* (1-51)
- Avoiding Plagiarism: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>
- MLA Overview and Workshop: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/675/1/>

Due: Tag ten sources in Zotero for annotated bibliography.

WEEK 4: MARCH 13—WORKSHOP OF SAMPLE ANNOTATIONS AND “THEY SAY” PAPER INTRODUCED

Workshop sample annotations. *They Say* Literature Review Paper assigned (due week 8). Read prior to class:

- *They Say / I Say* (145-155)
- Hurston “The Eatonville Anthology” (59-72)
- Frever “‘Mah Story Ends,’ or Does It? Orality in Zora Neale Hurston’s ‘The Eatonville Anthology’”

Due: Two sample annotations for class workshop.

WEEK 5: MARCH 20—IDENTIFYING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS (OR TRENDS IN “THEY SAY”)

Practice identifying connections among scholars. Read prior to class:

- Hurston “The Gilded Six-Bits” (86-98), “Black Death” (202-208), re-read “The Eatonville Anthology” (59-72)
- Champion “Socioeconomics in Selected Short Stories of Zora Neale Hurston”

* Class schedule subject to changes with notice. Readings and assignments are listed on the day they are due.

WEEK 6: MARCH 27–ZOTERO ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Schedule individual tutorials with Dr. Jacobson for March 21, 22, 23, or 26. Dr. Jacobson will be in Athens for a Fulbright meeting March 27-30.

Due: Annotated Bibliography (Zotero, 10 annotations)

MARCH 31-APRIL 15–NO CLASSES–EASTER BREAK

WEEK 7: APRIL 17–ENTERING SCHOLARLY CONVERSATIONS WITH “I SAY” AND USING SECONDARY SOURCES

Discussion of how scholars introduce “I say” and use secondary sources in their own work. Read prior to class:

- *They Say I Say* (55-101)
- Hurston: re-read “Sweat” (73-85)
- Bethel “This Infinity of Conscious Pain”
- Lupton “Zora Neale Hurston and the Survival of the Female”

WEEK 8: APRIL 24–ADDITIONAL PRACTICE INCORPORATING SECONDARY SOURCES

They Say, I Say Proposal assigned (due week 11). Discussion of topics for final essays. Group work on Hurston criticism and identifying the scholar’s and your own “I say” (aka developing a thesis). Read prior to class:

- *They Say I Say* (105-138)
- Hurston: “The Country in the Woman”
- West “Youse in New York”

Due: They Say Literature Review Paper

MAY 1–NO CLASSES–LABOUR DAY

WEEK 9: MAY 8–INDIVIDUAL TUTORIALS

Mandatory conference with instructor. Schedule individual meetings May 7, 8, or 10.

WEEK 10: MAY 15–WORKSHOP INTRODUCTION AND FINAL RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

Bring two typed copies of your draft introduction with thesis. Students without the assignment will incur a grade penalty against their proposal grade (-5 points).

Due: They Say, I Say Proposal

WEEK 11: MAY 22–DRAFT WORKSHOP

Bring two typed copies of your draft final paper (at least 1000-1250 words or about 4-5 typed pages). Students without the assignment will incur a grade penalty against their final paper (-25 points).

Due: Draft of Final Paper (two copies)

WEEK 12: MAY 29

Optional brief class presentations on final research papers.

Due: Final Paper

SPRING SEMESTER EXAMS: JUNE 6-14

Dr. Jacobson will notify you when you may meet with her to collect your graded final paper.