



# LITERATURE AND LAW

**English 190  
Fall 2017**

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Course Meets: MWF 10-10:50am Sullivan House

My Chambers: 113 Carnegie Hall

Pleas for Mercy Taken: MWF 12-1pm; Thursdays 11-12:15pm; and by appointment

This course examines British and American novels, plays, poetry and film alongside real-life trial transcripts, legal briefs and supreme court rulings to explore the rich and surprising intersections between literary production and legal culture. In the process, you will learn how to scrutinize texts, build a rock-solid case and craft clear and persuasive oral and written arguments that will serve you well in the classroom, the courtroom and everywhere in between. This course has no prerequisites and welcomes all.

## Required Texts/Materials

- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* 038549081X
- Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood* 0679745580
- William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* 9780399501487
- Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* 0446310786
- William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (any edition)
- Several additional reading assignments are located on our course's Blackboard site (marked BB on syllabus). It is your responsibility to read them, print them out and bring them to the appropriate class meetings.
- Access to Blackboard and a Rollins email account (I will communicate with you via Rollins email so please check this account daily)

## Course Assignments

**1. Quizzes (10%):** All of your work for this course is designed to fulfill one or more of the course objectives. Daily reading assignments and class discussions and activities will prepare you for the quizzes and quizzes model the formats of exams. Early quizzes take the form of passage explications; quizzes assigned later in the semester will take the form of thesis

statements and essay outlines. Due to the developmental nature and pacing of this course, I cannot accept late quizzes. It's very sad, I know.

**2. Midterm Exam (20%):** After learning the ropes of close reading via a few low stakes quizzes, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your mastery of the skill through short (paragraph-length) analytical responses to relevant passages, movie clips and images. You will have so much fun doing this assignment that you'll forget that it's for a grade. Maybe.

**3. Close Reading Essay (4-5 pages) (25%):** A close reading makes a unique, specific and debatable argument about a larger thematic idea or topic and uses close readings of textual passages to bolster and support this claim. This is your chance to think boldly and flex your mental muscles. I value intellectual risk taking more than a perfectly polished paper, so push yourself outside your comfort zone and write the kind of paper that you have always been nervous or afraid to write.

**4. Unsolved Murder Project (10%):** Hundreds of murders go unsolved every year—some of which are in our own backyard. This assignment invites you to research a cold case from Central Florida and use the evidence you collect to build a case against someone (or some thing). Your job, in short, is to fill in the narrative gaps of the story of what happened and why.

**5. Speech (5%):** Being able to make a persuasive case is a valuable life skill that is critical to your success as a college student, employee, friend and world citizen. So why delay your ascent to awesomeness? After learning how to craft a bad-ass argumentative speech by paying attention to tone, style, presentation and content, you'll deliver said speech to a rapt audience (namely, your peers and me).

**6. Final Exam (30%):** After honing your close reading skills through the midterm and essay assignments, you will have the opportunity to show off your analytical prowess on a larger stage. In this "exam," you will construct 2-3 short original argumentative essays on course topics. These essays' structure will take the form of several linked close readings, yoked together by a bold thesis and sexy answer to the "so what" question {yes, I just used 'sexy' to describe a paragraph in your essay—it's possible people!}

All course grades will be calculated using the following scale:

A (94-100) A- (90-93) B+ (87-89) B (84-86) B- (80-83) C+ (77-79); C (74-76); C- (70-73); D+ (66-69); D (64-66); D- (60-63) F (59 and below)

## **Course Policies/Unsolicited Advice**

### **Attendance**

Here's my take on attendance: you have made the commitment to enroll in my course (many thanks) and I take seriously the responsibility to make coming to class each day worth your while. Every classroom discussion and activity correlates to a mode of assessment, so missing class is equivalent to shooting yourself in the foot. Why would you do that? Because sometimes we need systems of accountability to keep us on the straight and narrow, this course abides by the following attendance policy: you are allowed 3 absences without penalty. Your 4th absence may result in your final course grade being lowered by 1/3 letter grade. If you miss 6 classes,

you will earn a failing grade for the course. No one has ever fallen into this category, so don't be the first! I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so choose your absences wisely. The only standing exception to this rule applies to students who are traveling on pre-approved college business (ie. varsity sports team). If you have a disability that may require additional exceptions to this rule, please make an appointment with the Disability Services Office.

### Extra Credit

Do you want to boost your grade in this course by doing a little extra outside work? Take your quizzes/exams to the Writing Center! While I don't offer formal extra credit, students who utilize the support and assistance of our fabulous writing consultants always do better on their assignments. There are several fantastic writing consultants on staff who have taken this course from me in the past and thus know "how I roll" including Katie Deisler ([kdeisler@rollins.edu](mailto:kdeisler@rollins.edu)) and Morgan McConnell ([mmconnell@rollins.edu](mailto:mmconnell@rollins.edu)). You must make your appointments 24 hours in advance for most writing consultants using the Tutoring/Writing Appts link (found in the Campus Logins on the Rollins R-Net page). However, if you wish to utilize the services of any of the above tutors, you may contact them directly.

\*\*\*Please note that writing consultants have busy schedules and may not be able to accommodate you at the eleventh hour. Wise students will plan ahead and book their appointments well in advance of paper and exam due dates.

## **COLLEGE POLICIES**

### **Disability Services**

Rollins College is committed to equal access and inclusion for all students, faculty and staff. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 create a foundation of legal obligations to provide an accessible educational environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. It is the spirit of these laws which guides the college toward expanding access in all courses and programs, utilizing innovative instructional design, and identifying and removing barriers whenever possible. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to fully participate in your classes, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services, located on the first floor of the Olin Library, as soon as possible. You are encouraged to schedule a Welcome Meeting by filling out the "First Time Users" form on the website: <http://www.rollins.edu/accessibilityservices/> and/or reach out by phone or email: 407-975- 6463 or [Access@Rollins.edu](mailto:Access@Rollins.edu). All test-taking accommodations requested for this course must first be approved through the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) and scheduled online through Accommodate at least 72 hours before the exam. Official accommodation letters must be received by and discussed with the faculty in advance. There will be no exceptions given unless previously approved by the OAS with documentation of the emergency situation. We highly recommend making all testing accommodations at the beginning of the semester. OAS staff are available to assist with this process.

### **Academic Integrity**

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. The student commitment to uphold the values of

honor - honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility - particularly manifests itself in two public aspects of student life. First, as part of the admission process to the College, students agree to commit themselves to the Honor Code. Then, as part of the matriculation process during Orientation, students sign a more detailed pledge to uphold the Honor Code and to conduct themselves honorably in all their activities, both academic and social, as a Rollins student. A student signature on the following pledge is a binding commitment by the student that lasts for his or her entire tenure at Rollins College. The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community. Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others. This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own. Students shall add to the paper, quiz, test, lab report, etc., the handwritten signed statement: "On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work." Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

Specific to our course: Plagiarism is a serious offense with serious consequences that may include failing an assignment, the course, or both. Forms of plagiarism include but are not limited to purchasing a paper online, cutting and pasting material from the Internet or other electronic or print source (including Wikipedia), passing off someone else's work (or portions of that work) as your own, and failing to cite external sources. If I suspect that you have cheated on an assignment, you will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs.

### **Credit Hour Statement**

This course is a four-credit-hour course that meets three hours per week. The value of four credit hours results, in part, from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average at least 2 ½ hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are the completion of daily reading assignments, production of written quizzes, drafting and revising essays and attending out-of-class RCC events.

### **Title IX Statement**

Rollins College is committed to making its campus a safe place for students. If you tell any of your faculty about sexual misconduct involving members of the campus community, your professors are required to report this information to the Title IX Coordinator. Your faculty member can help connect you with the Coordinator, Oriana Jiménez (TitleIX@rollins.edu or 407-691-1773). She will provide you with information, resources and support. If you would prefer to speak to someone on campus confidentially, please call the Wellness Center at 407-628-6340. They are not required to report any information you share with the Office of Title IX. Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence (such as dating or domestic abuse), sexual assault, and any discrimination based on your sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation that creates a hostile environment. For information, visit <http://www.rollins.edu/titleix/>

### Recording Device Use

In order to protect the integrity of the classroom experience, the use of recording devices is limited to either the expressed permission of the faculty member or with proper documentation from the Office of Accessibility Services. Information about accommodations through Accessibility Services can be found at <http://www.rollins.edu/accessibility-services/>. Recording without the proper authorization is considered a violation of the Rollins Code of Community Standards.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

\*\*\*Indicates high reading or viewing load. Please plan accordingly.

Date	Required Readings	Assignment Due
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>The Court of Public Opinion</b>	
8/28 M	Convocation—in lieu of class, meet at the Alford Sports Center at 9am	
8/30 W	Course Introduction Syllabus	
9/1 F	View <i>Amanda Knox</i> on Netflix (about 1.5 hours); discuss film in class Add/Drop Period Ends	
<b>Week 2</b>		
9/4 M	Labor Day—No Class	
9/6 W	*** <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part 1	Quiz due. Post to Blackboard by start of class
9/8 F	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part 1 continued  No Credit Deadline; Last day to drop without a “W” on your transcript	
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Crime and Punishment</b>	
9/11 M	Exhibition Analysis—meet in the lobby of the Cornell Fine Arts Museum	
9/13 W	*** <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part 2  Glaspell, “A Jury of Her Peers”	Quiz due. Post to Blackboard by the start of class
9/15 F	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , Part 2	Speeches: The photo you saw on social media—it’s not what you think

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Courtroom Dramas</b>	
9/18 M	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> , Act 1	
9/20 W	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts 2-3	Quiz due; post to Blackboard by the start of class
9/22 F	*** <i>Merchant of Venice</i> , Acts 4-5	Speeches: Stop hating on me because I'm X
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Crime on Campus</b>	
9/25 M	Boyd, "Coyote Bros"  Erdley, "A Rape on Campus"	
9/27 W	View <i>Tower</i> before class; discuss in class	
9/29 F	No assigned reading "So this is how it went down" activity	
<b>Week 6</b>		
10/1 Sun	<b>The Body of Law</b>	Midterm due; post to Blackboard by the start of class
10/2 M	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>	
10/4 W	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>  Law School Expo: Visit between 11am-2pm in the Alfond Sports Arena	
10/6 F	<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>	Speeches: Just because I have X doesn't mean that Y
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Legal Fictions</b>	
10/9 M	<i>Serial</i> podcast, episodes 1-3	
10/11 W	<i>Serial</i> podcast, episodes 4-6	
10/13 F	No Class	
<b>Week 8</b>		
10/16 M	Fall break—No Class	
10/18 W	<i>Serial</i> podcast, episodes 7-9	
10/20 F	<i>Serial</i> podcast, episodes 10-12	Speeches: I didn't do it. Really. I didn't.
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>True Crime</b>	
10/23 M	<i>In Cold Blood</i> , Part 1 pp. 3-74	
10/25 W	<i>In Cold Blood</i> , Part 2 pp. 77-155	Quiz due. Please submit to Blackboard by the start of class.
10/27 F	*** <i>In Cold Blood</i> , Part 3 pp. 159-248	Speeches: Sorry I'm not sorry.

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Unsolved Mysteries</b>	
10/30 M	*** <i>In Cold Blood</i> , Part 4 pp. 251-end	
11/1 W	View before class: <i>48 Hours Mystery</i> "Hollywood Secrets" 44 minutes (video link on BB)	Due: Unsolved Murder Assignment
11/3 F	Unsolved Murders Presentations  Last Day to Withdraw from a Class	
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Grey Areas</b>	
11/6 M	Waxman, from <i>Loot</i>  Eds. of Scientific American, "Who Owns the Past"?	
11/8 W	Poole, "Looting Iraq"	Please submit your thesis to Blackboard by 7pm on Tuesday 11/7
11/10 F	No assigned reading	
<b>Week 12</b>		
11/13 M	Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant"  "The Case of the Speluncean Explorers"	
11/15 W	No assigned reading. View in class: <i>The Last Descent</i>	
11/17 F	No assigned reading. Discuss <i>The Last Descent</i> in class.	
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>The Bird Massacre</b>	
11/20 M	No assigned reading.	Close Reading Essay Due. Submit to Blackboard by the start of class.
11/22 W	Thanksgiving Break—No Class	
11/24 F	Thanksgiving Break—No Class	
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Hung Jury</b>	
11/27 M	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-75)	
11/29 W	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> 5-7 (pp. 76-123)	Quiz due. Please post to Blackboard by the start of class.
12/1 F	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> Chapters Chapters 8-12 (pp. 124-202)	

<b>Week 15</b>	<b>The Final Verdict</b>	
12/4 M	No Assigned Reading In class: Mock Trial	
12/6 W	No Assigned Reading In class: Mock Trial	
12/8 F	Last day of class	
12/11		Final Exam Due. Please submit to Blackboard by 10am