

UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON -- NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

Electronically submit this completed form with attachments in one file to the Chair of the College Curriculum Committee.

COLLEGE (check one):	Arts and Sciences	x	Business		Education	
Proposal Submitted By: Chris Foss				Date Prepared: 3-17-16		
Course Title:	Disability and Literature					
Department/discipline and course number*:	ENGL 384					
Prerequisites:none						

**This course number must be approved by the Office of the Registrar before the proposal is submitted.*

Number of credits:	3	Will this course meet for at least 700 contact minutes for each credit hour proposed? <i>If no, provide a credit hour justification.</i>	YES	x	NO	
Will this be a <i>new, repeatable</i> "special topics" course? (Do you want students to be able to take this new course more than once if the topic changes?)			NO	x	YES	

Date of first offering of this <i>new</i> course: FALL SEMESTER, year		Fall 2017	Fall 2018
Proposed frequency of offering of the course:	Once every two years		
List the faculty who will likely teach the course:	Chris Foss		
Are ANY new resources required?	NO	x	YES
<i>Document in attached impact statement</i>			

This new course will be (check all that apply):					
Required in the major		Required in the minor		General Elective	x
Elective in the major	x	Elective in the minor		General Education**	

***AFTER the new course is approved, a separate proposal must be sent to the General Education Committee.*

Catalog Description (suggested length – less than 50 words):	
This course takes for its focus the complex intersection(s) of disability and literature. Throughout the semester we will consider the various ways in which literary representations of disability from the nineteenth century to the present have embodied a range of pejorative, enabling, and/or ambivalent possibilities.	

COURSE HISTORY:	Was this course taught previously as a topics or experimental course?	YES	x	NO	
Course Number and Title of Previous Course		Semester Offered		Enrollment	
ENGL 375A2: DISABILITY AND LITERATURE		Fall 2013		25	
ENGL 375A2: DISABILITY AND LITERATURE		Fall 2012		27	
ENGL 375A2: DISABILITY AND LITERATURE		Fall 2010		21	
x	CHECK HERE if the proposed course is to be <i>equated</i> with the earlier topics or experimental offerings. If equated, students who took the earlier “topics” course will only be able to take the new course as a repeat (C- grade or lower).				
NOTE: If the proposed course has not been previously offered as a topics or experimental course, explain in the attached rationale statement why the course should be adopted even though it has not been tried out.					

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:

1. **Rationale Statement** – Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?
2. **Credit Hour Justification** (if required) – explain how this course will comply with the UMW Credit Hours Policy (D.5.1)
3. **Impact Statement** – Provide details about the Library, space, staffing, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc. **Any change that impacts another Department must have a written statement (such as a copy of an email) from the Chair(s) agreeing to the change.**
4. **Sample Syllabus**

Department Chair Approval: _____ Gary Richards _____

Date: 4—8-16 _____

CCC Chair Approval: _____  _____

Date: 9/07/2017 _____

UCC Chair Approval: _____  _____

Date: 9/20/17 _____

Rationale Statement

My proposed new course, to the best of my knowledge, would be the only upper-level course in the College of Arts and Sciences catalog that not only takes disability for its primary focus but further substantially acquaints students with the interdisciplinary field of Disability Studies and the particular approaches to disability it typically entails. The course would serve as a wonderful complement to my FSEM 100A4: Representations of Autism in Literature and Film.

As G. Thomas Couser has asserted, “Disability is a fundamental facet of human diversity—people with disabilities make up the largest minority in the U.S. population—and disabled people have histories and cultures deserving of study on their own terms.” Thus, as acknowledged by the University of Washington, “While manifestation of disability changes through time, disability itself is a constant component of human existence. Since disability is a fact of the human experience, not the exception, **a comprehensive undergraduate curriculum must include the study of the experiences of disabled people.**”

This course would appeal to both the general student population and a strategically important particular cohort of students. Every single student, in the course of her/his life, either will experience disability personally or will know someone for whom disability is a major aspect of their lived experience, so the degree of relevance of such a course of study actually is very high for all students. As noted above, because disability is as fundamental a component of human identity as class, gender, race, etc., one might argue that a true liberal arts education should contain the opportunity for such study.

Obviously, students with disabilities represent a strategically important cohort of students for whom such a program would be especially crucial. Students with disabilities are one of the specific cohorts that our strategic plan identifies as a population to be included in our initiatives in support of Diversity and Inclusion. Students with disabilities also are poised to be one of the fastest-growing segments of the postsecondary education population, so proactive curricular planning for such a potential surge is not only practical but also savvy where both our reputation and our profit margin are concerned.

Impact Statement

This new course will have no impact on the Library, space, staffing, budget, and technology. I have taught it three times previously with no new/extra requirements where any of these areas are concerned. I have the flexibility in my course rotation (as worked out with my fellow British nineteenth Century Literature specialist, Eric Lorentzen) to offer a course or even two outside of the agreed upon menu of standard offerings every couple of years, and I plan to teach this course only once every two years.

Sample Syllabus

ENGL 375A2

DISABILITY AND LITERATURE

FALL 2013

SECTION 01

2:00 TR

COMBS 111

Dr. Chris Foss

Office: Combs 307

Hours: MWF 11:50-1:00, TR 11:45-12:30

Phone: 654-1128

Email: cfoss@umw.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes for its focus the complex intersection(s) of disability and literature. Throughout the semester we will consider the various ways in which literary representations of disability from the nineteenth century to the present have embodied a range of pejorative, enabling, and/or ambivalent possibilities.

In our first unit we will read an array of the most significant work by the leading theorists in the field of disability studies, positioning our own voices in the vibrant critical discussions about disability and literature. During the course of our second and third units, we will read and analyze literary texts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries respectively, applying and qualifying the theoretical models we studied in the first unit. Both of these units will concentrate primarily on fiction, but each will sample dramatic and poetic offerings as well.

Finally, in our fourth unit, we will extend our examination of disability and literature into the current century with a more narrow focus on autism in order to explore how an immersion-experience with the emergent field of autism studies might yield insight into how the more general disability studies perspective fruitfully may be applied to the literary representation(s) of one particular disability—and, simultaneously, how such concentrated study might contribute toward a comparable consideration of other specific disabilities or toward a broader understanding of disability in general.

COURSE GOALS

This course aims to foster a complex, profound engagement with a variety of issues pertaining to disability and literature. First and foremost, it will ask you to consider thoroughly how disability is used to make meaning and

what patterns of signification may be projected onto it. To do so, it will require you to define—or, perhaps, more accurately, to theorize—(dis)ability and (ab)normalcy, in the process reinforcing an understanding of disability as a historical and sociocultural construction. It further will require you to explore how the various critical lenses offered by disability studies theory impact your assessment of literary representations of disability (across genre and period, alongside gender/sexuality and ethnicity/race, etc.), in the process illuminating the role of language and literature in reflecting and/or altering contemporary assumptions about disability. Ultimately, this course aims to reveal disability's essential role as a fundamental facet of human identity—and, accordingly, to posit disability is as integral to any consideration of the human experience as class, gender, race, or any other such category.

More generally, in terms of content, this course will help you become more familiar with:

- literary history, including an understanding of historical context and its impact on literary periods;
- literary theory and its application;
- the major genres of literature; and
- how issues of class, disability, ethnicity/race, gender/sexuality, and historical period influence the development and interpretation of literary works.

In terms of skill competencies, you will need to:

- adapt writing to a variety of purposes; and
- apply literary methods as a means for analyzing oral and written discourse.

COURSE FOCUS

In her ENGL 369: Women and Modernism course (a.k.a., GynoMod), my colleague Professor Scanlon tells her students that their task might be articulated broadly by Rita Felski's questions: "How would our understanding of modernity change if instead of taking male experience as paradigmatic, we were to look instead at texts written primarily by or about women? And what if feminine phenomena, often seen as having a secondary or marginal status, were given a central importance in the analysis of the culture of modernity?"

For this course, we will ask: What if disabled phenomena, often seen as having a secondary or marginal status, were given a central importance in the analysis of literary texts? How does our understanding of literature (and the study of literature) change if, instead of taking the able-bodied experience as paradigmatic, we were to look instead at texts written primarily by or about individuals with disabilities? I think you will find that, by the end of the semester, you never will approach, read, and respond to literature in quite the same way again—and, perhaps most importantly, that you have a much more profound awareness, understanding, and appreciation of all human variation and difference, including (indeed, especially) disability.

My decision to focus upon such questions has been thoroughly informed by the perspectives and insights of disability studies. What, then, is disability studies? By the end of our first unit, you will have considered plenty of potential answers to this question, in the form of many excellent examples of the kind of theoretical work that has helped establish the increasing significance of this fast-growing interdisciplinary field within academia. Here, then, a nutshell summary will suffice. According to the Society for Disability Studies, a disability studies perspective first and foremost posits disability as a fundamental aspect of the human diversity. As Simi Linton puts it, "We prod people to examine how disability as a category was created to serve certain ends and how the category has been institutionalized in social practices and intellectual conventions." Its end is not merely cultural and/or sociopolitical critique, however. Ultimately, it aims to empower disabled people (in Linton's words) "remak[ing] [them] as full citizens whose rights and privileges are intact, whose history and contributions are recorded, and whose often distorted representations in art, literature, film, theater, and other forms of artistic expression are fully analyzed."

A disability studies approach, then, will (among many other things) ask you to explore the ramifications of how we see and understand disability, including but limited to examining the language used to (re)present disability both in literary works and in everyday life. For example, what sets of assumptions are put into play when one uses terms like *abnormal*, *handicapped*, *impaired*, *physically challenged*, *special needs*, *sufferer/victim*? It also will invite you to debate the extent to which one can, or should, see disability as primarily a medical or sociocultural phenomenon.

Finally, a disability studies approach further will attempt always to remain attuned to the ways in which one's lived experience of disability is impacted by difference—both difference in one's type(s) of disability and difference in one's age, class, gender, race, sexual orientation, veteran status, etc.

Perhaps the most fundamental premise in nearly all contemporary thought and work on disability (for both disability studies scholars and disability rights activists) is that, within the time frame with which we are concerned, one must acknowledge the presence of two very distinct paradigms of disability. The first of these, the medical model, has been the (pre)dominant frame through which we have individually and collectively perceived disability. This medical approach above all pathologizes disability, conceiving of disabled bodies and minds as deficient (if not defective) and in need of repair—with the result that individuals with disabilities are ascribed an inferior, or even pejorative, status whereby they are sentimentalized at best and demonized at worst. The second paradigm, the sociocultural model, instead insists upon an awareness of the extent to which one must approach disability as a cultural phenomenon that stems from disabling social attitudes, environments, and interactions rather than from a deficiency residing in the individual her/himself. As Carol J. Gill has pointed out, when one embraces the paradigm shift from the former mode of thinking to the latter, “the remedy for disability-related problems” becomes “a change in the interaction between the individual and society” rather than some “cure or normalization of the individual.”

One of the ways to contribute to this paradigm shift is to study and discuss the assumptions about and the representations of disability as embodied in cultural artifacts such as literary texts, and then to disseminate any findings. Since the specific focus of this course is the nexus of disability and literature, we accordingly will aim to begin determining what sorts of constructions of (ab)normalcy and (dis)ability have been/remain operative within our sociocultural understanding(s) of the human body and the human mind, so as to more thoroughly analyze how (ab)normal/(dis)abled bodies and minds have been represented in modern literature. We will need to investigate carefully the various ways in which disability can contribute to the meaning of literary texts, as well as all of the assumptions that appear to inform the role(s) of disability within any given text. More particularly, we will have to explore the multiple metaphorical and/or rhetorical dimensions to different textual utilizations of disability in order to better delineate the full range of pejorative, enabling, and/or ambivalent possibilities for how disability may be employed/represented in literature.

COURSE FORMAT

Our course will develop in two spaces: the classroom and the courseblog/website (which can be accessed at <http://dislit2013.umwblogs.org>). I have designed this course and its major assignments so as explicitly to acknowledge your own collaborative role, as a student in this course, in the formation and presentation of whatever our collective understanding of “Disability and Literature” will be by the end of the semester. Our classroom will be, of course, our primary site of collaborative engagement with the course materials. The Dis/Lit blog, however, also will be a crucial component—indeed, it actually may be the most exciting aspect of the course, since you the students will be creating nearly all of its content through your Formal Blog Posts, your Major Papers/Projects, your Take-Home Final Examinations, and (perhaps most importantly of all) your informal blogging in the form of comments, posts, and other contributions (such as links to websites and audio/image/video file uploads).

With all of this work, you will collaboratively construct a multi-voiced narrative of our progress through the calendar of readings. What is more, though, I am hoping you will see the blogspace not only as a place to record your responses to our assigned readings and our discussions but also as a student-driven supplement to the instructor-supplied focus points, a supplement which holds within it the potential to truly expand (if not transform) the range of possibilities implicitly represented in my choice of readings by introducing new directions for our thought(s) and conversation(s) through your references to and/or commentary on extra (literary, but also other cultural) artifacts and ideas. For instance, I ended up being unable to include any primary (or secondary) texts from the vital genre of life writing; your contributions to the blog might extend our consideration of disability and literature into this crucial area within disability studies. Or, you might apply our literary and theoretical lenses to

contemporary (or historical) sociopolitical concerns in order to connect our conversations to the daily lives of individuals with disabilities and to their lived experience of disability.

What is more, pulling something from Scanlon's WOMB (Women Of Modernism Blog) once again, I want each and every one of you to see our Dis/Lit blog as a means of re(en)visioning your usual academic practices. For the blog, and (to the extent the whole class revolves around it) the course itself, will ask you to reinflect Felski's questions a second time: How would our understanding of a college course change if, instead of taking individual performance and competitive practice as paradigmatic, we were to conceive of our learning instead primarily collaboratively? And what if collaborative knowledge-building, often seen as having secondary or marginal status, were given a central role in our study of disability and literature? If, collectively, we can begin to conceive of the blog as a vital piece of that collaborative practice, a fluid record of our accumulating knowledge and a place for the active exchange of ideas, then this course already will have been a success.

For me, education should be all about process. Yes, you'll need me to supply you with a fair amount of content-based information. At the same time, I do not want our classroom (or our blog) to be a place where you come to receive passive information transmissions. It is what you do with that information—your process of actively engaging with the material—that is most important. Discussion, rather than lecture, is my primary method of delivery, precisely because I see it as the best means of fostering an environment in which process and multiplicity are encouraged (as well as an excellent means of honing one's ability to think critically and to express oneself clearly and accurately). I offer a variety of discussion-based formats: instructor-led large group discussions, student-led large group discussions, small group discussions, and electronic discussion.

If any of this discussion is to be successful, you must believe that I value your personal opinions and that I value discussion which does not seek to close itself off by deducing or producing the correct answer. You must come to see that there are very few easy answers and that working to complicate rather than complete questions often times is more intellectually satisfying, if also more challenging. You must be free to disagree and comfortable enough to chance a potentially off-the-wall idea, even if you end up feeling a little foolish about it later; otherwise, as a class we may lose too many opportunities to move beyond answers one may simply memorize to a more complex consideration of multiple possibilities. You must be willing to explore questions without any pressure to decide upon final answers until later—sometimes as late as the final examination, or even beyond the end of the course.

Class time will revolve around the three inextricably interrelated activities of reading, speaking, and writing as the means for providing you both with a thorough knowledge of disability and its vital relationship with literature. Your homework and your in-class activities accordingly are geared toward providing you with a working knowledge both of basic methods for close reading of texts and of strategies for both speaking and writing about these texts. Whether our focus at any given time is reading, speaking, or writing (or some combination thereof), you will need to move away from the idea of the classroom as a place you go to be lectured at by a teacher. Instead, you must think of this classroom as more along the lines of a thinktank where you and your coworkers come to share your own ideas, to listen to others' ideas, and to reflect critically on all of these ideas together.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

This is a student-centered, discussion-based course and, as such, your active class participation is required. Your grade for this part of the course primarily will be based upon your oral contributions to both your small group and large group discussions, but also any informal writing assigned (whether in-class or for-class) and your informal contributions to the Dis/Lit blog. Our discussions will require you practice close reading of the assigned texts. Accordingly, you need to take these discussions seriously by coming prepared to talk about what you have read in a variety of thoughtful ways.

This course has a demanding and constant reading load, often from very challenging texts. You must complete the assigned readings beforehand in a thoughtful, careful way so that you are prepared to engage in substantial, sophisticated discussion during our time together. The class meetings are almost exclusively a time for discussion of the readings and of the critical questions that shape the course, so your participation is essential to your own success in the class and the success of the course as a whole. You needn't be an "expert" to participate. Remember

that asking a good question is as (sometimes, even more) valuable than offering a completed thought, and that participation includes engaging in meaningful dialogue with your classmates as well as with me, or, when necessary, providing energy and leadership in small group sessions.

You should have your own copy of the necessary text(s) at hand for each meeting; this means, for the texts you access online you either need to print out a personal copy or bring a laptop or other device that will allow you to find and read specific passages during our discussion time (or in case I assign in-class writing on a specific passage).

Some of the texts we read likely will raise strong responses; their treatments of some challenging and potentially uncomfortable issues/topics may strike you as controversial, even objectionable or offensive. I will do my best to handle these matters discreetly and with the highest standards of professional conduct. In turn, I expect you to help me create a community in which all of our exchanges are conducted in a sensitive and tolerant manner. I require respect and civility, even in disagreement. This applies equally to the blog.

The Dis/Lit blog is always open for free blogging; indeed, I hope you will do a lot of this (which will swell your class participation point total). I hope the blog will function as a place to develop threads we begin in class, to introduce topics of interest we didn't talk about, to supplement our knowledge with outside materials, to add links or embed audio and image files, to pose questions, to respond more personally to the literature we read, and more. Original posts and comments on posts are equally valuable in supporting the dialogue of the blog. Comments are appropriate not only on more casual posts but also, and essentially, on the critical reading posts detailed below, where you may offer different interpretations, expand on the writer's analysis, suggest another connection, and so on. Occasionally I may give a prompt for blog posting, but most of the time the writing will be done on your own initiative. It is a nearly limitless space in which we may build our community, our voices as reader/writers, and our collective knowledge. I don't want you to think about class discussion or the blog chiefly as a time to impress me; this course's success depends on our commitment to one another as a community of learners, so this should be more about collaboration than competition. You need to approach the blogspace as well as the classroom as a place where we will think, write, share, and learn together.

One final word on class participation: I invite you all to bring your laptops, phones, etc. to class in order to take advantage of what they have to offer your learning experience, but please do not abuse this invitation by texting, checking email or Facebook, etc. I consider such activities the contemporary equivalent of reading a newspaper in class. I'm happy for you to have your phones on (muted) so that you may be reached in case of emergency, but nonemergency messaging or browsing should not be taking place; it is not only distracting to me (and, likely, to at least some of your peers), but it is disrespectful. If you need to engage in such activity, please leave the room before doing so. If you abuse this privilege, I will (after a warning, of course) require you to leave all such devices at home for the rest of the semester. What is more, you may expect any issues/problems along these lines (as with any other disruptive/disrespectful activity) to negatively impact your class participation grade.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

By the end of the semester you must submit for evaluation two formal blog posts, a major essay/project, and a take-home final examination. You must complete all four of these major assignments in order to pass the course.

All of these assignments must be completed by the *beginning* of class on the due date to be considered on time. A late assignment will have its grade knocked down one full level (that is, from *A* to *B*) for each class meeting that passes without your turning it in (beginning with the due date meeting), unless I have granted you an extension ahead of time; extensions are sometimes a possibility, so feel free to check with me on this, but know that I only give extensions prior to the due date (except in the rarest of circumstances). Also, please note that I do not accept papers by email; if you are somehow prevented from handing in your hard copy in person, you may attach your assignment to an email message as a placeholder to qualify as having turned it in on time, but I expect you to still provide me with a hard copy at your earliest convenience. All papers should be typed and double spaced, with one-inch margins, in Times New Roman 12 (or equivalent font/point size). All papers also should be pledged.

Your Formal Blog Posts will correspond with preassigned dates and will take the form of either a key passage interpretation or an intertextual reading. These will need to be posted by 3:00 p.m. the day **before** the class meeting in question, but you also will need to bring a hard copy for me that day. The hard copy (375-500 words) is subject to the policies/requirements listed above for the two larger projects.

Your Take-Home Final Examination will revolve around our last unit, Autism and 21st-Century Literature. This exam, which will take the form of an essay (500-1000 words), will ask you to explore central concepts and issues from the course and will test your ability to synthesize and apply the course material. Like the Major Paper/Project, you may choose to do this assignment individually or collaboratively (with up to 3 other classmates).

REWARD QUIZZES

For most class sessions, I will be offering a “reward quiz” on the assigned readings. These quizzes typically will consist of five short answer/fill-in-the-blank questions. They are designed merely to check to see if you have read the assignments for any given day, not to test your analytical/interpretive skills. Your points from these factual, content-based quizzes will be totaled and curved at the end of the semester.

COURSE GRADING

Again, you must complete all four major assignments (excluding class participation and reward quizzes) to pass this course. The distribution that will make up your final course grade is as follows:

Class Participation	25%
Reward Quizzes	10%
Formal Blog Posts (10% each)	20%
Major Paper/Project	25%
Final Examination	20%

A note on academic misconduct: Plagiarism, like all cheating, is a serious offense. It means presenting others’ work as your own--whether it be a friend, tutor, professional, published author, or online resource. Copying passages or paraphrasing ideas without acknowledging the source of those ideas is plagiarism. You can avoid this offense by citing any sources you use and by using quotation marks to indicate others’ words. I am quite willing to help you understand strategies for quotation and citation but I am not willing to be lenient on plagiarism, so please consult with me if you need to do so. At all times I expect you to abide by Mary Washington’s Honor Code and, thus, refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing in all their various and nefarious forms.

LEARNING CONTRACT OPTION

While the above percentages represent the distribution I have decided upon as the ideal weights from my perspective, in this course they actually only are an official default option. I am offering each and every one of you the chance to design your own individualized learning contract, if you so choose. This contract will allow you to adjust the weighted percentages I have established, within a pre-set range, so that I can cater (at least to some extent) to your individual strengths and weaknesses in determining how successfully you have engaged with the course material. In other words, if you know you have a hard time speaking in class, you might lower the class participation percentage and increase that of one of the other categories. If you like to work collaboratively, you might wish to bump up both your Major Paper/Project and Final Exam, as these assignments will contain a collaborative option.

You do not need to fiddle with this option at all; if you do not submit an individualized learning contract to me, I automatically will assess your overall success in the course according to the official default weighting system listed in the preceding section. If, however, you wish to take advantage of this option, then you may submit **via email only** your individualized set of adjusted percentages (see official contract form). The window of opportunity for submitting a learning contract is limited to Week Three, M Sept. 09 through F Sept. 13. All contract percentages must be a multiple of 5. Please be sure that your total adds up to 100%; if a contract is submitted without a total of the percentages adding up to 100%, you will be graded using the default scale instead.

The official learning contract option percentage ranges are as follows:

Class Participation	20-30%
Reward Quizzes	10-15%
Formal Blog Post 1	10-15%
Formal Blog Post 2	10-15%
Major Paper/Project	20-30%
Final Examination	15-20%

Regardless of how you might adjust the percentages, you still must complete all four major assignments in order to receive a passing grade for this course.

COURSE TEXTS

You have seven books for this course that you will be required to purchase. In order of appearance, they are:

William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (Vintage) ISBN: 0679732241

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (Penguin) ISBN: 0142000671

Toni Morrison's *Sula* (Knopf) ISBN: 1400033438

Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (HarperCollins) ISBN: 0061120081

Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Norton) ISBN: 0393308804

Stuart Murray's *Autism* (Routledge) ISBN: 0415884993

Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (Vintage) ISBN: 1400032716

Where these books are concerned, I am aware that, increasingly, students like to utilize electronic options such as Kindle. I am not going to forbid any of you from doing so (or from securing cheaper but different editions of the books from elsewhere rather than from our campus bookstore), but there are a couple of caveats you need to know ahead of time.

First of all, I cannot promise that I or the rest of the class always will be able to help you find your way to any particular passage under discussion. As noted above, if things go according to plan, we will spend a fair amount of time turning to specific pages and performing a close reading of individual sentences/paragraphs; thus, it is important for as many of us as possible literally to be on the same page—and, if you are unable to follow along with us, it makes it more difficult for you to participate as actively or fully.

Second, I will not grade any formal written work that does not use the pagination I have at hand in the instructor-adopted texts. I do not mean to appear unaccommodating in insisting on such a policy, but when I am grading your written work I want to be able to review any specific passages/sections you refer to with as little difficulty as possible so that I avoid wasting time that might otherwise be better spent formulating and writing responses to your essays.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Obviously, given the focus of our study, I am committed to making every effort to accommodate disabilities. The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by Mary Washington as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you already receive services through ODR and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. Please rest assured I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence, unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you need accommodations (note taking assistance, extended time for tests, etc.) but do not yet have them in place, please contact ODR as soon as possible. You will need appropriate documentation of disability.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR INSTRUCTION

I am attempting (whenever possible and to the best of my ability) to deliver this course and its materials according to the principles of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI). UDI is, according to the University of Connecticut's Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability, "an approach to teaching that consists of the proactive design and use of inclusive instructional strategies that benefit a broad range of learners, including students with disabilities." In order "to be responsive to diverse student learners and to minimize the need for 'special' accommodations and retrofitted changes to the learning environment," a UDI pedagogy "operates on the premise that the planning and delivery of instruction as well as the evaluation of learning can incorporate inclusive attributes that embrace diversity in learners without compromising academic standards." UDI "is not a synonym for 'one-size-fits-all' instruction," but rather "a flexible design that is specifically created to be used in diverse ways." Its benefits are clear: "By providing faculty with a framework and tools for designing inclusive college instruction, the dialogue surrounding college students with disabilities changes from a focus on compliance, accommodations, and nondiscrimination to an emphasis on teaching and learning."

Some of the UDI features I will be incorporating into this course include but are not limited to a detailed syllabus with clear goals and a complete calendar, links to outside resources (such as digital versions of readings whenever possible) and to instructor-generated documents (such as discussion questions or important quotes for readings), previews of the anticipated format for class meetings, multiple forms of assessment, multiple formats for in-class delivery, online student-generated formal responses to assigned readings (in addition to all the informal blog posts), mid-semester course evaluations, a take-home final examination, multiple collaborative options on assignments, and a learning contract option with adjustable percentages.

I am very interested in your opinions, throughout the semester and after the semester has ended, about any or all of these features (for example, what worked well for you and why, or what did not work well and why) and about the UDI approach overall. Also, if you do appreciate this sort of approach to course delivery, please consider being proactive in asking other professors to begin to include as many of these features as possible; this is the best way to ensure that the curriculum here at Mary Washington becomes more accessible sooner rather than later.

STIRRING CONCLUSION/SALES PITCH

I truly believe that this class has the potential to be one of the most memorable, rewarding, and transformative courses you take here at Mary Washington. Disability is as fundamental a component to human identity as class, ethnicity/race, gender, and sexuality/sexual orientation. According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2010), 56.7 million Americans, or 19% of all Americans (approaching 1 in 5!), report some level of disability—and over half of those (more than 1 in 10 Americans) report having at least one “severe” disability.

Do you know any older individuals who have difficulties hearing, seeing, or walking as well as they used to? Do you know any relatives who have been diagnosed with cancer? Do you know any friends who are dealing with chronic depression or eating disorders? Do you know any families who have an autistic child? Disability touches all of our lives, whether or not one is aware of the extent to which this true. We all know people who live with disability every day (not merely our acquaintances, but our children, our coworkers, our friends, our grandparents, our neighbors, our parents, our relatives, our siblings, etc.). What is more, most of us personally will experience one or more disability before we die.

Yet, despite how disability is such a common part of daily life for so many of us, many rarely stop to think about the role it plays in how one views oneself, how one views others, and how one views society. When one does, one’s understanding of the human experience (and, more particularly, in this course, one’s understanding of how that experience is represented in literature) may be changed utterly—for the better of us all.

According to Percy Bysshe Shelley, “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World.” He spends the majority of his aesthetic manifesto *A Defence of Poetry* (from which this quotation is taken) attempting to demonstrate “the effects of poets, in the large and true essence of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times”—and the fact that he includes in his broad conception of Poets “not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance and architecture and statuary and painting” but also “the institutors of laws, and the founders of civil society and the inventors of the arts of life and the teachers,” clearly establishes that his claims for Poetry (including for teaching!) are to be understood as inextricable claims for its power to effect change not merely in the aesthetic arena but equally in the sociopolitical arena, not merely in theory (on the level of ideas) but equally in practice. Indeed, his primary motivation in writing the *Defence* is to counter his society’s privileging of reason over and against imagination, in that “a cultivation [of reason] in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty” ultimately only tends to exacerbate “the inequality of [hu]mankind.” I am a teacher because I believe, with Shelley, that both art and the teaching of art have the power to change the world.

Oscar Wilde shares with Shelley the dubious honor of being one of my two favorite writers. Wilde asserts in his essay “The Soul of Man under Socialism” that the great merit of art is that it is inherently a disruptive activity: “Art is Individualism, and Individualism is a disturbing and disintegrating force. Therein lies its immense value. For what it seeks to disturb is monotony of type, slavery of custom, tyranny of habit, and the reduction of [hu]man[kind] to the level of a machine.” It is through the “disturbing and disintegrating force” of Art/Individualism that we may (even, must) realize beneficial social change. As Wilde sees it, “Progress is the realization of Utopias.” Thus, while he acknowledges that his aesthetics/politics as “set forth” in this essay are “quite unpractical” and that they go “against human nature,” he continues on to insist,

This is why it is worth carrying out, and that is why one proposes it. For what is a practical scheme? A practical scheme is either a scheme that is already in existence, or a scheme that that could be carried out under existing conditions. But it is exactly the existing conditions one objects to; and any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish. The conditions will be done away with, and human nature will change. The only thing that one really knows about human nature is that it changes. Change is the one quality we can predicate of it.

I am a teacher because I believe, with Wilde, that art and the teaching of art have the power to change the world.

What I want you to understand is that, as a student in this course, you too have the power to change the world—through your discussions with one another in class; through your conversations with family, friends, and acquaintances about this course; and through your own writings/artistic creations (including your contributions to our blog) which are in any way influenced by this course. Indeed, I am hoping you will embrace the Dis/Lit blog as one potentially powerful way to have an immediate impact on the ‘real world’ outside academia, outside the walls of our classroom, as a chance to publish for all to see your own insights into disability and literature. The disability rights movement fundamentally is (in the words of Paul Steven Miller) “about civil rights, personal autonomy, and individual dignity.” Your participation in this course can be a truly meaningful part of the imperative process of advancing the cause of disability rights and thereby improving the quality of life for millions of people (from individuals with disabilities to their caregivers/family members to you) today and in the future.

CALENDAR

DISABILITY AND THEORY

WEEK 1

T A 27

Introductions

R A 29

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, “Disability and Representation” (Readings [hereafter, R])

Simi Linton, “Reassigning Meaning” from *Claiming Disability* (R)

Paul K. Longmore, “The Cultural Framing of Disability: Telethons as a Case Study” (R)

Sharon L. Snyder, “Infinities of Forms: Disability Figures in Artistic Traditions” (R)

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, “The Case for Conserving Disability” (R)

WEEK 2

T S 03

David L. Braddock and Susan L. Parish, “An Institutional History of Disability” (R)

Lennard Davis, “The End of Identity Politics and the Beginning of Dismodernism: On Disability as an Unstable Category” from *Bending over Backwards* (R)

Lennard Davis, “Introduction: Disability, the Missing Term in the Race, Class, Gender Triad” from *Enforcing Normalcy* (R)

R S 05

Michael Bérubé, “Disability and Narrative” (R)

David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, “Disability as Narrative Supplement” from *Narrative Prosthesis* (R)

Sharon L. Snyder and David T. Mitchell, “Introduction: Cultural Locations of Disability” and

“Conclusion: Compulsory Feral-ization” from *Cultural Locations of Disability* (R)

WEEK 3

T S 10

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, “Disability, Identity, and Representation: An Introduction” from *Extraordinary Bodies* (R)

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, “Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory” (R)

Adrienne Asch, “Critical Race Theory, Feminism, and Disability: Reflections on Social Justice and Personal Identity” (R)

R S 12

Chris Bell, “Introducing White Disability Studies: A Modest Proposal” (R)

Ato Quayson, “Introduction: Aesthetic Nervousness” from *Aesthetic Nervousness* (R)

Michael Davidson, “Universal Design: The Work of Disability in an Age of Globalization” (R)

Tobin Siebers, “Disability in Theory: From Social Constructionism to the New Realism of the Body” (R)

WEEK 4

T S 17

Robert McRuer, “Introduction: Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence” and “Epilogue: Specters of Disability” from *Crip Theory* (R)

Robert McRuer, “Disability Nationalism in Crip Times” (R)

Clare Barker and Stuart Murray, “Disabling Postcolonialism: Global Disability Cultures and Democratic Criticism” (R)

DISABILITY AND 19TH-CENTURY LITERATURE (+ SHAKESPEARE!)

R S 19

William Shakespeare, *Richard III* [through Act IV. Scene II]

(<http://archive.org/details/shakespearestra58shakgoog>)

WEEK 5

T S 24

William Shakespeare, *Richard III* [through end]

(<http://archive.org/details/shakespearestra58shakgoog>)

Byron, *The Deformed Transformed*

(<http://archive.org/details/deformedtransfor00byrorich>)

R S 26 Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* (<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DicChri.html>)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* [through Ch. 8]
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/SheFran.html>)

WEEK 6

T O 01 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* [through end]
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/SheFran.html>)

R O 03 Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* [Chs. 14-15, 20, 25-27, and 36-38]
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/BroJanI.html>) and
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/BroJaII.html>)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/GilYell.html>)
Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birthmark"
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/HawBirt.html>)

WEEK 7

T O 08 Thomas Hardy, "The Withered Arm"
(<http://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/ghost-stories-hardy.html>)
Oscar Wilde, "The Birthday of the Infanta"
(<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/WilInfa.html>)
John Clare, "I Am" (http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/I_Am)
Emily Dickinson, 327 (http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Before_I_got_my_eye_put_out), 435
(http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Much_Madness_is_divinest_Sense_%E2%80%94), and 670
(http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/One_need_not_be_a_Chamber_%E2%80%94_to_be_Haunted_%E2%80%94)
Amy Levy, "Felo de Se" (<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/vwwp/view?docId=VAB7098>)
Charlotte Smith, 70 (<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/headland.html>)
Walt Whitman, "The Wound-Dresser"
(<http://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/169>)
Dorothy Wordsworth, "Thoughts on My Sick-Bed"
(<http://www.rc.umd.edu/pop-blog/?p=217>)
William Wordsworth, "The Mad Mother"
(<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Wor2Lyr.html>)

DISABILITY AND 20TH-CENTURY LITERATURE

R O 10 William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* [3-179 (through June Second, 1910)]

WEEK 8

T O 15 **FALL BREAK—NO CLASS**

R O 17 William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* [through end]

WEEK 9

T O 22 John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* [all]

Toni Morrison, *Sula* [3-29 (through 1920)]

R O 24 Toni Morrison, *Sula* [through end]

WEEK 10

T O 29 Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* [through Ch. 14]

R O 31 Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* [through end]

WEEK 11

T N 05 Keith Banner, “The Wedding of Tom to Tom” (R)

Raymond Carver, “Cathedral” (R)

Jhumpa Lahiri, “The Treatment of Bibi Haldar” (R)

Flannery O’Connor, “Good Country People” (R)

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* [17-61 (through Part One)]

R N 07 Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* [through end]

WEEK 12

T N 12 Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (<http://www.samuel-beckett.net/endgame.html>)

Joy Harjo, “The Woman Hanging From the Thirteenth Floor Window”

(<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=180960>)

Petra Kuppers, “Crip Time” and “disabled lilacs” (<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/86/86>)

Laurie Clements Lambeth, “Symptoms” and “Hypoesthesia”

(<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/88/88>)

Sylvia Path, “Tulips” (<http://www.sylviaplathforum.com/tulips.html>)

R N 14 Caryl Churchill, *A Mouthful of Birds* (R)
Rafael Campo, “Technology and Medicine”

(<http://litmed.med.nyu.edu/poems/technology.medicine.rc.html>) and “Towards Curing AIDS”

(<http://litmed.med.nyu.edu/poems/towards.curing.rc.html>)

Jim Ferris, “Poet of Cripples,” “Normal” (<http://www.mainstreetrag.com/JFerris.html>), and

“Obviously” (<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/82/82>)

Ayisha Knight, “Until” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4py3SA4DVns>)

Robert Lowell, “Home After Three Months Away”

(<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15285>)

AUTISM AND 21ST-CENTURY LITERATURE

WEEK 13

T N 19

Stuart Murray, *Autism* [all]

Jim Sinclair, “Don’t Mourn For Us” (http://www.autreat.com/dont_mourn.html)

R N 21

Ari Ne’eman, “Dueling Narratives: Neurotypical and Autistic Perspectives about the Autism Spectrum” (http://www.cwru.edu/affil/sce/Texts_2007/Ne'eman.html)

Melanie Yergeau, “Circle Wars: Reshaping the Typical Autism Essay”

(<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/1063/1222>)

Amanda Baggs, “Up in the Clouds and Down in the Valley: My Richness and Yours”

(<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/1052/1238>)

Dawn Prince, “The Silence Between: An Autoethnographic Examination of the Language Prejudice and its Impact on the Assessment of Autistic and Animal Intelligence”

(<http://dsqsds.org/article/view/1055/1242>)

John Duffy and Rebecca Dorner, “The Pathos of ‘Mindblindness’: Autism, Science, and Sadness in ‘Theory of Mind’ Narratives” (R)

Ralph James Savarese, “Toward a Postcolonial Neurology: Autism, Tito Mukhopadhyay, and a New Geo-poetics of the Body” (R)

WEEK 14

T N 26

MAJOR PAPER/PROJECT DUE

Tito Rajarshi Mukhopadhyay, “The Gold of the Sunbeams” and “The Climb” (R)

Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* [1-90 (through Ch. 139)]

R N 28

THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS

WEEK 15

T D 03

Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* [through end]

R D 05

Rebecca Foust, “Apologies to my OB-GYN” (<http://www.rebeccafoust.com/poems.html#>) and

“Dark Card” (http://www.fishhousepoems.org/archives/rebecca_foust/dark_card.shtml)

Tito Rajarshi Mukhopadhyay, Five Poems (<http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/1192/1256>)

Dawn Prince, “she knew the way the wind” and “Our dust swirls . . .” (R)

Dora Raymaaker, “A Poem” (<http://autisticadvocacy.org/2012/05/a-poem>)

DJ Savarese, “Alaska,” “Daring To Be Brave,” “Rescue,” and “Spring” (R)

Nancy Carlin and Michael Rasbury, *Max Understood* (R) or

(<http://www.michaelrasbury.com/music/maxunderstood/maxunderstood.htm>)

FINAL EXAMINATION

Tues., Dec. 10 (3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.)