

# Sample Syllabus: BEFORE Universal Instructional Design Changes

## Introduction to Women's Texts

L77 WS 214C, Section 03

Spring 2002

*"One is not born but made a woman."  
~Simone de Beauvoir*

**Instructor:** <instructor name>  
**Office Hours:** <office hours>  
**Phone:** <office phone>  
**Email:** <email address>

### Required Texts

Course Packet (x)  
Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. (Doubleday)  
Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. (Penguin)  
Crane, Stephen. *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*. (Bantam)  
Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. (NAL)  
Morrison, Toni. *Sula*. (Signet)  
Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. (Norton critical)

### Course Objectives

- 1) To assess canonical and non-canonical literary texts, primarily written by women, with a more critical eye for gender constructions, both inside and outside of the texts themselves.
- 2) To evaluate how language, literature, and the stories we tell—to each other and to ourselves—contribute to individual and cultural identity-formation.
- 3) To identify the arguments implicit in seemingly non-argumentative texts, and to consider the ways in which women have used writing as a mode of changing their "social and imaginative conditions."

### Course Requirements / Policies

- **Attendance.** You must attend every class, except in the event of serious illness or family emergency. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed. More than three unexcused absences will result in a lowered final grade.
- **Participation.** Active and attentive involvement, both in your discussions and in your reading, is mandatory for this class. You should come to each class prepared to discuss the day's assignment, and prepared to think critically about its content, motivations, and implications.
- **Reading Journals.** For each new reading assignment, you will be required to type a 1-page (minimum) reading journal entry. These entries should be placed in a folder from which they can be removed easily; **you will need to bring the whole journal to class every day.** Entries will be collected at random, and **no late entries will be accepted.** See handout on the format and content of these entries.
- **Essays.** There will be two formal essays: one of 4-5 pages in length, and one of 7-8 pages. I will give you topics to choose from for the short essay assignment, but you will formulate the topics of the longer paper, according to your own interests. These topics will need to be planned carefully and discussed with me in advance. All papers for this course should be written according to conventions for writing about literary texts. More details to come about these essays. **No late papers will be accepted.**

*Note:* Plagiarism is using others' ideas without citing them, whether "intentional" or not, and can result in failure of an assignment or even the course. If you are uncertain about whether to cite an idea, cite it, or ask someone. If you are uncertain about how to cite material, please see the *Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (most recent edition), a. k. a. *MLA Handbook*.

**Comment [d1]:**  
Two font formatting choices that may present difficulties for students with visual disabilities: 1) the font is "shadowed," and 2) the font is a serif font (Garamond).  
  
What's a "serif"? See: <http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/S/serif.html>  
  
Sans serif fonts – such as **Arial**, **Corbel**, and **Calibri** – are more accessible.

**Comment [d2]:**  
Shaded background with black text is low-contrast. This formatting choice persists throughout in the section and table headings.  
  
May be difficult for students with visual disabilities.

**Comment [d3]:**  
The "x" in parentheses is intended to serve as shorthand later in the syllabus, when readings from the Course Packet are listed in the Class Schedule.  
  
Without a note explaining this shorthand, instructor is assuming that this information will be understood by all students.

**Comment [d4]:**  
Font size throughout the syllabus is 9 point.  
  
Accessible font size should be 12-point at a minimum; 14-point often is preferred for those with visual disabilities.

**Comment [d5]:**  
Missing: "policies" or other information that might contribute to an inclusive, accessible learning environment, such as:  
  
Information about where students with disabilities may go for support and relevant campus policies.  
  
Explicit mention of the value and importance of multiple perspectives and shared understandings across difference as a means to enrich the learning of the class.  
  
Code of conduct or civility to describe the norms for respectful dialogue and discussion (particularly important in a course where the subject matter could lead to discussions of a sensitive nature).

**Comment [d6]:**  
Text alignment is justified, which may present difficulties for students with visual disabilities, due to inconsistencies in spacing between words. Left-hand justified text would be more accessible because the spacing between words is more regular and predictable.

**Comment [d7]:**  
Italics also may present difficulties for students with visual disabilities. Underlining is more accessible.

# Sample Syllabus: BEFORE Universal Instructional Design Changes

## Class Schedule

1 How Literature Makes Gender: Representations of Women and Men		
TU 1/8	Introduction & Opening Thoughts "Spelling" (Atwood)	
TH 1/10	Fairy Tales (handout) Gilbert and Gubar excerpt (handout)	<b>Journal 1:</b> Consider how the fairy tales could be said to "make" gender. How do they contribute to assumptions about gender?
TU 1/15	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 5-96 (pref. – ch. 9)	<b>Journal 2:</b> How might Jane's life/identity be different if she were a male?
TH 1/17	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 97-172 (chs. 10-15)	<b>Journal 3:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TU 1/22	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 175-247 (chs. 16-20)	<b>Journal 4:</b> Identify stereotypes of feminine and masculine behavior, and consider how Jane's identity might be said to be more "masculine" than "feminine."
TH 1/24	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 248-331 (chs. 21-26)	<b>Journal 5:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TU 1/29	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 335-432 (chs. 27-33)	<b>Journal 6:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TH 1/31	<u>Jane Eyre</u> – pp. 433-end (chs. 34-end)	<b>Journal 7:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.

**Comment [d8]:**  
Information is presented in tables, which may present difficulties for screen readers.  
  
**What's a screen reader?** See: <http://www.nomensa.com/blog/2005/what-is-a-screen-reader>

2 Literature and Identity Formation: Constructing the Narrative of Self		
TU 2/5	De Beauvoir (x)	<b>Journal 8:</b> Consider how the cultural "narratives" about women shape their identities.
TH 2/7	Ferré – "Poisoned Story" (x)	<b>Journal 9:</b> How is this tale a tale of Rosaura's identity? How does it deviate from typical "fairy tales"?
TU 2/12	<u>Sula</u> – thru p. 85	<b>Journal 10:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TH 2/14	<u>Sula</u> – pp. 86-end	<b>Journal 11:</b> Consider the issue of identity in this text, and why "boundaries" are essential to a definition of "self."

**Comment [d9]:**  
Blue font on white background may be difficult to read for students with color blindness or other visual disabilities.

3 Writing as a Social Instrument: Negotiating Private and Public Bodies/Selves		
TU 2/19	Woolf, Gilman, Walker (x)	<b>Journal 12:</b> Apply Woolf's "Angel" to the narrator in "The Yellow Wallpaper."
TH 2/21	Maggie – thru p. 61 (end of novella)	<b>Journal 13:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TU 2/26	<u>Incidents</u> – thru p. 109 <b>Essay #1 due in class.</b>	<b>Journal 14:</b> Who is Jacobs's audience? What's her purpose? How do these things shape the narrative she's telling?
TH 2/28	<u>Incidents</u> – pp. 110-end	<b>Journal 15:</b> Topic/passage of your choosing.
TU 3/5	Spring Break!	
TH 3/7	Spring Break!	

**Note: the remaining weeks of the semester have been cut for the sake of brevity with this sample syllabus.**

## Sample Syllabus: AFTER Universal Instructional Design Changes

### Introduction to Women's Texts

L77 WS 214C, Section 03

Spring 2002

**Instructor:** <instructor name>

**Office Hours:** <office hours>

**Phone:** <office phone>

**Email:** <email address>

"One is not born  
but made a woman."

~Simone de Beauvoir

#### Comment [d1]:

Font changed to Corbel (a sans serif font) throughout. The "shadow" formatting has been removed.

#### Comment [d2]:

Black background with white text is high-contrast, which may be easier to see for students with visual disabilities.

### Required Texts

Course Packet (readings marked with "x" in Class Schedule are from this text)

Atwood, Margaret. The Handmaid's Tale. (Doubleday)

Brontë, Charlotte. Jane Eyre. (Penguin)

Crane, Stephen. Maggie: A Girl of the Streets. (Bantam)

Jacobs, Harriet. Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. (NAL)

Morrison, Toni. Sula. (Signet)

Rhys, Jean. Wide Sargasso Sea. (Norton critical)

#### Comment [d3]:

Included a description explaining the "x" in the Class Schedule below.

### Course Objectives

- 1) To assess canonical and non-canonical literary texts, primarily written by women, with a more critical eye for gender constructions, both inside and outside of the texts themselves.
- 2) To evaluate how language, literature, and the stories we tell—to each other and to ourselves—contribute to individual and cultural identity-formation.
- 3) To identify the arguments implicit in seemingly non-argumentative texts, and to consider the ways in which women have used writing as a mode of changing their "social and imaginative conditions."

#### Comment [d4]:

Font size throughout the syllabus is now 12-point, with 14-point headers.

### Course Requirements / Policies

**Attendance.** You must attend every class, except in the event of serious illness or family emergency. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed. More than three unexcused absences will result in a lowered final grade.

**Participation.** Active and attentive involvement, both in your discussions and in your reading, is mandatory for this class. You should come to each class prepared to discuss the day's assignment, and prepared to think critically about its content, motivations, and implications.

**Accommodations.** Students who may need specific accommodations due to disabilities must register with the Office of Disability Services (<insert links / phone numbers>). Once this registration process has happened, I am more than happy to work with you on appropriate modifications to the course to ensure that you have equal access and opportunities for success....

#### Comment [d5]:

New content has been drafted under the headings, Accommodations, Inclusion, and Dialogue. This content is intended to be used only as a sample.

Many institutions and academic units require specific language to be included regarding students with disabilities and accommodation processes.

Additionally, every instructor has different ways of describing and prioritizing what "inclusion" and "dialogue" might look like for her/his course.

## Sample Syllabus: AFTER Universal Instructional Design Changes

**Inclusion.** This course depends upon the inclusion of different perspectives, ideas, modes of learning, and voices for critical thinking and for learning. I have designed the course, to the extent possible, to eliminate barriers and provide full and equal access for all students. All forms of diversity (e.g., culture, ability, age, gender expression, religious belief or non-belief, etc.) – those unique characteristics that add richness, breadth, and depth to our class – will be acknowledged and accommodated in a universal manner. (Note: the language in this paragraph has been adapted from a “Universal Instructional Design” included in syllabi in the Higher Education Administration program at Saint Louis University.)

**Dialogue.** As we tackle topics and texts that challenge our preconceived ideas and our own personal biases, it will be important that we treat one another with respect. Together, at the beginning of the semester, we will co-create a “code of conduct” to guide our classroom discussions. At a minimum, we will seek to foster dialogue, not debate; to read more about the differences, FOLLOW THIS LINK: <http://bit.ly/1Cw8cyg>.

**Reading Journals.** For each new reading assignment, you will be required to type a 1-page (minimum) reading journal entry. These entries should be placed in a folder from which they can be removed easily; **you will need to bring the whole journal to class every day**. Entries will be collected at random, and **no late entries will be accepted**. See handout on the format and content of these entries.

**Essays.** There will be two formal essays: one of 4-5 pages in length, and one of 7-8 pages. I will give you topics to choose from for the short essay assignment, but you will formulate the topics of the longer paper, according to your own interests. These topics will need to be planned carefully and discussed with me in advance. All papers for this course should be written according to conventions for writing about literary texts. More details to come about these essays. **No late papers will be accepted.**

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**Comment [d6]:**

Announcing hyperlinked text as a link is more accessible for screen readers and for students who may not understand the convention of a blue, underlined item in the text as a link.

**Comment [d7]:**

Text is aligned to the left-hand margin, rather than justified. This choice results in more regular, predictable spacing between words and, therefore, is more accessible.

**Comment [d8]:**

Italics changed to underlining for increased accessibility.

## Sample Syllabus: AFTER Universal Instructional Design Changes

### Class Schedule

#### Unit 1: How Literature Makes Gender: Representations of Women and Men

##### Tuesday, January 8

Focus: Introduction & Opening Thoughts

Reading: "Spelling" (Atwood)

##### Thursday, January 10

Readings: Fairy Tales (handout); Gilbert and Gubar (handout)

Journal 1: Consider how the fairy tales could be said to "make" gender.  
How do they contribute to assumptions about gender?

##### Tuesday, January 15

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 5-96 (pref. – ch. 9)

Journal 2: How might Jane's life/identity be different if she were a male?

##### Thursday, January 17

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 97-172 (chs. 10-15)

Journal 3: Topic/passage of your choosing.

##### Tuesday, January 22

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 175-247 (chs. 16-20)

Journal 4: Identify stereotypes of feminine and masculine behavior.  
Consider how Jane's identity might be said to be more "masculine" than "feminine."

##### Thursday, January 24

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 248-331 (chs. 21-26)

Journal 5: Topic/passage of your choosing.

##### Tuesday, January 29

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 335-432 (chs. 27-33)

Journal 6: Topic/passage of your choosing.

##### Thursday, January 31

Reading: Jane Eyre – pp. 433-end (chs. 34-end)

Journal 7: Topic/passage of your choosing.

#### Comment [d9]:

Information is presented as text, rather than in tables, to improve accessibility.

Comment [d10]: Changed blue font for the journal entry text to black.

## Sample Syllabus: AFTER Universal Instructional Design Changes

### Unit 2: Literature and Identity Formation: Constructing the Narrative of Self

#### Tuesday, February 5

Reading: DeBeauvoir (x) [x = Course Packet]

Journal 8: Consider how the cultural “narratives” about women shape their identities.

#### Thursday, February 7

Reading: Ferré – “Poisoned Story” (x)

Journal 9: How is this tale a tale of Rosaura’s identity?  
How does it deviate from typical “fairy tales”?

#### Tuesday, February 12

Reading: Sula – thru p. 85

Journal 10: Topic/passage of your choosing.

#### Thursday, February 14

Reading: Sula – pp. 86-end

Journal 11: Consider the issue of identity in this text.  
Why are “boundaries” are essential to a definition of “self”?

### Unit 3: Writing as a Social Instrument: Negotiating Private and Public Bodies and Public Selves

#### Tuesday, February 19

Readings: Woolf, Gilman, Walker (x)

Journal 12: Apply Woolf’s “Angel” to the narrator in “The Yellow Wallpaper.”

#### Thursday, February 21

Reading: Maggie – thru p. 61 (end of novella)

Journal 13: Topic/passage of your choosing.

#### Tuesday, February 26

Reading: Incidents – thru p. 109

Due: **Essay #1 due in class**

Journal 14: Who is Jacobs’s audience? What’s her purpose?  
How do these things shape the narrative she’s telling?

#### Thursday, February 28

Reading: Incidents – pp. 110-end

Journal 15: Topic/passage of your choosing.

#### March 5 and March 7

Spring Break – no class!