

**UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA**  
**School of Modern Languages**  
**B. A. in English / B. A. in English Teaching**

**Course Outline I-2024**

**General Information**

**Code:** LM-1472

**Name:** Rhetoric III: Writing about Literature

**Credits:** 3

**In-class hours:** 3

**Self- study hours (out-of-class hours):** 6

**Requisites:** LM-1362

**Co-requisites:** None

**Cycle:** VII

**Modality:** In-person classes

**Schedule:** Fridays from 13:00 to 15:50

**Professor:** MSc. Paula Cervantes Cruz / paula.cervantes@ucr.ac.cr

**HAE:** Thursdays from 15: 00 to 17: 00 (ask for Zoom link via institutional e-mail).

**I. Course Description**

This is a fourth-year writing course designed to develop the skills necessary to write about literature. Its fundamental purpose is to train students to not only enjoy, understand, and appreciate literature in English, but also to be able to write logically, coherently, and proficiently about it, with a command of rhetorical strategies, correct grammar and punctuation, and appropriate literary analysis.

**II. General Objectives**

- A. Enhance understanding and appreciation of literary works.
- B. Foment critical reading abilities and literary analytical skills.
- C. Improve ability to articulate and develop ideas in clear, cohesive standard written English.

**III. Specific Objectives**

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- A. Reinforce ability to analyze basic elements of poetry, drama and fiction.
- B. Generate and evaluate multiple critical responses to works of literature.
- C. Identify themes with logical implications derived from assigned literary works.
- D. Articulate original positions in clear, argumentative thesis statements.
- E. Develop ideas on the basis of standard, cohesive sentence format outlines.
- F. Defend positions through the use of ample, varied support from primary texts.
- G. Proofread, edit, and assess their own written production, as well as that of peers.

## **IV. Contents**

- A. Analysis of literary conventions, elements, and themes for writing skills purposes.
  - 1. Analyzing narrative: using narrative texts to improve advanced academic writing in English.
  - 2. Analyzing poetry: using poetic texts to improve advanced academic writing in English.
  - 3. Analyzing drama: using dramatic texts to improve advanced academic writing in English.
  
- B. The writing process of a literary analysis essay
  - 1. The thesis statement: using literary texts and secondary sources to effectively support arguments in advanced literary academic writing in English.
  - 2. Planning and outlining: pre-writing preparation skills for advanced academic writing in English.
  - 3. Using sources effectively: primary and secondary sources, in-text citations, paraphrasing, references, APA style.
  - 4. Proofreading as a fundamental skill in advanced academic writing in English.
  - 5. Editing as a fundamental skill in advanced academic writing in English.
  
- C. Academic writing conventions
  - 1. Features of academic writing: purpose and strategy, organization, style, cross-cultural differences in academic writing, information flow, summary phrases, vocabulary shift.
  - 2. Achieving a clear academic writing style: preparation for research writing, post-graduate projects, and future jobs.
  - 3. Writing coherent and cohesive texts.
  - 4. Avoiding vagueness and excessive wordiness.

## **V. Methodology**

Students will be given information to review and increase knowledge about basic literary terms, writing concepts, and skills, which will be discussed and practiced in class. Extensive out-of-class work is required for both reading and writing assignments. Students are expected to participate actively in discussions and work sessions, which will include individual and group work. Peer evaluation and self-evaluation are an important part of the course and will take place during class sessions. All assignments will be delivered personally in printed form and digitally via *Mediación Virtual*, the official university platform, which will also be used to store and share class material and extra resources.

## **VI. Evaluation**

Evaluation is continuous in the sense that students' preparation and participation are observed on a daily basis. Students are responsible for all information and material discussed in class or assigned as

readings. The final grade will be determined on the following basis:

- Writing Process (3 essays, one per literary genre, 5 pages each) ..... 80%
- Academic writing conventions quizzes (2) ..... 20%

**Notes on evaluation:** Students must submit all papers in order to complete the course. No late papers will be accepted under any circumstance. Papers failing to adhere to the APA 7th format will be rejected and will be graded with a ZERO. Plagiarism will be dealt severely and as established by the *Reglamento Estudiantil*.

## VII. Bibliography

Bailey, Stephen. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Routledge, 2011.

Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing about Literature*. Little, Brown, 1980.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power*. Oxford Univ. Press 1981.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

McMahan, Elizabeth et al. *Literature and the Writing Process*. 3rd ed., Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.

Miller, James E. et al. *Traditions in Literature*. Scott, Foresman and Company. 1985. (Handbook of literary terms)

Roberts. Edgar V. *Writing Themes about Literature*. Prentice-Hall, 1983.

Swales, John M. and Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Writing Students: Essential Skills and Tasks*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., University of Michigan Press, 2012.

### Timetable\*

This chronogram is tentative and may be subject to change due to unexpected circumstances or as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Week	Content and activities
<b>Week #1</b> March 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Welcome week</b></li><li>• <b>Syllabus:</b> reading, discussion, and approval.</li></ul>
<b>Week #2</b> March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic writing / Writing about Narrative</li></ul>
<b>Week #3</b> March 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Holy Week (holiday)</b></li></ul>
<b>Week #4</b> April 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Narrative</li></ul>
<b>Week #5</b> April 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Narrative</li></ul>
<b>Week #6</b> April 19	<b>Essay 1 Due</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to writing about Poetry</li></ul>
<b>Week #7</b> April 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Poetry</li></ul>
<b>Week #8</b> May 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Poetry ** (Possibility of changing this date)</li></ul>
<b>Week #9</b> May 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing About Poetry</li></ul> <b>I quiz</b>
<b>Week #10</b> May 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Poetry</li></ul>
<b>Week #11</b> May 24	<b>Essay 2 Due</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to writing about Drama</li></ul>
<b>Week #12</b> May 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Drama</li></ul>
<b>Week #13</b> June 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Drama</li></ul>
<b>Week #14</b> June 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Drama</li></ul> <b>II quiz</b>
<b>Week #15</b> June 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing about Drama</li></ul>
<b>Week #16</b> June 28	<b>Essay 3 Due</b>
<b>Week #17</b>	<b>Ampliación</b> July 5 to July 12

\* This timetable is tentative and subject to change as deemed appropriate by the instructor.