Goals and Expectations for the English Major

EN110

Students should begin to demonstrate

Ability to

- frame questions about how we read and write within the discipline of literary studies
- read closely and to attend to the complexity of language
- formulate questions about an author's formal choices and draw inferences from patterns (of language, verse, imagery)
- craft and support a thesis
- recognize historical and cultural contexts and their bearing on literary meanings
- engage with secondary readings pertinent to the texts and questions of the course
- advance class conversation through active listening and appropriately informed contributions

Familiarity with

- the conventions of specific genres
- literary terms
- critical perspectives, methods, and theories
- the conventions of written literary analysis and documentation
- periods of literary history
- library resources

200 Level

In addition to developing greater sophistication in the goals listed at the 100 level, students in literature courses should demonstrate the ability to

- situate a text in relation to forms/genres/literary periods
- read against a text, that is, to question its ideological or social assumptions
- define a topic independently
- engage the work of other critics and scholars, both in class discussion and in written work
- carry out basic research appropriate to literary studies

Students in creative writing courses should demonstrate the ability to

- critique both professional writing and the work of their peers in workshop settings
- write fiction, poems, and essays that demonstrate fluency in the appropriate conventions

300 Level

In addition to developing still greater sophistication in the goals listed at the 100 and 200 level, students in literature courses should demonstrate the ability to

- read and interpret a work of literature independently
- sustain a complex argument
- conduct research in support of a sustained analytical paper

Students in creative writing courses should demonstrate the ability to

- write with technical sophistication in relation to formal conventions

Capstone Experience

Students in capstone courses will

- take the initiative to plan and organize their projects
- work independently to sustain projects through their various stages
- produce a major project that synthesizes and reflects back upon work already completed in the major
- demonstrate awareness of the wider critical or artistic context that informs the project being completed
- participate in a community of other writers and artists whose work they will be expected to critique in an engaged and constructive way