**Prof. Peter Schmidt**

**Fall 2016, TTh 9:55 – 11:10 am, LPAC 201**

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**English 009H: “Portraits of the Artist”**

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**English 009H Course Requirements: what students must do**

• *Please do not eat food in class*; eat beforehand. It’s OK to bring coffee or another drink.

Put your cell phone in silent mode. But always bring a digital device with Internet access (a laptop, pad/tablet, or phone in silent mode) to class, for you’ll need it to access course documents and sometimes to do group Internet searches or other activities. It’s OK also to print out the course materials if you prefer.

• Regular attendance: more than 3 unexcused absences over the course of the semester will definitely hurt your grade. To get an excused absence (sickness, family emergency, etc.) you need to get a note from the Health Center and/or the Dean’s office; please try to let me know ahead of time through yourself or a friend if you know you’ll miss class. Also, this class begins at 8:30am: be in class ready to go on time. Please get a good night’s sleep the night before.

• This is a seminar, not a lecture class. That means everyone should regularly participate in discussion. Come to class having studied the readings and other materials assigned for that day, with particular questions and topics you would like to discuss as well as passages or scenes to focus on.

• Students will be expected to some of our discussion questions for many of our classes. For more details, see below.

• Attending one-on-one paper conferences with the professor about my feedback and your own thoughts (times announced later this semester); and other activities.

• Completion of writing assignments on time. Late papers and other writing will be penalized a partial grade for each day they are late (B+ to B to B- , etc.). All students must attend paper conferences with the professor as assigned. Completion of assigned revisions to papers may also part of the course requirements, at the discretion of the instructor. Yes, I know you’re taking this semester pass/fail, but it’s best to get in the habit of turning in all your work on time.

***Assigned writing for “Portraits of the Artist” will mostly be of three kinds:***

• Please create a “Portraits of the Artist” folder for all your downloaded and/or printed course materials, your paper drafts, and your papers with my comments after they are returned. This folder may be entirely digital or you may make a print folder as well if you prefer to work with printed materials. Or you may use some mix of both.

• ***2 papers of medium length* (~4-8pp.: see syllabus),** double-spaced. Students will have substantial freedom (read responsibility) to choose their own topic and interpretive focus for each paper. ~25% of your grade (each)

**Deadlines for uploading the papers to our Moodle site using the links provide (add these dates to your calendar)**: Sunday, Sept. 23, 10pm; and Sunday, Nov. 18, 10pm. See the 9H Moodle page for more information and for the links to use to upload your papers.

• **A revision of paper #1 or #2** responding to feedback and your own new ideas: By Friday, Dec. 14 print your revised paper and turn it in to LPAC 206 by 5pm. I’ll have a copy of your original paper and my comments to compare with your revision.

• **Final exam essays (open book and notes)**. At the end of the semester one of the exam questions will involve discussing a paper of yours that you revised, so please create a “Portraits of the Artist” folder and your papers with comments after they are returned(i.e., either the printed or digital copies with my comments).

The Final Exam will have 3 parts, as the syllabus explains. In the first, you will revise one of your “Portraits of the Artist” essays from earlier this semester and submit it in print form in December (see syllabus). For question #1 of the final exam, you will write an essay meditating on what you learned from doing the revision and briefly evaluating how your writing has evolved in our course.

A second final exam question will be a short essay on course material we’ve covered since the Ruth Ozeki novel, or any other course material on which you’ve not yet written a paper.

A third short exam question will ask you to reflect more generally on your learning in English 009H and to draw some general conclusions about the value of Humanities courses in a liberal arts curriculum.

The final exam will be an open-book and open-notes exam. For more details on this exam and its questions and due date, see the 009H syllabus on Moodle. Due date: Saturday, Dec. 22.

**Grading**: Quality of class participation (both participating in discussion and leading discussions, plus other assignments like online blog posts) counts 25%; papers #1 and #2, 25% each; revised paper (due in Dec.) 25%; and Final Exam 25%. Poor attendance or class participation and/or late papers will negatively affect your grade, just as poor written work will. Clear *improvement* in your writing over the course of the semester will help your final grade, as will thoughtful class participation throughout the semester.

*Because this seminar meets in the fall semester, Swarthmore policy is that first-year students receive either credit or no credit (CR or NC) for their classes on their transcript. But you’ll receive “shadow grades” and regular feedback for all assignments*, so you should have a good sense of how you’re doing and why you’re receiving the shadow grades that you are. I also email a brief report on your grades and behavior to your academic advisor. Your final shadow grade for the class is not recorded on your transcript, but is sent to you and your advisor.

**A note about honesty and avoiding plagiarism**: All writing that you turn in for this English Literature class should be yours alone and done solely for this course.

When you borrow ideas and language from others it is your responsibility to acknowledge these sources accurately; anything less constitutes plagiarism and severe penalties may be involved (including flunking the course and suspension for a semester)—regardless of whether you “intended” to plagiarize or not. For more information, read at least TWO of the following sources:

* The Swarthmore English Literature Department’s Web Page: <http://www.swarthmore.edu/academics/english-literature/plagiarism-and-citation.xml>
* The Writing Associates Program on proper paraphrasing and citation: <https://www.swarthmore.edu/writing/paraphrasing-citation>
* The Swarthmore Student Handbook’s section on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Misconduct, relevant for all your classes at Swarthmore: <https://www.swarthmore.edu/student-handbook/academic-policies#academic_misconduct>
* Biology professor Amy Cheng Vollmer’s definitions of three common kinds of plagiarism and how to avoid them. The sinful 3: patchwork plagiarism, paraphrase plagiarism, and lazy plagiarism. **This document is on the General Resources section on our 009H Moodle site**.

*Plagiarism penalties do not mean you should be afraid of consulting with others (a Writing Center person, fellow students, me) or of borrowing good ideas from others: just about all good writing borrows a little from others and is inspired by them!* It is very simple to acknowledge this with a “Acknowledgments” at the end of a paper, and/or in your bibliography. I will be happy to confer with you about any issues involving citing sources or plagiarism if you have questions—but it’s always best to do this while your paper is in progress, not afterwards.

English Literature introductory courses at Swarthmore do not emphasize or require extensive research and citing of secondary sources. Our main focus will be on quoting and citing accurately materials on the syllabus and making effective interpretations and arguments based on your textual evidence (and other data).

**Accommodations for a disability:** If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Dean’s Office or the Office of Student Disability Services (both are in Parrish) to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs.

As appropriate, a student with documented disabilities will be given a written Accommodations Letter to give to their professors. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, **please arrange to get this Accommodations Letter as soon as possible—i.e., before the end of the Add/Drop period**.

\*\*\*Info: [Visit the Student Disability Service Website](http://www.swarthmore.edu/academic-advising-support/welcome-to-student-disability-service) at:

<https://www.swarthmore.edu/academic-advising-support/welcome-to-student-disability-services>

You are also welcome to contact me, Peter Schmidt, privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged through the Office of Student Disability Services.

**A Summary of Skills We Focus on Improving in English First-Year Seminars (but improvement takes effort on YOUR part, not just on the professor’s):**

*Discussion skills:*

• how to ask better questions for interpreting cultural (especially literary) works

• arguing with others fairly: making distinctions and supporting your claims

• supporting others: making connections and finding common ground in a discussion

• leading discussion: how to use your own ideas to help others discover theirs

• how to give criticism of others’ writing, and receive criticism of yours

*Writing skills:*

• how to move from a set of observations to a thesis sentence, and what differentiates a weak thesis from a strong one

• how to use quoted evidence better (being more thorough and more skeptical and more detailed in your arguments; learning how to use quoted evidence most effectively, especially guiding a reader *through* a key quotation)

• counter-arguments and other rhetorical skills

• the value of illustrations and digressions (including embedded in parentheses or dashes)

• improving grammar, punctuation, syntax, vocabulary, paragraph structure, and organization. With punctuation we’ll focus on correctly using commas, colons, semi-colons, and dashes to bring liveliness, clarity, and variety to your sentences

• revision skills

• how to do basic page and bibliographic citations for written work in the Humanities

Note: FURTHER HELP WITH WRITING ASSIGNMENTS FOR ALL YOUR CLASSES MAY BE AVAILABLE AT THE **SWARTHMORE COLLEGE WRITING CENTER** IN THE FIRST FLOOR OF TROTTER. IT IS STAFFED BY TRAINED STUDENTS KNOWN AS WRITING ASSOCIATIONS (WAs). THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ENCOURAGES ALL STUDENTS TO USE THE WRITING CENTER FOR HELP WITH WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS.

IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A WA GIVE YOU ADVICE ON A DRAFT OF YOUR PAPER, BE SURE TO PLAN AHEAD. THAT IS, HAVE A DRAFT FOR THEM TO READ SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE PAPER IS DUE, NOT THE NIGHT BEFORE!

**Anonymous end-of-the-semester student course evaluations:**

At the end of the semester, each student will fill out an anonymous English 009H course evaluation. This is your chance to give feedback to the professor about things you most liked (and why) and changes you would recommend.

I read these course evaluations after all grading is done, and I often incorporate student suggestions into the next version of the course.