

English 1012 Spring 2023, Professor Diana Lobontiu
Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:40pm - 4:55pm _____
Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:55pm - 5:55pm, 2311 Boylan Hall
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617-893-2319 (for emergencies)

English 1012

Absurdism and Surrealism in Literature and Media

This course concerns itself with absurdism, which introduces irrationality into a seemingly rational universe, and surrealism, absurdism's softer counterpart, which introduces elements of the human subconscious/dreams into a seemingly rational universe. Both of these movements evoke feelings of loneliness and terror, but there is also room in them for comedy, satire, surprise, and delight. We will look at a range of works, from articles to novels to plays to movies to sketch shows and analyze how and why they use absurdism/surrealism, and what the result is. We will interrogate who "gets" to be absurd/surreal, and engage with the intersection of absurdism/surrealism, gender, and race. You will critically engage with the material to write two short responses and a longer research paper, in which you will advance unique, original ideas based on the material we read.

Course Objectives:

- Understand what makes a piece absurdist or surrealist and be able to engage with it.
- Generate your own unique ideas supported by evidence from the material we read and watch.
- Express ideas-both orally and in writing-correctly, cogently, persuasively, and in conformity with the conventions of the discipline.
- Learn how to rethink and revise essays.
- Learn to develop viable research questions and identify appropriate sources.
- Learn to use library resources, including collections, databases, and archives.
 - Learn how to summarize and cite both primary and secondary sources in support of the argument in MLA format.

Absence Policy

You are entitled to three excused absences for health or personal reasons. If you're going to miss class, please send me an email ahead of time. If you miss more than three classes, your grade will be impacted. **All phones must be off and put away during class.**

COVID-19 Policy

- While Brooklyn College has no indoor masking mandate, I encourage you to come to class masked - it's only an hour and fifteen minutes of your day, and it will do a lot to keep the whole group safe as we prepare for another COVID wave this fall and winter.
- Practice good hand hygiene upon arrival to class.
- If you're feeling sick, please don't come to class - send me an email ahead of time. Read up on Brooklyn College's COVID-19 policy here: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/initiatives/return.php>
- If I get sick and am feeling well enough, we will conduct the class via zoom. If I'm not feeling well enough to teach, we will schedule a makeup session.

Assignments

Reading Responses (10%)

1. Due 2/23: Reading Response 1 (300 - 500 words, 2-3 paragraphs) - Make a claim connecting *The Myth of Sisyphus* and *Waiting for Godot*. Use quotations to support your claim.
2. Due 3/16: Reading Response 2 (300 - 500 words, 2-3 paragraphs) - Make a claim connecting any two other pieces we discuss in class. Use quotations to support your claim.

Research Paper (60%)

1. Due 3/4: Brainstorm Exercise (5%)
2. Due 4/18: Annotated bibliography (10%)
3. Due 4/18: First draft (15%)
4. Due 5/9 (in class on 5/2): Peer review (10%) - You will read a partner's first draft. You will provide comments on the draft according the cover sheet I provide and turn them into me.
5. Due 5/19: Final draft (20%) - You will submit a 7-10 page research paper with a well-defined, original, and interesting thesis on the basis of textual and contextual evidence. You will correctly cite and meaningfully (i.e. in a way that moves your paper along) discuss your sources in a way that supports your argument.

Presentations (10%)

1. Due 5/9 - 5/16 Research paper presentations (7-10 minutes) - you will present your paper to the class.
 - a. Alternative presentation assignment (7-10 minutes) - you can present a creative assignment to the class instead of your paper. This assignment should explore some aspect of the absurd and you should generate your own creative writing. It could be a sketch, a scene, a video, or a personal narrative. Feel free

to explore. You will then share your creative writing with the class and talk about your process.

Participation/Class Material presentations (20%)

You will each be responsible for presenting one of the pieces we will be studying. You will give us context as to who the author is, select a passage for us to read, and select who will read it out loud. You will then pose 2-3 discussion questions for the class.

Your in class participation is also a big part of your grade. Be prepared to discuss in class - be bold, be inquisitive, be lively. Question and respond to the material - it will make the class more interesting.

Grading

Grades for English 1012 are: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, NC or F. Note that the minimum passing grade is C-. Students who have completed all the course work but are not yet writing at the college level will receive a grade of NC; students who have not completed the course work will receive a grade of F. Students who do not pass English 1012 must repeat it the following semester. The course may not be taken more than two times; students who receive three grades of F, NC and/or WU may be dismissed from the college. If you have any questions regarding grammar or punctuation, you should consider signing up for regular meetings in the Learning Center.

NOTE: English 1012 is an Academic Foundations course. Brooklyn College's policy on withdrawing from English 1012 is as follows: students are not permitted at any time to delete, drop, or withdraw from an assigned Academic Foundations course without obtaining permission of the academic department involved and consulting the Center for Academic Advisement and Student Success.

Course Materials

Andre, Eric. Adam Rippon | The Eric Andre Show . YouTube, Adult Swim, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5_xvTJe_fE. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Andre, Eric. Tyler, The Creator | The Eric Andre Show | Adult Swim. YouTube, Adult Swim, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVhme1eb8SI>. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Camus, Albert. "The Myth of Sisyphus." *The Myth of Sisyphus & Other Essays*. Vintage Books, 1955, pp. 2-5, 34-43, 75- 80.

Carrington, Leonora. "The Debutante." *The Debutante and Other Stories*, Silver Press, London, 2017, pp. 12-14.<http://cisyeo.pbworks.com/f/The+Debutante.pdf>

Cortázar Julio. "La Noche Boca Arriba." *Final Del Juego*, Argentine, 1956. <http://berwickea.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/The-Night-Face-Up.pdf>

Harris, Aleshea, et al. *Is God Is*; What to Send up When It Goes Down. First edition., Theatre Communications Group, 2022.

Fleming, Chris. *Gigi the Christmas Snake*. YouTube, Chris Fleming, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBgrsC6uHUK>. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Gilliam, Terry and Terry Jones, directors. *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Youtube, Python (Monty) Pictures, 1975, https://www.google.com/search?q=monty%2Bpython%2Band%2Bthe%2Bholy%2Bgrail%2Bfull%2Bmovie&rlz=1C5CHFA_enUS805US805&biw=1099&bih=736&tbm=vid&ei=_LK0Y4TbFLLhkPIk6_uAU&ved=0ahUKewiEyuAwKz8AhWyMEQIHQjXD1cQ4dUDCA0&uact=5&oq=monty%2Bpython%2Band%2Bthe%2Bholy%2Bgrail%2Bfull%2Bmovie&gs_lcp=Cg1nd3Mtd2l6LXZpZGVvEAMyBQgAEIAEMgUIABCABDlGCAAQFhAeMgYIABAWEB4yBggAEBYQHjIGCAAQFhAeMggIABAWEB4QDzIGCAAQFhAeMgYIABAWEB4yBggAEBYQHjoFCAAQhgNQvARYxBFgkRNoAHAAeACAACUBiAG2CpIBAzUuNpgBAKABAcABAQ&scient=gws-wiz-video#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:60780a90,vid:h6AI55PWINM. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Kafka, Franz. "In the Penal Colony." *In the Penal Colony* by Franz Kafka, Franz Kafka Online, 2007, <https://www.kafka-online.info/in-the-penal-colony.html>.

Robinson, Tim, director. 'Prank Show' Full Sketch - I Think You Should Leave. YouTube, Netflix, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4Fv3LFGCgo&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com&feature=emb_logo. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Robinson, Tim. *Driver's Ed' Full Sketch - I Think You Should Leave Season 2*. YouTube, Netflix, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=-ZBwPmla8QQ&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com&feature=emb_logo. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Robinson, Tim. *Spectrum and Funerals - I Think You Should Leave Season 2*. YouTube, Netflix, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Rn5QdO07d8&embeds_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com%2F&embeds_origin=https%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com&feature=emb_logo. Accessed 16 Jan. 2023.

Russian Avant-Garde and Radical Modernism : An Introductory Reader, edited by Dennis G. Ioffe, and Frederick White, Academic Studies Press, 2012. ProQuest Ebook

Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/brooklyn-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3110488>.

Webb, Eugene. *The Plays of Samuel Beckett*, University of Washington Press, 2014. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/brooklyn-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4305947>.

Tentative Course Calendar

Week 1

Thursday 1/26 Course introduction, set in class expectations. Discuss where students can go for support (learning center, personal counseling, etc.)
HW: Read *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

Week 2

Tuesday 1/31 Discuss the elements of absurdism and surrealism/historical background.
HW: Finish reading *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

Thursday 2/2 Discuss *The Myth of Sisyphus*.
HW: Start reading *Waiting for Godot* Act I.

Week 3

Tuesday, 2/7 Finish discussing *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Discuss *Waiting for Godot* Act I if time.
HW: Start reading *Waiting for Godot* Act II.

Thursday, 2/9 Finish discussing *Waiting for Godot* Act I.
HW: Read *Waiting for Godot* Act II.

Week 4

Tuesday, 2/14 Discuss Act II *Waiting for Godot*. **Go over expectations for reading response #1.**
HW: Work on reading response #1. Start reading from beginning through "Up To The Hills" of *Is God Is*.

Thursday 2/16 Go over MLA format.
HW: Work on reading response #1. Finish reading from beginning through "Up To The Hills" of *Is God Is*.

Week 5

Thursday, 2/23 Discuss first half of *Is God Is*. **Reading response #1 due.**
HW: Read to the end of *Is God Is*.

Week 6

Tuesday, 2/28

Discuss second half of *Is God Is*.

Thursday, 3/2

Return reading response #1. Discuss trends/future things to work on. Answer any questions. Discuss guidelines for reading response #2.

HW: Read "The Debutante" and "The Night Face Up." Work on reading response #2.

Week 7

Tuesday, 3/7

Discuss "The Debutante" and "The Night Face Up."

HW: Start reading "In The Penal Colony." Work on reading response #2.

Thursday, 3/9

Cover important dates and rubric for the research paper going forward.

HW: Finish reading "In The Penal Colony." Work on reading response #2.

Week 8

Tuesday, 3/14

Discuss "In The Penal Colony."

HW: Work on reading response #2. Read selections from Daniil Kharms and the writers of Oberiu.

Thursday, 3/16

Reading Response #2 due. Watch *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *Flying Circus* snippets in class.

HW: Read selections from Daniil Kharms and the writers of Oberiu.

Week 9

Tuesday, 3/21

Discuss selections from Daniil Kharms and the writers of Oberiu.

Thursday, 3/23

Return Reading Response #2. Watch snippets from *I Think You Should Leave*, *The Eric Andre Show*, and *Chris Fleming* in class. Discuss.

HW: Think about a topic to research for library day.

Week 10

Tuesday, 3/28

Go over annotated bibliography requirements. In class brainstorm exercises on developing research topics - turn in at end of class.

HW: Have topic to research before library day.

Thursday, 3/30

Library Day.

HW: Work on annotated bibliography.

Staff 1/18/2023 2:49 PM

Comment [1]: Brainstorm exercise should be moved to a date closer to the 3/14, which is when the HW asks students to think about research paper topics.

Staff 1/18/2023 2:50 PM

Comment [2]: Check date of this HW assignment. There's a gap between 3/14 and 3/30, where students will not be discussing/thinking about research project, so you might want to move this deadline to an earlier date to fill that gap.

Week 11

Tuesday, 4/4

Turn in annotated bibliography. Discuss the research paper guidelines/rubric more in depth. Day to ask any questions.
HW: Work on your research paper first draft.

SPRING BREAK

Week 12

Tuesday, 4/18

Return annotated bibliographies. Go over successful student papers.
HW: Work on first drafts.

Thursday, 4/20

Research paper first draft due. Discuss presentation/creative assignment guidelines. Answer questions.
HW: Work on presentation.

Week 13

Tuesday, 4/25

Office hours/work day/students can bring in individual questions: grammar, citations, thesis statements, can look at papers that didn't work, etc.
HW: Work on presentation

Thursday, 4/27

Return research paper first drafts with feedback. Go over general trends of the drafts.
HW: Work on incorporating 1st draft research paper/presentation.

Week 14

Tuesday, 5/2

Peer review of first draft in class.
HW: Work on presentation/creative writing assignment. Work on peer review if not finished.

Thursday, 5/4

Class Presentations (Attendance mandatory.)
HW: Work on final draft of research paper.

Week 15

Tuesday, 5/9

Class Presentations (Attendance mandatory.) **Peer review due.**
HW: Work on final draft of research paper.

Thursday, 5/11

Class Presentations (Attendance mandatory.)
HW: Work on final draft of research paper.

Week 16

Monday, 5/16

Class Presentations (Attendance mandatory.)
HW: Work on final draft of research paper.

Staff 1/18/2023 2:47 PM

Comment [3]: We recommend moving the deadline of the first draft to an earlier date to allow time for you to provide feedback and for students to work on revisions based on your feedback. Typically, instructors assign two drafts prior to the final draft, which we find to be effective in allowing students to tackle the research project in bite-size pieces. Additionally, scaffolding the assignment allows instructors to catch plagiarism, for you'll be familiar with the student's ideas after reading the first draft.

May 19

Final paper due/first draft/peer reviews due. All other late work for the class due.

Brooklyn College Information and Policies

- Make sure to familiarize yourself with Brooklyn College's rules and regulations on, and penalties for [plagiarism](#). Plagiarism—using other people's ideas and words as your own—is an academic violation that can result in course failure and college dismissal. If you have ANY questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me immediately. **If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member must report the violation. In other words, DO NOT plagiarize.**
- Please note the Student Bereavement Policy and the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs, noted in the front matter of the Undergraduate Bulletin and Graduate Bulletin. These may be found on the Academic Calendars, Course Schedules, and Bulletins page of the Registrar's website.
- Student Services at Brooklyn College:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal anti-discrimination statute, provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, the legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. **If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538.** Students who have a documented disability (or suspect they have a disability) must register with the Center for Student Disability Services before they can receive disability-related academic accommodations. Once registered, please provide me with the course accommodation form and discuss with me the specific accommodations you require.

Brooklyn College offers excellent academic, counseling, and campus services, including the Learning Center, which houses both a writing as well as a peer tutoring center. The Library maintains a collection of links to sites that can assist you with research and with proper citation format and paraphrasing and quoting other authors. In addition, the reference librarians are available to help you with research.

- **Tech Support**

Brooklyn College's Information Technology Service (ITS) can help with any tech or Blackboard related questions. Please email helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu or call 718.951.4357 Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.