

Course: ENG 228.section [code] : Literature and Medicine

Professor Name

Class days and times

Office hours: days and times

*ENG 228 Literature and Medicine. 3 hours, 3 credits. Critical analysis of fiction, poetry, plays, films, and nonfiction about medicine, disease, illness, and/or health. Exploration of central themes and consideration of historical and social contexts.*

### Course Goals & Objectives

- Analyze a range of literary and cultural texts by paying attention to their formal features and social and historical contexts
- Analyze the cultural, social, and political impact of literary and cultural representations of medicine, disease, contagion, and/or health
- Identify common tropes and techniques used to describe medicine, disease, contagion, and/or health in literary and cultural texts
- Effectively employ literary terminology, theoretical approaches, and rhetorical analysis in the research and critical evaluation of literary and cultural texts about medicine, disease, contagion, and/or health
- Write clear, persuasive essays that develop an argument through close textual analysis

### Required Texts

- Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals*
- Paul Kalanithi, *When Breath Becomes Air*
- Albert Camus, *The Plague*
- Alejandro Morales, *The Rag Doll Plagues*
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*
- Other readings and films available on Blackboard

### Course Requirements/Assignments

#### **Participation:**

- **Daily Participation:** Participate actively and conscientiously in class discussion and class activities. Full participation means coming to class on time with reading assignments complete and in hand; remaining attentive and engaged in group discussions; contributing to discussion with questions, comments, and responses to others' remarks; and participating in class activities.
- **In-Class Writing:** Complete the writing warm-ups that will occur nearly every day in class. Full credit will be given for writing that thoughtfully considers the prompt.
- **Reading Quizzes:** Pop reading quizzes may occur.

**Reading Responses:** Complete 8 reading responses (300–500 words each) throughout the semester and post them on Blackboard. Prompts will be provided. At the end of the semester, I'll drop the reading response with the lowest grade. See the course schedule for specific due dates.

### **Essays:**

- **Essay 1:** Write a close reading essay that analyzes a short passage from one of the assigned texts. We will review the process of close reading through an in class group assignment on a short passage, and come together as a group to critique the group readings. We will then model the assignment/essay.
- **Essay 2:** Write an analytical essay that examines one of the assigned texts. We will review the tools of analysis in class. For example, students may choose to use a rhetorical strategy (such as compare and contrast or the process form of writing). We will also review essay format (Introduction, body paragraphs, and Conclusion).
- **Writing Process:** Before each essay, you will go through an extensive drafting, peer review, and revision process. The effort you put into this process will be factored into the final grade of each essay.
- **Submitting Assignments:** All final and rough drafts are due on Blackboard on the assigned day by 11:59 p.m. See the course schedule for specific due dates.

**Final Project:** Complete a final project where you will apply your knowledge from the course You have two options for this project: 1) write an opinion piece on a contemporary public health issue that you analyze in relation to course themes and questions, or 2) respond creatively and critically to one of the course texts or films. If you choose the second option, you will also write an artist's statement that explains and justifies your project. Secondary sources are required. The sources can come from class readings, and library research.

### **Grading**

- **Participation:** 20%
- **Reading Responses:** 20%
- **Essay 1:** 20%
- **Essay 2:** 20%
- **Final Project:** 20%

### **Course Policies/Other Information**

**Attendance:** The student handbook notes that “Students are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled, and are responsible for all class work missed as a result of late registration or absence. Excessive absences in any course may result in a lower final grade.” In this course, you will be allowed 4 absences to cover emergency or illness. Your final grade will be lowered for each additional class missed. Extreme tardiness may be construed as an absence. If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact me ASAP.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** “Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.” All violations are reported to the department and the college's Academic Integrity Officer. For detailed information on definitions and examples of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and documents, please refer to the student handbook or visit: <http://lehman.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2019/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Services-and->

**Accommodating Disabilities:** Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may require any special considerations should register with the Office of Student Disability Services in order to submit official paperwork to the instructor. For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238, 718-960-8441. For detailed information on services and resources visit <http://www.lehman.edu/student-disability-services/> or email [disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu).

**Tutoring Services:** Lehman College’s Instructional Support Services Program (ISSP) is home to the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and Science Learning Center (SLC). Both offer students an array of activities and services designed to support classroom learning. Open to students at any level, there are individual, small group, and/or workshop sessions designed to improve “proficiency in writing, reading, research, and particular academic subject areas. Computer-assisted writing/language tutorial programs are also available,” as well as individual tutors, workshops, and tutors. To obtain more information about the ACE and the SLC, please visit Old Gym, Room 205 or <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/instructional-support-services/humanities-tutoring.php> or call ACE at 718-960-8175 and SLC at 718-960-7707. Regular tutoring hours for fall & spring semesters are M–Th 10 a.m.–7 p.m. and Sat. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Library Tutors are also available in the library. These tutors offer help with library resources and computers.

**Lehman Food Bank:** The Herbert H. Lehman Food Bank aims to alleviate food hardship among Lehman students. It was started by leadership students in the Advanced Leadership class and officially opened in March 2017. Any Lehman student can visit the pantry to receive healthy food to make well-balanced meals so they can focus on their academic development. Learn more here: <http://www.lehman.edu/student-leadership/lehman-food-bank.php>.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing:** The Counseling Center offers virtual services for registered Lehman College students. Call 718-960-8761 or email [counseling.center@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:counseling.center@lehman.cuny.edu) with your name, EMPLID, email address, telephone number, and days and times you are available. A counselor will follow up with you as soon as possible.

**Technology and Blackboard Information:** You are required to use Blackboard to access course materials, post reading responses, and upload assignments to Safe Assign. You are also required to sign into your Lehman student email account for course messages—check it daily! Blackboard will only allow me to send individual and mass messages to Lehman accounts. If I send you or the class an email, the fact that you didn’t know about an assignment or course change because you don’t use your Lehman account is not a valid excuse for not knowing the information. For Blackboard, visit <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/blackboard.php>. For Information Technology, visit <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/>.

**Writing-Intensive Course Requirements:** Lehman students must complete four writing-intensive courses. In a WI Course, students should be expected to write approximately 15–20 pages of proofread, typed work that is turned in to the instructor for grading. Various courses stipulate various requirements designed to meet this requisite over the course of the semester. WI courses focus on revision, short & long assignments, graded and ungraded writing, journals, etc., and each will have a class-size limit of twenty-two. Under no circumstances will more than twenty-five students be admitted

to any writing-intensive section. For more information, see <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/general-education/writing-faqs.php>.

**Student Handbook:** Students are strongly encouraged to download and become familiar with the Student Handbook: <http://www.lehman.edu/campus-life/support-services.php>.

**Title IX:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program receiving federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX, and is considered a Civil Rights offense. Lehman College encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination, or sexual misconduct to talk to a faculty member, counselor, or staff; confidential resources are available through the Lehman Counseling Center at 718-960-8761.

**Assignment Submissions & Late Work:** All assignments, unless otherwise noted, must be submitted to Blackboard by the appointed due date. Problems with technology are not valid reasons for why an assignment is late. If you're concerned an assignment was not uploaded onto Blackboard correctly, please email me the assignment by the deadline. If you need an extension, please contact me ASAP before the deadline.

## Course Schedule

### SYLLABUS & COURSE INTRODUCTION

Wk. 1	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus &amp; introductions</li> <li>• Burke, "The Unending Conversation"</li> <li>• Collins, "Marginalia"</li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chen, "Stories in the Service of Making a Better Doctor"</li> <li>• Davis &amp; Bradley, "The Meaning of Normal"</li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Letter of introduction</b></li> </ul>

### UNDERSTANDING ILLNESS: THE PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Wk. 2	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sontag, excerpt from <i>Illness as Metaphor</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Otremba, "Expectancy"</li> <li>• Alexander, "Diagnosis"</li> <li>• Liz A, "The Isolation of Illness"</li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 1</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 3	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lorde, <i>The Cancer Journals</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lorde, <i>The Cancer Journals</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 2</b></li> </ul>

**DIAGNOSIS & PRACTICE: THE DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

Wk. 3	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charon, excerpt from <i>Narrative Medicine</i></li> <li>• Williams, "The Use of Force"</li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kalanithi, <i>When Breath Becomes Air</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 3</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 4	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kalanithi, <i>When Breath Becomes Air</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kalanithi, <i>When Breath Becomes Air</i></li> </ul>

**IMAGINING EPIDEMIC: QUARANTINE & THE LIMITS OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

Wk. 5	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poe, "The Masque of the Red Death"</li> <li>• Due, "Patient Zero"</li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer review workshop</li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Rough draft of essay 1</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 6	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camus, <i>The Plague</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camus, <i>The Plague</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Final draft of essay 1</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 7	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camus, <i>The Plague</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camus, <i>The Plague</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 4</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 8	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camus, <i>The Plague</i></li> </ul>

**GLOBAL HEALTH: CONTAGION & EMPIRE**

	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wald, excerpt from <i>Contagious</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 5</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 9	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preston, excerpt from <i>The Hot Zone</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preston, excerpt from <i>The Hot Zone</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 6</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 10	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morales, <i>The Rag Doll Plagues</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morales, <i>The Rag Doll Plagues</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 7</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 11	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morales, <i>The Rag Doll Plagues</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer review workshop</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing due: Rough draft of essay 2</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 12	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soderbergh, dir., <i>Contagion</i> (BB)</li> </ul>

**THE FUTURES OF HEALTH: BIOTECHNOLOGY & BIOETHICS**

	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vonnegut, “Fortitude” (BB)</li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Final draft of essay 2</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 13	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Niccol, dir., <i>Gattaca</i> (BB)</li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Reading response 8</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 14	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i></li> <li>• <b>Writing due: Final project proposal</b></li> </ul>
Wk. 15	Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i></li> </ul>
	Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course wrap-up</li> </ul>
Finals		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing due: Final project</b></li> </ul>