

ENGL270: Military Literature

College of Graduate and Continuing Studies, Norwich University

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Course Description

This course studies literature written about the experience of being in the military and at war. We will read texts about the American Civil War through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, examining works authored by writers from the United States, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Questions that we will investigate, via literary texts, include why people are motivated to join the military, how their expectations concerning military life are fulfilled or disappointed, and how writers communicate their experiences of war through memoir and fiction. In addition, we will work on argumentative writing skills by composing several short to medium-length essays. (3 credits)

Course Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the major themes discussed in military and war literature;
- Explain the relationship between language and traumatic experience;
- Analyze the way military and war narratives are used by readers;
- Explain the advantages or disadvantages of memoir versus fiction;
- Compare and contrast military and war literature from different cultures;
- Describe elements of the literary genres;
- Explicate a passage from a work of fiction, poetry, or drama;
- Use logic and intuition to arrive at an understanding of the theme (or underlying ideas) in a piece of literature;
- Analyze, synthesize and critically evaluate readings;
- Demonstrate the ability to write with clarity and precision.

Weekly Outline

Every week has a prescribed checklist of activities required to successfully complete the lesson. Follow this checklist, in the specified order, to complete each lesson.

Week	Topic	Requirements
Week 01	Ambrose Bierce's Civil War Stories (selected stories)	Readings, Commentary, Discussion, and an Assignment.
Week 02	The Poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen	Readings, Commentary, Discussion, and an Assignment.
Week 03	Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five	Readings, Commentary, and Discussion. No Assignment.
Week 04	Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five (cont.)	Readings, Commentary, Discussion, and an Assignment.
Week 05	David Rabe's The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel	Readings, Commentary, and Discussion. No Assignment.

Week 06	Duong Thu Huong's Novel Without a Name	Readings, Commentary, and Discussion. No Assignment.
Week 07	Ishmael Beah's A Long Way Gone	Readings, Commentary, and Discussion. No Assignment.
Week 08	The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and Reflecting on the Semester	Readings, Commentary, Discussion, and the Final Essay Assignment.

Overall Course Design

You will be provided a weekly commentary/lecture and have required reading and discussion assignments. There will be a number of written assignments and exercises, which are explained thoroughly in the list of assignments. A total of 1000 points are available in the course distributed across the components listed below, with both points and percent of final grade indicated.

As a student in this course, you have a number of responsibilities that will affect the level of learning you achieve. These responsibilities include: 1) working actively to create a challenging and useful learning experience for yourself, your discussion group and the class as a whole; 2) encouraging and supporting the learning of each member of the class; 3) preparing and participating fully in discussions as well as group and/or class activities; and 4) completing all assigned work on time or making prior arrangements if an absence of late submission is unavailable. In this course you have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills that will help you become effective, confident, and focused in your learning.

Required Textbooks

Textbooks required for this course are listed below. All texts should be in the particular edition identified.

- **Beah, I. *A Long Way Gone*. 2007. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.** Print ISBN: 9780374531263
- **Bierce, A. (1994). *Civil War Stories*. 1994. Mineola, New York: Dover.** Digital ISBN: 9780486111568
Print ISBN: 9780486280387
- **Duong, T. H. (1996). *Novel Without a Name*. Trans. Phan Huy Duong and Nina McPherson. 1996. New York: Penguin.** Print ISBN: 9780140255102
- **Rabe, D. (1993). *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel. The Vietnam Plays, Volume One*. 1993. New York: Grove.** Digital ISBN: 9780802196910
- **Vonnegut, K. (1968). *Slaughterhouse-Five*. New York: 1968. Dell.** Print ISBN: 9780440180296
- **Ward, C., ed. (1997). *World War One British Poets*. 1997. Mineola, NY: Dover.** Digital ISBN: 9780486113234
Print ISBN: 9780486295688

See [Required Readings](#) for additional seminar readings.

Course Components

The course is made up of graded and ungraded components. Here is a list of **graded** items:

- Writing Assignments
- Discussion Forums

Here are some of the items that are **ungraded**:

- [Required Readings](#)
- Commentaries

[Course Participation](#)

Unlike a traditional classroom-based course, you do not need to show up to class at a specific time every day to earn your class participation grade in an asynchronous online course. Instead, you need to complete the online weekly readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments by the due dates specified by your instructor. Although some of your activities will be ungraded, your instructor will keep track of whether you have completed them and will assign you a course participation grade based on your completion of these activities.

The normal flow of the weekly classroom is to read any [Required Readings](#) first, then the Commentary, participate in the Discussions for the week, and finally complete any Assignment.

[Discussion Groups](#)

In this course, you will be assigned to small weekly discussion groups. All discussion postings in this seminar are to be considered CONFIDENTIAL . Each weeks Discussion Question(s) will be graded based on participation between Monday and Saturday.

The quality of your posts and those of your fellow students will create a lively discussion and ensure that a high level of learning occurs. You are expected to contribute **at least three posts to each question every week**. Your first **Original Post** should be substantive (approximately 200-300 words) and it should be made by Wednesday (Note: the earlier you make your initial posts, the more your classmates, and you, will have to work with). It should answer the question using your own experience, if appropriate, and, very importantly, it should refer to the readings of that week, using correct citations. Your second two posts should be **Reply** type responses to the posts of your fellow group members.

Responses such as, “Good point,” or, “I agree,” are not sufficient and do not constitute a discussion in a college level classroom.

Your response posts should be substantive - ask questions, point out additional thoughts, etc. Posts should build on the course content and add momentum to our collective learning. In short, each post should be a valuable contribution! Disagreement and critical feedback are part of an academic classroom, as is respect for the diversity of opinion. For more information about what is expected in regard to discussion postings, please review the [Grading Guidelines and Rubrics](#).

[Written Assignments](#)

Papers must be written using Times New Roman 12 point font with one inch borders on each page. Please include your name in the title of the paper and in the title box when you submit your assignment.

Remember to use the MLA Guide in citing the sources you use to support your position.

All writing for this seminar (unless otherwise directed) must follow the MLA style. [The Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) is an excellent resource to answer any questions that might arise while you are working on a paper.

[Online Etiquette](#)

The objective in an online discussion is to be collaborative, *not* combative. Please, proofread your responses carefully before you post them to make sure that they will not be offensive to others. Use discussions to develop your skills in collaboration and teamwork. Treat the discussion areas as a creative environment where you and your classmates can ask questions, express opinions, revise opinions, and take positions just as you would in a more traditional classroom setting.

[Grades](#)

The following table shows the graded assessment types contained within this course and the assigned weighting to determine the final course grade.

Graded Assessment Types	Points	Weights (%)
Discussion Forums (8 weeks x 40)	320	32%
Reaction Paper	80	8%
Short Story Essay	150	15%
Poetry Essay	150	15%
Final Essay	300	30%
TOTAL	1000	100%

Letter grades for the course will be based on the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A	93-100%	4.0
A -	90-92.9%	3.7
B +	87-89.9%	3.3
B	83-86.9%	3.0
B -	80-82.9%	2.7
C +	77-79.9%	2.3
C	75-76.9%	2.0
C -	73-74.9%	1.7
D +	70-72.9%	1.3
D	67-69.9%	1.0
D-	63-66.9%	0.7
F	0-62.9%	0.0

For complete information on the Grading Policy for Bachelor Degree students, please refer to the [CGCS Online Catalog](#) (Sub-Section of Catalog on "Grades.")

[Academic Honesty and the Norwich University Honor Code](#)

A student must submit work that represents the student's own original analysis and writing. Copying another's work is not appropriate. If the student relies on the research or writing of others, the student must cite those sources. Words or ideas that require citations include, but are not limited to all hardcopy or electronic publications, whether copyrighted or not, and all verbal or visual communication when the content of such communication clearly originates from an identifiable source. While students are encouraged to seek editing feedback, extensive revisions of one's work by another person is considered a lack of academic honesty, as it is representing another student's work as one's own.

For more information see:

[Academic Dishonesty](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Norwich University Honor Code](#)

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[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ADA](#)

Please consult [Appendix H: University Policy - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) for instructions on obtaining an accommodation.

Disclaimer: Please note the specifics of this Course Syllabus are subject to change. Students are responsible for abiding by any such changes. Your instructor will notify you of any changes.

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