**EN 120 A1: Satire from Swift to *McSweeney’s***

**Fall 2018 MWF 10:10-11:00 AM, Rm. PSY-B45**

Instructor: Kristin Lacey

Office: 236 Bay State Road, Room 122

Office Hours: Tuesday 2PM-3PM; Wednesday 11:00AM-12:00PM; and by appointment

Email: [klacey@bu.edu](mailto:klacey@bu.edu)

Email Policy: I welcome email correspondence, and appreciate your clear, formal, and grammatically correct messages. Please allow 48 hours for a response.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Satire has roots in Ancient Greece and remains popular today; it is a genre that uses humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to criticize and expose vices and stupidity, particularly in the context of politics and other topical issues. In this course, we will study a sampling of satirical texts, from Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) to *McSweeney’s*. Some questions this course seeks to consider: What makes satire effective? Are certain historical moments more likely to produce satirists or satirical material? What commonalities exist between satire produced in the eighteenth century and satire published in 2018? Who has access to this form of writing, and how has that changed over time? Authors may include Swift, Flannery O’Connor, Joseph Heller, Dorothy Parker, Paul Beatty, and Djuna Barnes. We will also read work from contemporary satirical magazines, including *McSweeney’s*, *Reductress*, *The Onion*, and *ClickHole*.

Satisfies CAS WR 100 requirement. This course fulfills a single unit in the following BU Hub area: First-Year Writing Seminar.

**COURSE GOALS**

All sections of WR 100 and EN 120 have certain goals in common. In EN 120, you will develop your ability to:

• craft substantive, motivated, balanced academic arguments

• write clear, correct, coherent prose

• read with understanding and engagement

• plan, draft, and revise efficiently and effectively

• evaluate and improve your own reading and writing processes

• respond productively to the writing of others

• express yourself verbally and converse thoughtfully about complex ideas.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

The following texts will be available at the Barnes & Noble in Kenmore Square. You may also buy them in other bookstores or online. **It is essential that you search using the ISBN numbers so that we all have the same editions.**

Beatty, Paul. *The Sellout.* Picador, 2015.

**ISBN: 9780374260507**

Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22.* Simon & Schuster, 2011.

**ISBN: 9781451626650**

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver’s Travels.* Barnes & Noble, 2003.

**ISBN: 9781593081324**

*They Say, I Say*

**ISBN: 9780393935844**

**A notebook dedicated to this course.**

All other materials will be handed out in class and/or posted on the Blackboard site. You

can log in to our Blackboard page at: https://learn.bu.edu

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Self-Assessment:** At the beginning of the semester, you will submit a written self-assessment in which you take stock of your reading and writing abilities and establish some personal goals you wish to pursue over the course of the semester.

**Exercises (10%):** We will use the term *exercises* to refer to various low-stakes assignments and activities that you will be asked to complete over the course of the semester. You will do some of these exercises in class; others will be given as homework.Your exercises will not receive explicit grades, although you will receive credit for completing them on time. **You must purchase a notebook to contain your in-class writing and you must bring this notebook with you to class each day.**

**Major Papers (drafts and final versions):** We will use the term *draft* to refer to unfinished or preliminary versions of your two major papers. You will be required to write at least one draft before the final for Papers 1 and 2. Your first draft will receive feedback from your peers and from me. **For Paper 1, you are required to attend an in-person conference with me.** Drafts will not receive letter grades, although you will receive credit for completing them on time. Remember that you are more likely to write a better final paper if you write substantive drafts. Your course grade will be determined primarily by the quality of the final versions of your major papers. All drafts and final papers must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and Times New Roman 12-point-font and be documented in MLA style. Please include a *word count* at the end of all written work.

**Blackboard Responses (10%):** Each student will be required to make a weekly post on the class Blackboard forum. The day you will post depends on the first letter of your last name:

* **A-K –** Post for Monday (by 11:59pm Sunday);
* **L-Q –** Post for Wednesday (by 11:59pm Tuesday);
* **R-Z** – Post for Friday (by 11:59pm Thursday).

Requirements for each post:

* Your posts must be between 200 and 300 words, and have a word count posted at the end;
* They must be posted as text in the Blackboard forum, not posted as an attachment;
* Your posts should be focused directly on the course material we’ll be discussing in class;
* They must be analytical posts. Your posts do not need to be perfect, but I expect them to be proofread, to contain at least one strong point, and to have that point bolstered by cited evidence from your text. You can pose a question rather than make an argument, but questions should be accompanied by preliminary answers that are supported by the text.;
* Your post can be a response to another student’s post, but it must add something new to the conversation and must use new evidence from the text;
* You can choose two (2) weeks to skip your post without affecting your grade;﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿﻿
* Your posts will be graded out of ten points based on how successfully you meet the above requirements.

**Oral Presentation (10%):** You will deliver a five-minute (5) presentation on **one of the following:**

1. a satirical text (or excerpt from a text) you have encountered—film, book, TV show, song, etc. Some questions to consider:
   1. Who or what is the object of the satire?
   2. Who is the intended audience? What evidence supports that?
   3. How does this satire relate to other texts we have read in class, or to topics raised in class?
2. a secondary/argument source on satire generally or on one of our texts. Some questions to consider:
   1. What is the source about?
   2. What is the source’s claim? What main points support this claim, and what evidence does the author use?
   3. What makes this source worth reading? How does it help us understand the exhibit source it examines (if there is one)?

After giving your oral presentation, **you will write a 500-word report on what you presented and post it to Blackboard no later than 11:59pm on Friday the week you present.** I will pass out the schedule for these presentations and a more detailed assignment sheet the second week of class.

**Midterm Exam (20%):** The exam will consist of short answer questions, passage identification, and short essays. Passages discussed in class are likely to show up on the test.

**Sharing of Student Writing:** In this class, you will learn how to respond productively to the writing of others and how to use feedback from others to improve your own work. All students in the class will be required to share at least one draft of each paper. If you are concerned about sharing your writing, please talk with me about your concerns.

**GRADING AND EVALUATION**

Grading Scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Percent |
| A  A-  B+  B  B-  C+  C  C-  D-F | 93-100  90-92  87-89  83-86  80-82  77-79  73-76  70-72  <70 |

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Exercises and Drafts: 10%

Oral Presentation: 10%

Blackboard Responses: 10%

Participation: 10%

Paper 1: 15%

Midterm: 20%

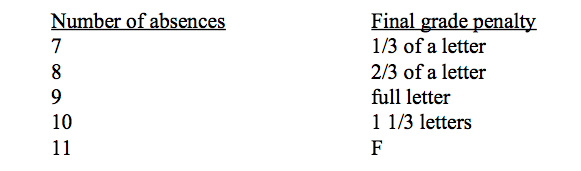
Paper 2: 25%

**Late and Missed Assignments:** Unless you make other arrangements with me in advance, graded assignments will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late. If you submit a draft late, I cannot promise to read it in time for my comments to be useful to you. Please note that we will regularly work with our exercises and drafts in class. If you are habitually late with your assignments, you will be unable to participate fully in the class.

**Participation and Attendance:**  Since this course is a seminar, your regular attendance and participation are essential both to your own learning and to your classmates’ learning. Consequently, your final grade will reflect the quality of your participation and ungraded work over the course of the semester. Because this is a literature course, we have a lot of reading we must do for each class; please ensure that you keep up with the readings so that you can be participate in seminar discussions. Because laptops and mobile devices must be put away and silenced during class, you must print any texts posted on Blackboard and bring them to class. **Making a habit of not having your readings in class (including those that need to be printed from Blackboard) will lower your participation grade.**

**Three late arrivals to class will count as one class absence.**

You may miss SIX classes without penalty. I ordinarily do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so please save your absences for when you need them. If you exceed the number of allowed absences, your course grade may be lowered as follows:

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If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g., varsity athletics, religious observances), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. **Missed conference appointments will be counted as absences.** While my attendance policy is fairly rigid, **please do not hesitate to speak to me about circumstances that may be affecting your performance or attendance.** **Exceptions may be made in a small number of cases.**

**Pronouns and Names:** If your name or pronouns do not match the university’s records, please let me know. If your pronouns or name change during the semester, I am happy to adjust my records.

**Technology Policy:** All phones and electronic devices must be put away and silenced before class begins. A first offense during the semester will merit an in-class calling-out, and the second will count as an absence for that class period. I take this policy seriously and expect that you will, too. Because of the discussion-based nature of this seminar, I do not allow laptops or tablets in the classroom. **You will need to print ALL texts from Blackboard and bring them to class annotated.** Please bring your notebook and pen to each class. I may include Laptop Days for working on drafts; any Laptop Days will be announced in advance.

**CONTENT WARNING**

Satire is inherently provocative; satirical texts challenge our complacency and our assumptions. It is highly likely that something we read this semester will make you uncomfortable, even angry or upset. Our goal will be to acknowledge satire’s effects on our emotions, ideas, and society, and to think critically about satire’s role in our texts and our world. Several authors we read use racial and other slurs; we will not, however, read slurs aloud in the classroom, nor will we use these words in discussion.

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the passing off of another’s words or ideas as your own, and it is a serious academic offense. Cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures described in the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code. All EN/WR students are subject to the CAS code, which can be read online:

http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/

Penalties for plagiarism can range from failing an assignment or course to suspension or expulsion from the university. In this class, we will discuss conventions for using and citing sources in academic papers. If you have any questions about plagiarism or citation, I invite you to speak with me.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**BB:** Blackboard

**L:** Link to webpage in syllabus

**GT:** *Gulliver’s Travels*

**C22:** *Catch-22*

**TS:** *The Sellout*

**TSIS**: *They Say, I Say*

The schedule below is subject to change at any time by the instructor. I will bring contemporary satirical articles in to class as they pair with our course texts.

**Unit 1: Satirizing Politics and Government**

Week 1

Monday, Sept. 3 [NO CLASS, Labor Day]

Wednesday, Sept. 5

* Course introduction and syllabus review
* Self-Assessment and Questionnaire Assigned
* What is satire?

Friday, Sept. 7

* Reading Due: Jonathan Swift, “A Modest Proposal” (BB and given in class)

Dustin Griffin, *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* p. 1-5 (BB)

* Writing Due: Self-assessment (BB) and Questionnaire (physical copy)
* Name Test 1

Week 2

Monday, Sept. 10

* Reading Due: Mark Twain, *The Gilded Age* Ch. 35 (BB)

The Onion, “[**Senator Moved To Tears After Reading Constituent’s Heartfelt Check**](https://politics.theonion.com/senator-moved-to-tears-after-reading-constituent-s-hear-1819580074)” (BB/L)

* Writing Due: Blackboard Response A-K
* Name Test 2

Wednesday, Sept. 12

* Reading Due: GT p. 3-43
* Writing Due: Blackboard Response L-Q

Browse [www.theonion.com](http://www.theonion.com) and [www.clickhole.com](http://www.clickhole.com) and complete the handout (BB and given in class)

* Final Name Test

Friday, Sept. 14

* Reading Due: TSIS Ch. 1

GT p. 43-84

* Writing Due: Blackboard Response R-Z

Browse [www.mcsweeneys.com](http://www.mcsweeneys.com) and [www.reductress.com](http://www.reductress.com) and complete the handout (BB and given in class)

Week 3

Monday, Sept. 17

* Reading Due: GT p. 89-153

TSIS Ch. 15

* Writing Due: BB Response A-K
* Paper 1 Assigned

Wednesday, Sept. 19

* Reading Due: GT p.157-219
* Writing Due: BB Response L-Q

Friday, Sept. 21

* Reading Due: GT p. 223-264
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z

Write a a one-paragraph summary of today’s reading. (Bring hard copy to class)

Week 4

Monday, Sept. 24

* Reading Due: GT p. 264-295

Dustin Griffin, *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* p. 61-63 (BB)

* Writing Due: BB Response A-K

Wednesday, Sept. 26

* Reading Due: Emma Stefansky, “Jon Stewart: Relax, Satire Doesn’t Change Elections”

<https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/12/jon-stewart-satire-trump-election> (L)

*Is Satire Saving Our Nation* selection (TBD)

* Writing Due: BB Response L-Q

**Unit 2: Satirizing Violence and Tragedy**

Friday, Sept. 28

* Reading Due: C22 p. 3-50
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z

Week 5

Monday, Oct. 1

* Peer Review Workshop
* Paper Conferences Begin [REQUIRED]
* Writing Due: **Paper 1 Draft 1 (BB and hard copy to class)**

Wednesday, Oct. 3

* Paper Conferences End [REQUIRED]
* Reading Due: C22 p. p. 51-103

TSIS Ch. 6

* Writing Due: BB Response A-Q

Friday, Oct. 5

* Reading Due: C22 p. 104-152
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z

Week 6

Monday, Oct. 8 [**No classes**]

Tuesday, Oct. 9 [**Substitute Monday schedule**]

* Reading Due: C22 p. 153-208

TSIS Ch. 7

Wednesday, Oct. 10

* Reading Due: No additional reading

Friday, Oct. 12

* Writing Due: **Paper 1 Final Draft (BB and hard copy due in class)**

Week 7

Monday, Oct. 15

* Reading Due: C22 p. 208-305
* Writing Due: BB Response A-K

Wednesday, Oct. 17

* Reading Due: C22 p. 306-367
* Writing Due: BB Response L-Q

Friday, Oct. 19

* Reading Due: C22 p. 368-420
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z

Week 8

Monday, Oct. 22

* Reading Due: C22 p. 421-453, p. 498-502

Wednesday, Oct. 24

* Canceled

Friday, Oct. 26

* Midterm Review

**Unit 3: Satirizing Culture**

Week 9

Monday, Oct. 29

* **Midterm Exam**

Wednesday, Oct. 31

* Reading Due: Dorothy Parker, “Arrangement in Black and White” (BB)

“Little Curtis” (BB)

Michelle Dean, *Sharp* p. 110-121 AND p. 175-177 (BB)

Friday, Nov. 2

* Reading Due: Dorothy Parker, “Here Comes the Groom” (BB)

Dorothy Parker, “Fulfillment” (BB)

Week 10

Monday, Nov. 5

* Reading Due: TS p. 3-40
* Writing Due: BB Response A-K

Wednesday, Nov. 7

* Reading Due: TS p. 40-89
* Writing Due: BB Response L-Q

Friday, Nov. 9

* Reading Due: TS p. 89-126
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z
* Paper 2 Assigned

Week 11

Monday, Nov. 12

* Reading Due: TS p. 127-168
* Writing Due: BB Response A-K

Wednesday, Nov. 14

* Reading Due: TS p. 169-209
* Writing Due: BB Response L-Q

Friday, Nov. 16

* Reading Due: TS p. 210-250
* Writing Due: BB Response R-Z

Week 12

Monday, Nov. 19

* Reading Due: TS p. 250-289

Wednesday, Nov. 21 [*NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Recess*]

Friday, Nov. 23 [*NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Recess*]

Week 13

Monday, Nov. 26

* Peer Review Workshop
* Writing Due: **Paper 2 Draft 1 (hard copy)**

Wednesday, Nov. 28

CLASS CANCELED

Friday, Nov. 30

* Reading Due: Dorothy Parker, “The Waltz” (BB)

“Song of Perfect Propriety” (BB)

* Optional Conferences

**Course Wrap-Up**

Week 14

Monday, Dec. 3

* Reading Due: Mary McCarthy, *The Company She Keeps* Ch. 4 (BB)

Wednesday, Dec. 5

* Reading Due: Dorothy Parker, “I Don’t Feel Funny” (BB)

Friday, Dec. 7

* Reading Due: TBD

Week 15

Monday, Dec. 10

* Writing Due: TBD

Wednesday, Dec. 12

* Last Day of Class
* Course Evaluations
* Paper 2 Final Draft Due

**CAS Center for Writing**

At the CAS Center for Writing (100 Bay State Road, 3rd floor with a satellite location at Mugar Library) students enrolled in WR courses can receive one-on-one consultations about their writing with well-trained tutors familiar with WR assignments. When you visit the center, you should expect to be actively involved in your session. Tutors will work with you at any stage in your writing process, but they will not edit or correct your paper for you. Rather, they will work with you to help you do your own best work. The center is a resource for all WR students. Whether you consider yourself to be a strong writer or a weak one, you can benefit from consulting with a tutor.

The CAS Center for Writing is open Monday through Friday. Hours for the current semester are posted on the website below (common hours are between 9 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.). While the center accepts walk-in visits, you are strongly encouraged to make an appointment in advance. Because of the high demand for consultations, students are limited to one reservation per week. You may schedule a session online:

http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/the-writing-center/

You may also schedule a session in person at the CAS Center for Writing or by calling 617-358-1500. Cancellations must be made at least 9 hours in advance.

***WR***

The CAS Writing Program publishes an online journal of exemplary writing from WR courses. If you are interested in looking at samples of successful WR papers, or if you just want to read some good essays, I encourage you to visit the journal: http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/journal/

CAS Writing Program: Administers all WR courses and the CAS Center for Writing. You may contact the Writing Program if you have any concerns about your WR class.

100 Bay State Rd., 3rd Floor

617-358-1500

<writing@bu.edu>

Boston University Libraries: Offer a wealth of online and print resources. Research Librarians will introduce you to the many resources the library offers in any field of research. They can work with you to develop a research plan and organize your sources. The Research Center welcomes you for walk-in consultations on the first floor of Mugar Memorial Library or at any other library on campus.

Research appointments can be made at http://www.bu.edu/common/request-an-appointment/.

Mugar Memorial Library

771 Commonwealth Avenue

Phone: 617-353-2700

http://www.bu.edu/library

Educational Resource Center: Offers tutorial assistance to all undergraduate students in a range of subjects, including writing. You should use the Writing Program’s Center for Writing for your WR classes, but you may wish to visit the ERC for tutorial assistance in other subjects.

100 Bay State Rd, 5th floor

Phone: 617-353-7077

http://www.bu.edu/erc

CAS Academic Advising: A central resource for all questions concerning academic policy and practice in the College of Arts and Sciences. The office is headed by the Associate Dean for Student Academic Life and has a staff of fifteen faculty advisors and five academic counselors. All students can receive academic advice about and assistance through this office. Students who have not yet declared concentrations can receive pre-registration advising through this office.

100 Bay State Rd. 4th Floor

Email: casadv@bu.edu

Phone: 617-353-2400

<http://www.bu.edu/casadvising/>

Here are links to the advising offices of other BU colleges:

CFA: <http://www.bu.edu/cfa/resources/advising/>

CGS: <http://www.bu.edu/cgs/academics/advising/>

COM: <http://www.bu.edu/com/resources/current-students/undergraduate>

ENG: <http://www.bu.edu/eng/current-students/ugrad/advising/>

QST: <http://questromworld.bu.edu/udc/essentials/advising/>

SAR: <http://www.bu.edu/sargent/current-students/academic-services-center/>

SED: <http://www.bu.edu/sedadmitted>

SHA: <http://www.bu.edu/hospitality/academics/advising/>

Office of Disability Services: Responsible for assisting students with disabilities. If you have a disability, you are strongly encouraged to register with this office. You may be entitled to special accommodations in your courses, such as additional time on tests, staggered homework assignments, or note-taking assistance. This office will give you a letter outlining the accommodations to which you are entitled that you can share with your teachers. If you require accommodations, you must present me with an official letter from Disability Services. **Please also feel free to approach me via email, before or after class, and/or during office hours to talk about how I can best support you in light of any disabilities you may have.**

19 Deerfield Street, 2nd floor  
 Phone: 617-353-3658

http://www.bu.edu/disability