

Professor Leslie Petty  
Palmer 313  
Office Hours: TTh 12:45-1:45; W 1-3 and by appt.  
[pettyL@rhodes.edu](mailto:pettyL@rhodes.edu); x3981

Spring 2013  
Palmer 211  
TTh 11:00-12:15 p.m.

### **English 485-01: Henry James and Edith Wharton**

In this course we will focus exclusively on the works of Henry James and Edith Wharton. Through intensive study of their novels and short stories, we will consider questions of sexuality, gender, ethnicity, nationality, aesthetics, and economics. We will also situate the fiction historically, not only by learning about the authors' lives, but more importantly, by considering the texts as cultural artifacts of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth and by thinking of them as exemplars of various literary genres and modes such as realism, naturalism, satire and novels of manners. Finally, we will also consider questions of literary influence and intertextuality, given the close personal and professional relationship between the two authors.

This course is the capstone experience of the English major, and its primary goal is to guide you towards finding your own voice as a literary critic by helping you hone your skills of independent research, synthesis and interpretation. To this end, the course begins with a series of common readings, gradually moving towards independent research, reading, and writing. By the end, you will have produced a 20-25 page essay of original scholarship, and you will be required to present your work formally to your peers during the last weeks of the semester.

#### **Required Texts**

James, Henry. *The Ambassadors*. Penguin.  
James, Henry. *The Portrait of a Lady*. W. & W. Norton  
Wharton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence*. Penguin.  
Wharton, Edith. *The House of Mirth*. W. & W. Norton.

Several articles, essays and short stories will be assigned throughout the semester and will be considered required reading. These texts will be available in our public folder.

#### **Recommended Texts**

Gibaldi, ed. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7<sup>th</sup> ed).  
Leitch, ed. *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2nd ed.). W. & W. Norton.

#### **Assignments**

You will write two 5-7 page papers, one on a James text and one on a Wharton text. The culminating research paper will be 20-25 pages. We will discuss further parameters for this paper in class. As part of the final research project, you will also write a 2-3 page formal proposal, produce an annotated bibliography, and give two presentations – one on your preliminary analysis/research and one on your final essay. You will also be required to submit your first five pages to peer review. We will discuss the particulars of these assignments in class. Grades for all of the above will be weighted as follows:

Short Essay #1	15%
Short Essay #2	15%
Seminar Essay	50%
Proposal	5%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
Presentations	10%

### Assignment Submission Policy

Essays are due on the day and time specified in the syllabus. I expect hard copies, unless you are submitting a late paper over the weekend. You will lose 2/3 of a letter grade per day (including weekends) whenever an assignment is late. (For example, if the essay receives an A- but is one day late, the final grade is a B, and so on.) After an essay is a week late, you will receive an “F” on the assignment. If you fail to turn in any of the major assignments, you will fail the course. Presentations are mandatory and cannot be made up. Please clear your calendar now of any conflicts on presentation days.

Also, please note that essays must be typed, double-spaced with an inch margin, stapled, and adhere to MLA standards in both layout and documentation. See me if you have questions about MLA or need further information.

### Attendance Policy

Because this is a senior seminar, you are expected to perform like graduating majors and be serious about your work. I will have little patience, therefore, with lax attendance or inattention during class. We will rely heavily on class discussion, so your participation and preparedness are essential. You are to be here on-time, well-prepared, and well-rested. If you miss more than 3 classes, your final grade will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per absence. If you miss more than 6 classes, you may fail the course. Furthermore, a failure to participate can adversely affect your attendance. Coming to class without the assigned reading text for the day may be counted as an absence.

### Academic Honesty

If you plagiarize an essay or other assignment, in part or whole, you will fail the course in addition to any punishment meted out by the Honor Council. Please see the attached list of English department policies and read carefully the section on academic honesty. This policy governs our class. Please note particularly that work written for another class – even if revised – cannot be handed in as original work in this class. Doing so is considered intellectual dishonesty.

### Course Schedule

#### January

Thur, 10	Introductions
Tues, 15	FOLDER: Henry James, “The Art of Fiction” Johnson, “James: “Henry James, 1843-1916: A Brief Biography”
Thur, 17	<i>The Portrait of a Lady</i> : Chpts. I-XIV (17-122) FOLDER: Banta, “Henry James and the New Woman”
Tues, 22	<i>The Portrait of a Lady</i> : Chpts. XV-XXIX (122-265)

*Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism: Pater, Studies in the History of the Renaissance: "Preface," "Conclusion" (724-730)*

- Thur, 24 *The Portrait of a Lady*: Chpts. XXX-XLII (265-365); "Preface to the New York Edition" (3-16)
- Tues, 29 *The Portrait of a Lady*: Chpts. XLIII-end (365-490)  
FOLDER: Martin, "Failed Heterosexuality in *The Portrait of a Lady*"
- Thurs, 31 FOLDER: Wharton, *The Writing of Fiction*, Chpts. I, IV (NOTE: Your handout had I, III and IV: you may omit III); Benstock, "Edith Wharton, 1862-1937: A Brief Biography"; Lingeman, from *Double Lives*: "Henry James and Edith Wharton"

## February

- Tues, 5 *The House of Mirth*: Book I, Chpts. I-XII (5-109)  
FOLDER: Marchand, "Values Made Flesh: Edith Wharton and the Body Aesthetic"
- Thurs, 7 *The House of Mirth*: Book I, Chpt. XIII – Book II, Chpt. V (109-189)  
FOLDER: Essay on Wharton and Naturalism: TBA
- Tues, 12 *The House of Mirth*: Book II, Chpt. VI – end (189-256)  
FOLDER: Banta, "Wharton's Women"
- Thurs, 14 *The Ambassadors*: Preface, Books First – Second (1-90)  
FOLDER: Wolkenstein, "Henry James in France" (Pay special attention to the section on *The Ambassadors*)

## Mon, 18 Short Essay #1 Due

- Tues, 19 *The Ambassadors*: Books Third-Sixth (93-228)  
FOLDER: Anna Despotopoulou, "What woman was *ever* safe?" Dangerous Constructions of Womanhood in *The Ambassadors*"
- Thurs, 21 *The Ambassadors*: Books Seventh – Ninth (231-341)
- Tues, 26 *The Ambassadors*: Book Tenth – Twelfth (345-470)  
FOLDER: Buchele, "Renunciations in James's Late Novels" (137-50)
- Thurs, 28 *The Age of Innocence*: Chpts. 1-12 (3-92)

## March

- Tues, 5 *The Age of Innocence*: Chpts. 13-26 (93-219)  
FOLDER: Dwight, "Wharton and Art"
- Thurs, 7 *The Age of Innocence*: Chpts. 27-end (220-98)  
FOLDER: Evron, "Realism, Irony and Morality in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*"
- Tues, 12 **SPRING BREAK**
- Thurs, 14 **SPRING BREAK**
- Tues, 19 TBA
- Wed, 20 Short Essay #2 Due**
- Thurs, 21 TBA
- Tues, 26 TBA

Thurs, 28 TBA

**April**

Tues, 2 Presentation of Critical Passages/Research

**Wed, 3 Proposals Due**

Thurs, 4 **EASTER BREAK**

Tues, 9 Presentation of Critical Passages/Research

Thurs, 11 Presentations of Critical Passages / Research

**Fri, 12 Copies of your 5 pages due to me and to the members of your group for peer review**

**Mon, 15 Peer Review Evaluations due to your classmates and to me**

Tues, 16 Presentations

Thurs, 18 Presentations

**Mon, 22 Annotated Bibliographies Due**

Tues, 23 Presentations

Thurs, 25 Presentations  
**Complete Draft Due**

**Final Draft Due Thursday, May 1 @ noon outside my office door.**