

# The List

The English Department invites you to complete the list. What is the list? It is easier to say what it is not than what it is. It is not a list of books that represents the canon. It is not even a list of all our favorite books or all the great works we hope you will someday read. Rather, it is the list of books that emerged when we asked this question of ourselves: what books do we think are essential; what books do we think no one—and in particular, no English major—should leave college without having read? We gave ourselves this limitation: we could each only offer up five books for the list and at least three of those had to come from our area of specialization. So, the list is idiosyncratic in the best sense of the word: all tenure-track, tenured, and visiting professors in the department are required to identify five books we think it most essential for our English majors to read while in college. The books that emerge from these individual choices become “The List.”

We hope you will take the challenge to read these books along with us. If you read 50 of the books from this list while at Wittenberg, you get to make a difficult choice yourself: you get to choose a work of literature to add to The List. For those of you who complete 35 works from The List, we will buy you a copy of your favorite work from the list, inscribe it, and then invite you at the end of the year to join us at a literary salon where we discuss these wonderful works. If you complete 20 books, you will receive an English Department mug.\*

Here's how the challenge works:

- Sign up in the English Department office (Hollenbeck 102) if you want to take the challenge. You have your college years to complete the list.
- When you finish reading a work of literature from the list, pick up a slip from the English Department office to fill out with your name and the title of the book.
- Take that slip with you and talk with the professor who recommended the book (or with one of the alternate professors if any are listed for that title) about what you found most interesting about the work, and get his/her signature on your completion slip. Return the slip to the English Department office.
- When you complete 20 works, you receive an English Department mug! At 35 works, there is further cause for celebration: a gift of a book and the promised party are forthcoming. If you complete 50, you have earned the right to name your own essential book and alumni will be contacting you in the future and letting you know what they found interesting about your selection.

*\*The List will vary over time as individual professors retire and new tenure-track and visiting professors arrive. So, if you sign up to read 50 books from the list, you can read any 50 books from the various evolving lists that have been created during your time at Wittenberg, so long as you are able to meet with a listed professor to receive credit.*

# The List

*\*While you should try to meet with the Professor who chose the book for The List, most titles have alternate Professors (listed parenthetically after the author) with whom you may also meet to discuss and earn credit for completing the work.*

## **Dr. Kimberly Anderson**

*Circe*, Madeline Miller (Fallon)

*Kindred*, Octavia Butler (Askeland, Battle, Davis, Polak)

*Little Fires Everywhere*, Celeste Ng (Mattison)

*Marriage of a Thousand Lies*, SJ Sindu

*The Lais of Marie de France* (Richards)

## **Dr. Lori Askeland**

*Dream Country*, Shannon Gibney

*My Bondage and My Freedom*, Frederick Douglass (Davis)

*A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf (Fallon, Inboden, Incorvati, Mattison, Richards)

*Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Audre Lorde (Battle)

*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Ann Jacobs (Battle, Davis, Mattison, Richards)

## **Dr. Sha'Dawn Battle**

*A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry (Askeland)

*Blues for Mister Charlie*, James Baldwin (Askeland)

*Nervous Conditions*, Tsitsi Dangarembga (Polak)

*Praisesong for the Widow*, Paule Marshall (Askeland)

*The Hate U Give*, Angie Thomas (Mattison)

## **Dr. Robert Davis**

*Walden*, Henry David Thoreau (Askeland, Mattison)

*Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman (Askeland, Hinson)

*Tenth of December: Stories*, George Saunders (Mattison)

*The Complete Stories*, Flannery O'Connor (Hinson, Mattison, Polak)

*Selected Poems*, Emily Dickinson (Askeland)

**Professor D'Arcy Fallon**

*Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, Joan Didion (Incorvati, Mattison, McClelland)

*The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien (Davis, Mattison, McClelland, Polak, Richards)

*The Boys of My Youth*, Jo Ann Beard

*The Undertaking*, Thomas Lynch (Mattison)

*A Shimmer of Something: Lean Stories of Spiritual Substance*, Brian Doyle

**Dr. Scot Hinson**

*Gilead*, Marilynne Robinson (Askeland, Davis, Incorvati)

*The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner (Askeland, Davis, Polak)

*Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov (Askeland, Fallon, Mattison, Polak)

*The Blind Assassin*, Margaret Atwood (Askeland)

*Ulysses*, James Joyce (Davis, Mattison)

**Dr. Robin Inboden**

*Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Bronte (Fallon, Incorvati, Mattison, Richards)

*Tennyson's Poetry (Norton Critical Ed. selection)*, Alfred Tennyson

*Middlemarch*, George Eliot (Askeland, Richards)

*Collected Poems*, William Butler Yeats (Polak)

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles (or Jude the Obscure)*, Thomas Hardy (Polak, Richards)

**Dr. Rick Incorvati**

*Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen (Fallon, Inboden, Polak, Richards)

*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley (Hinson, Inboden, McClelland, Richards)

*"Lamia," "Isabella," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and other poems*, John Keats (Inboden, Richards)

*The Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, William Blake (Inboden, Polak)

*Angels in America*, Tony Kushner (Askeland, Davis, Richards)

**Dr. Michael Mattison**

*Infinite Jest*, David Foster Wallace

*Ohio*, Stephen Markley

*Wittgenstein's Mistress (or Reader's Block)*, David Markson

*Words and Rules: The Ingredients of Language*, Steven Pinker

*Wolf Whistle*, Lewis Nordan

**Dr. Michael McClelland**

*Moby-Dick*, Herman Melville (Askeland, Davis, Hinson, Mattison)

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain (Askeland, Davis, Fallon)

*Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison (Askeland, Battle, Davis, Incorvati, Polak)

*White Noise*, Don DeLillo (Askeland, Davis, Hinson, Polak)

*40 Short Stories: A Portable Anthology*, Beverly Lawn (Mattison)

**Dr. Katharine Polak**

*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz (Askeland, Fallon, Mattison)

*Deogratias*, Jean-Philippe Stassen (Askeland)

*Simulacra and Simulation*, Jean Baudrillard (Hinson)

*Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Askeland, Battle)

*The Anatomy of Prejudices*, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl

**Dr. Cynthia Richards**

*Clarissa (Broadview abridged)*, Samuel Richardson

*Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Sterne (Askeland)

*Evelina*, Frances Burney

*The Letters of John Keats* (Inboden, Incorvati)

*Oroonoko*, Aphra Behn (Inboden, Incorvati)

**Jordan Hildebrandt**

*Flatland*, Edwin A. Abbott (Mattison)