

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 four 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 four 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.*

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 35 works, there is 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. Lori Askeland

Uncle Tom's Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe

My Bondage and My Freedom, Frederick Douglass (I. MacDonald)

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

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

Professor Sha'Dawn Battle

Go Tell It on the Mountain, James Baldwin (Askeland, Incorvati)

Praisesong for the Widow, Paule Marshall (Askeland)

Salt, Earl Lovelace

The Street, Ann Petry

Dr. Ty Buckman

The Faerie Queene, Edmund Spenser

King Lear, William Shakespeare (Hinson, Inboden, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

Selected Works of John Donne (Inboden, Richards)

Paradise Lost, John Milton (Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Richards)

Dr. Robert Davis

Walden, Henry David Thoreau (Askeland, I. MacDonald)

Leaves of Grass, Walt Whitman (Askeland, Hinson)

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

Selected Poems, Emily Dickinson (Askeland)

Professor D'Arcy Fallon

Slouching Towards Bethlehem, Joan Didion (Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Mattison, McClelland)

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

The Boys of My Youth, Jo Ann Beard

The Undertaking, Thomas Lynch

Dr. Scot Hinson

Gilead, Marilynne Robinson (Askeland, Incorvati)

The Sound and the Fury, William Faulkner (Buckman, I. MacDonald, Polak)

Lolita, Vladimir Nabokov (Askeland, Buckman, Fallon, I. MacDonald, Mattison, Polak)

The Blind Assassin, Margaret Atwood (Askeland, I. MacDonald)

Dr. Robin Inboden

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

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

Middlemarch, George Eliot (Askeland, I. MacDonald)

Collected Poems, William Butler Yeats

Dr. Rick Incorvati

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen (Fallon, Inboden, I. MacDonald, Polak)

Frankenstein, Mary Shelley (Buckman, Hinson, Inboden, I. MacDonald, McClelland)

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

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

Dr. Ian MacDonald

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born, Ayi Kwei Armah (Battle)

Nervous Conditions, Tsitsi Dangarembga (Battle, Polak)

Sweet and Sour Milk, Nuruddin Farah

The Famished Road, Ben Okri

Dr. Michael Mattison

Lost in the Funhouse, John Barth

Still Life with Woodpecker, Tom Robbins

Rhetorical Grammar, Martha Kolin and Loretta Gray, 7th edition (Polak)

A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again, David Foster Wallace (Fallon, Polak)

Dr. Michael McClelland

Moby Dick, Herman Melville (Askeland, Davis, Hinson, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

Huck Finn, Mark Twain (Askeland, Fallon, I. MacDonald)

Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison (Askeland, Buckman, Incorvati, I. MacDonald, Polak)

White Noise, Don DeLillo (Askeland, Buckman, Davis, Hinson, I. MacDonald, Polak)

Dr. Katharine MacDonald Polak

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, Junot Diaz (Askeland, Fallon, I. MacDonald, Mattison)

Deogratias, Jean-Philippe Stassen (I. MacDonald)

Simulacra and Simulation, Jean Baudrillard (Buckman, Hinson, I. MacDonald)

Half of a Yellow Sun, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Askeland, Battle, I. MacDonald)

Dr. Cynthia Richards

Clarissa (Broadview abridged), Samuel Richardson (Buckman)

Tristram Shandy, Laurence Sterne (Buckman)

Evelina, Frances Burney (Buckman)

The Letters of John Keats (Inboden, Incorvati)

Jordan Hildebrandt

Flatland, Edwin A. Abbott (Buckman, I. MacDonald)