

Honor Statement:

I pledge on my personal honor and integrity that all the answers I will provide for both Part 1 and Part 2 of this exam will be my own.

Signature _____ Date _____

English Department

Senior Comprehensive Examination

Fall 2018

Part 1 (AM)

I. Chronology (10 points)

Identify ten (10) of the following by the century in which they flourished. (Note: 1800s = 19th Century.) On your answer sheet, number 1 through 12 and place your answers in the appropriate order, indicating your two blanks with an "0".

1. Edgar Allan Poe & Gustave Flaubert
2. Chinua Achebe & Anna Akhmatova
3. Petrarch & William Langland
4. Viet Thanh Nguyen & Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
5. Aeschylus & Herodotus
6. Mary Wroth & John Dryden
7. Frederick Douglass & Stephen Crane
8. Gwendolyn Brooks & John Millington Synge
9. Ovid & Petronius
10. Jonathan Edwards & Mary Wollstonecraft
11. Cicero & Lucretius
12. Edmund Spenser & Isabella Whitney

II. Literary Terms and Movements (15 points)

In a paragraph or two, **define five** of the following seven terms and movements. For movements, be sure to offer examples of important works and authors. All responses should provide enough elaboration, historical/cultural context, and detail to demonstrate full understanding. All examples should follow logically, be relevant, and support your definition.

1. Harlem Renaissance
2. Orientalism
3. Irony
4. Romance (narrative)
5. Naturalism
6. Dramatic Unities

7. Unreliable Narrator

III. Literature, Culture, and Ideas I (Literary History) (25 points)

Choose **one** of the following questions and write a thoughtful, well-informed, well-written, and well-edited essay in response to it. Every essay should have a clearly stated thesis and textual support for its interpretive claims. Do not simply write a compare-and-contrast essay. Note: a book-length literary work could be in the form of a play, novel or short story, memoir, or long poem.

1. James Joyce used the term “epiphany” in his writings to indicate a sudden eye-opener regarding the nature of a person or situation. He said it is the moment in which “the soul of the commonest object ... seems to us radiant, and may be manifested through any chance, word or gesture.” Write an essay that examines how this idea is exhibited in two literary works from different centuries.
2. Authors often use subplots that feature minor characters whose plight parallels or juxtaposes that of the major characters in the central plot. Choose two book-length works of literature from different time periods that employ such a secondary plot, and discuss how it contributes to each work’s primary plot in a significant way. You might examine how the subplot aids in the development of characterization, theme, or even in plotting itself. Be sure to place the two works in conversation by drawing some explicit comparisons or contrasts between them.
3. Writers often respond in their work to contemporaries and predecessors, even if the relationship is rarely stated explicitly (as in, say, Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* or Margaret Atwood’s *Penelopiad*). Choose one literary text and discuss how it consciously engages an earlier work. In providing your answer, your focus should be on the subsequent work—the answer, that is, and its various strategies of response, however successful—but you should also demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the form, content, and context of the earlier piece.
4. Ron Rash has claimed that “landscape is destiny”: that landscape profoundly shapes how people—including writers—perceive the world. (According to Rash, for example, “*The Great Gatsby* could only have been written by a Midwesterner.”) Choose two works from different eras or cultures in which landscape (or environment) figures prominently, almost as a character itself. Write an essay that discusses not only how landscape shapes the characters’ actions, but also how this feature reflects contextual assumptions (of the author or era) about human agency.