

**University of Waterloo
Isolation and Alienation
ENGL 108H
FALL 2010**

Instructor: Jessica Antonio Lomanowska

Course Meets: M,W 4:00-5:20PM, HH280

Office: PAS 2217

Office Hours: M,W 3:00-3:50PM, or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course examines themes of alienation and isolation in a variety of literary works and across historical and cultural contexts. The chosen texts feature the overarching theme of individuals in crisis, particularly as it extends to inner turmoil, conflict with others, and/or with his/her world. We will investigate how these literary accounts of isolation and alienation are constructed, what purposes they serve, and what these ideas and experiences reveal about our own identities. In the texts that we study in ENGL 108H, the construction of identity is contested, challenged, and re-written against a pervasive framework of suffering. This course will challenge you to examine the many ways that these stresses collide and intersect with conceptions of gender, sexuality, power, race, and sub-themes of childhood, madness, war, disability, and love to name a few. Throughout the term, we will discuss the process through which wisdom, maturity, and healing are gained, but only, perhaps, as the consequence of personal trauma and crisis. Books, videos, and music will be among the artifacts that we study in this course.

Required Texts:

Burnett, Hodgson Frances. *The Secret Garden*

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*

Maguire, Gregory. *Wicked*

Martel, Yann. *Beatrice & Virgil*

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*

Perkins Gilman, Charlotte. *The Yellow Wallpaper*

Sapphire. *Push*

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*

Assignments:

Essay #1: 15% (1000 words, bibliography of two items, MLA style) **due Oct 27 (in class)**

Essay#2: 30% (1500 words, bibliography of two items, MLA style) **due Dec 10**

Film Precis: 5% **due Nov 1 (in class)**

In-Class Test (Midterm): 20% **Oct 13 (in class)**

In-class Test (End of Term): 20% **Dec 6 (in class)**

Participation: 10%

Notes on Assignments:

Essays: students will write two research papers in which they will investigate matters related to the course—both theoretically and contextually. Topics will be distributed in class, but you may devise your own topic provided it is approved by the instructor. All essays must include secondary research, and must follow MLA guidelines. Essays will be marked for correctness of grammar, presentation and citation, and intellectual content.

Film Precis: students will write one short response to the film we screen in class (apx. 3-4 paragraphs). Responses should be anchored in course themes, be formal in tone, and develop an argument.

In-Class Test (Midterm): will take place on **Oct 13** and will cover all material up to that date. It will be in short answer and essay format.

In-Class Test (End of Term): Will take place on **Dec 6** and will cover all course material since the midterm exam. It will be in short answer and essay format.

Participation: The grade for class participation will be based upon the student's prepared presence in class. This means that s/he will have the assigned texts read and available for reference, and be able to offer respectful and contextual comments to classroom discussions. This grade will also be comprised of the completion of various in-class exercises, and random reading quizzes. In order to excel in this category, it is necessary for students to take the responsibility to be prepared for class, be willing to offer personal insight, listen to others and respond to their comments. In general, we will collectively aim to make the classroom a place of mutual learning. Please bring your books to class.

Late Policy:

Essays must be passed in on the due date. Late essays will be penalized 10% (a letter grade) automatically and will not be accepted after one week past the deadline, resulting in a grade of zero for the assignment. Extensions can only be granted for documented illness. Essays can also be passed in to the English department drop box in Hagey Hall, the day **before** the due date, if a student cannot attend class.

Missed Exams or Midterms:

The midterm test and final test can only be rescheduled if a doctor's note is provided.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. If you require academic accommodations (such as alternate test and exam arrangements) please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term and inform the course instructor.

Schedule of Classes and Topics:**Week 1**

Sept 13 M: Introduction

SEPT 15 W: Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

Week 2

SEPT 20 M: Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

SEPT 22 W: Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

Week 3

SEPT 27 M: Shelley, *Frankenstein*

SEPT 29 W: Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Week 4

OCT 4 M: Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*

OCT 6 W: Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*

Week 5

OCT 11 M: no class, Thanksgiving holiday

OCT 13 W: **In-Class Test#1 (Midterm)**

Week 6

OCT 18 M: Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

OCT 20 W: Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

Week 7

OCT 25 M: Film Screening, *Persepolis*

OCT 27 W: Film Screening, *Persepolis*

Essay 1 Due**Week 8**

NOV 1 M: Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*

Film Precis Due

NOV 3 W: Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*

Week 9

NOV 8 M: Sapphire, *Push*

NOV 10 W: Sapphire, *Push*

Week 10

NOV 15 M: Maguire, *Wicked*

NOV 17 W: Maguire, *Wicked*

Week 11

NOV 22 M: Martel, *Beatrice & Virgil*

NOV 24 W: Martel, *Beatrice & Virgil*

Week 12

NOV 29 M: McCarthy, *The Road*

DEC 1 W, McCarthy, *The Road*

Week 13

DEC 6 M: **In-Class Test #2 (Final)**