ENGLISH 105A
20TH-CENTURY IN ENGLISH, 1900-1945
(SPRING, 1999)

A) PARTICULARS:

Instructor: Cameron Reid
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Office Hours: Tuesday 4-6 p.m. (or by appointment)
Meeting Time: Wednesday 7-10 p.m.

B) REQUIRED TEXTS:

F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (Scribner)
Ernest Hemingway, In Our Time (Distican)
Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God (Harper)
John Steinbeck, Grapes of Wrath (Canbook)
Samuel Beckett, Murphy (Grove)
COURSE PACK FOR ENGLISH 105A – AVAILABLE IN THE BOOKSTORE

*NOTE: other editions of the novels are fine but recognize page references will be different for in-class discussion; check out the USED BOOKSTORE(s) for copies of these books.

C) COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1.) Midterm (Tuesday, June 15th -- in class): 20%

2.) Participation and Group work: 10%

3.) Final Exam (set by registrar): 35%
4.) Optional Paper Proposal (Due Tuesday, July 13): 10% (1-2 pages)

5.) Final Paper (Due on or before Friday, August 6): 25% (or 35% depending on whether you choose to do the optional paper proposal: 4-5 pages)

D) COURSE MANDATE:

Our course, "20th-century English Literature, 1900-1945," contends with a very eclectic period in English literary and social history. We, as a reading audience, cannot begin to think about the great 'puzzle' of early 20th-century literature without developing a background in the sorts of historical and social influences in/against which this literature takes shape. That is, we need to recognize that the literature both reflects and speaks to its time. We also need to recognize that this literature gets situated, gets grounded or implicated within much larger cultural, geo-political, psychological, artistic, and intellectual contexts at work in the minds of most (if not all) the "great" literary figures in the first-half of this century which results in what is typically referred to as "Modernism." Consider, for instance, the growing intellectual influence of Marx, Freud, and Darwin; the growing impact of the scientific mind; the rapid shifts and growth in technologies; the rise of new media such as film and radio; and the spirit of rationalism looming over the cultural 'zeitgeist' of early 20th-century Europe. One also must recognize the inevitable disillusionment and alienation of a "Lost Generation" of writers who came of age during a time of World Wars, the "Great Depression," the rise of Fascism in Europe, the growing presence of weapons of Mass-destruction, etc.

So often our readings and discussions will be organized around some of the above themes or contexts, literary and cultural "access points," if you will, that might help to better orient us to this complicated period and its writings.

E) WEEKLY BREAKDOWN OF CLASSES (some later classes may change):

May 4 Short introduction to Modernism; discussion of course requirements.

May 11 MODERN CRITICISM AND THOUGHT: essays by Lawrence, Conrad, and Woolf (all in Reading Package).
May 18  **THE "ROARING TWENTIES"**: Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

May 25  **SHORT STORY I**: Faulkner's "Barn Burning" and "A Rose for Emily";  D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking Horse Winner";  Welty's "Petrified Man" (all in reading package).

June 1  **DISILLUSIONMENT AND THE MODERN MAN**: Hemingway's *In Our Time*.


June 15  **MIDTERM** (in class).

June 22  **POETRY II: POETIC EXPERIMENT AND JAZZ**: H.D.: "Sea Rose"; "Oxread"; "Helen";  William Carlos Williams: "The Widow's lament in Springtime"; "The Great Figure"; "Spring and All"; "The Red Wheelbarrow";  all  e.e. cummings selections; all Langston Hughes selections; (all in reading package).

June 29  **HARLEM RENAISSANCE**: Hurston's *There Eyes Were Watching God*.

July 6  **SHORT STORY II AND DETECTIVE FILMS**:  Hammett's "Too many have lived";  Chandler's essay "The Simple Art of Murder";  (all in reading package); Howard Hawk's "The Big Sleep";  John Huston's "The Maltese Falcon" (or some other 'pot boiler,' depending on what's available).
July 13 **THE SOCIOLOGICAL NOVEL:** Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath.*

July 20 **THE MODERN ERA ON FILM AND CINEMATIC EXPERIMENT:** Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times"; Fritz Lang's "Metropolis"; Robert Wiene's "Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"; Eisenstein's "Battleship Potemkin"; Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane" (depending on what's available).

July 27 **THE MOVEMENT TOWARD THE POSTMODERN:** Beckett's *Murphy.*