ENGL 105A: Twentieth-Century Literature, 1900 to 1945

Course Description

Calendar Description

A close examination of a representative selection of works by major authors writing in English such as Yeats, Woolf, Lawrence, Eliot, Hemingway, and Faulkner.

Detailed Description

The years that encompass the "Modernist" Period are some of the most tumultuous in the history of the Western World: the collapse of the British Empire, the rise of totalitarianism, two world wars, genocides, the Great Depression . . . these are just some of the world-shaping (or world-breaking) events that took place between the 1900 and 1945. Writers tried to deal with their ever-changing world in a number of ways, in both the content and form of their works, from trying to find some sense in the chaos around them to trying to represent that chaos adequately to trying to ignore it as much as they could. In this class, we will examine works by some of the (mostly British) writers of the Modernist Period, paying particular attention to how those works responded, and contributed, to the world(s) around them—the social, political, historical, and literary contexts in which they were produced and to which they contributed. The class will be conducted in a seminar format, with occasional short and informal lectures to introduce key topics, and all students are expected to attend class regularly and to contribute to the on-going class discussion.

Texts

Required

Reading Package. (Available in the University of Waterloo Bookstore.)

Recommended

McArthur, Murray and Jane E. Aaron, eds. The Little, Brown Compact Handbook. First Canadian
Assignments

Short Essay (May 30, 2002) 20 %
In-Class Mid-Term Writing Assignment (June 20, 2002) 30 %
Research Essay Proposal and Annotated Working Bibliography (July 4, 2002) 10 %
Research Essay (July 25, 2002) 40%

Short Essay

During the second week of classes, I will provide a selection of essay topics, and you will be asked to write a short, three-to-four-page (approximately 800-1000 words) essay on one of the suggested topics. There is no research component for this assignment: I am interested in what you have to say about the text on which you are writing, in how well you can make an argument based on a careful close-reading of the text, and in how clearly you can develop that argument. The only text that should be on your list of works cited is the primary text—that is, the novel, story, poem, or essay on which you are writing. Further details will accompany the selection of essay topics I will hand out during the second week of classes. The essay must be formatted according to MLA guidelines (see MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers [5th ed.], pages 222-53 of The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, or the sheets accompanying this syllabus). If you are unsure how to use the MLA, please come and see me; all essays not formatted according to MLA standards will be docked 10%. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on Thursday May 30, 2002; all late papers will be penalized 5% per day every day including weekends. This assignment is worth 20% (twenty percent) of your final grade.

In-Class Mid-Term Writing Assignment

On Thursday, June 6, 2002, you will be given a list of three (3) short passages or quotations taken from texts we have not read but that clearly relate to issues we have discussed in class. On Thursday, June 20, 2002, you will write an in-class essay responding to one of those passages or quotations; I will choose the passage from the list of three, and everyone will write on the same one. In your response, you must refer to at least three (3) of the texts we have read and discussed in class, but, while I do expect you to be able to discuss the texts in some detail (that is, demonstrate familiarity with the story, its characters, and major themes and images), I do not expect you to quote directly from them. I am primarily interested in two things: first, I want to see you engage with the texts you are writing about in the terms of the discussions we have carried out in class; second, I want to see you take a position and make an argument, not simply repeat what was said in class or offer summaries of the texts we have read. Remember, an essay is an argument: you must introduce your argument, provide a clear thesis, defend that thesis in the body of the essay, and offer a conclusion that summarizes and indicates the relevance of your argument. Take the time to plan your essay carefully: prepare an outline and proofread and
selectively edit the finished product. More details will accompany the list of quotations you will receive on June 6. This in-class assignment will take place on Thursday, June 20, 2002 and is worth 30% (thirty percent) of your final grade.

Research Essay Proposal and Annotated Working Bibliography

Prepare a one-page (approximately 250 words), typed or word-processed, double-spaced working introduction to a six-page (approximately 1500 words) research essay. Include all of the elements of a good critical research essay introduction: provide a context for discussion, state your thesis as clearly as possible, and suggest the “shape” of the argument that will follow (what points or examples will you discuss and in what order). In addition, prepare a working bibliography of no less than three (3) but no more than five (5) secondary texts in MLA format. Two (2) of the bibliographic entries must be annotated: at the end of the citation, provide a short (approximately 3-4 sentence) paragraph indicating what the source is about--its thesis--and how you think you can use it in your paper. Remember, this is a “working” introduction and bibliography: you will revise, edit, drop, add, and change probably several times before your final paper is complete. The purpose of this assignment is to get you started on the research and essay-writing processes early so that you can produce a stronger final product. Further details will accompany a list of guidelines and suggested topics that I will hand out on May 30. In the week after this assignment is returned, my office hours will be extended and all students will be encouraged to sign up for brief meetings with me in order to discuss your papers-in-progress. The assignment must be formatted according to MLA guidelines (see MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers [5th ed.], pages 222-53 of The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, or the sheets accompanying this syllabus). If you are unsure how to use the MLA, please come and see me; all essays not formatted according to MLA standards will be docked 10%. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on Thursday July 4, 2002; all late assignments will be penalized 5% per day every day including weekends. This assignment is worth 10% (ten percent) of your final grade.

Research Essay

Write the essay for which you prepared the working introduction and annotated bibliography. The essay should be approximately six to eight, double-spaced, and typed or word-processed pages (roughly 1500-2000 words). As I stated above, more details will accompany a list of guidelines and suggested topics. The essay must be formatted according to MLA guidelines (see MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers [5th ed.], pages 222-53 of The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, or the sheets accompanying this syllabus). If you are unsure how to use the MLA, please come and see me; all essays not formatted according to MLA standards will be docked 10%. This assignment is due at the beginning of class on Thursday July 25, 2002; all late assignments will be penalized 5% per day every day including weekends. This assignment is worth 40% (forty percent) of your final grade.

Class Policies
Late Assignments

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in each assignment description. All late assignments will be docked 5% (five percent) per day, including weekends. In other words, if a paper is due on Thursday and it is handed in on Monday, it will be docked 20% (five percent for each of four days).

Extensions

All extensions must be requested well in advance of the due dates; except in extraordinary circumstances, extensions will not be granted the day before assignments are due (that is, if an assignment is due on Thursday, extensions will not be granted after Tuesday). I reserve the right to request appropriate documentation (e.g. a doctor’s note) in all cases.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted directly to me at the beginning of class on the due date. Do not, under any circumstances, put assignments under or on my office door. If you must submit to my mailbox (HH 229), make sure that the assignment is in before class; assignments handed in after class are considered late. Remember, however, that the mailroom closes at 4:30; make sure you submit before then.) Email submissions will stop late penalties, but you must submit a hard-copy within 24 hours--after that 24-hour period, the assignment will again start accumulating late penalties.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense; all plagiarised papers will be penalized to the fullest extent allowed by the university. (See the attached sheet, referring to Policy #71, for more information on plagiarism and related offenses.) I do recognise the difference between “accidental” plagiarism (a missed citation, for example) and outright cheating, but all such instances are serious and will be penalized accordingly. Take the time to go through all assignments carefully in order to be sure that everything is properly documented. If you are at all unsure, please come and see me. Don’t let a misunderstanding become a major problem.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

Students are expected to read all material before the class in which we will discuss it; lectures and discussion questions will assume familiarity with all of the texts scheduled for discussion during that class. All texts marked with an asterisk (*) can be found in the Course Reading Package (available in the University Bookstore).

May 2: Welcome and Introduction; Backgrounds and contexts (*McFarlane, “The Mind of Modernism”)
May 9: Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*

May 16: *Yeats, all selections

May 23: *H.D., all selections


June 6: Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*

June 13: *Auden, all selections

June 20: In-Class Mid-Term Writing Assignment; *Wells, “The Land Ironclads”*

June 27: Joyce, *Dubliners*

July 4: *Thomas, all selections; Sitwell, all selections; Research Essay Proposal and Annotated Working Bibliography Due

July 11: T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*

July 18: Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

July 25: Wrap-up and general class discussion; Research Essay Assignment Due
Department of English Contacts and Resources

Contacts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officer Type</th>
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Resources:

English Mail Room
HH 229
Open 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday
- Faculty mail boxes and course boxes located here.

THE FACULTY OF ARTS REQUIRES THAT WE NOTIFY YOU OF THE FOLLOWING:

"Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

Dean of Arts:
Robert R. Kerton
ML 236, ext. 2217

Associate Dean of Arts, Undergraduate Affairs
Sheila Ager
ML 254, ext. 3554