105B: 20th Century Lit in English 1945-Present
Instructor: Sara Humphreys
Time: Tuesdays, 6 to 8:50pm
Room Number: PAS (Psychology) 1241
Office Hours: Mondays 10 to 12 and Wednesdays 12 to 2 or by appointment.
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"There is a theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states this has already happened."
Douglas Adams

Course Description:
In this course, we will study a variety of genres from graphic novels to long dramatic poetry. The works we cover in this survey course only represent a tiny fraction of the available literature; however, each work will introduce different perspectives of the major literary and cultural movements in contemporary literature in English. We will study various identities, histories, genres, and aesthetic traditions that reflect the diversity of our contemporary world. Please see the course schedule below for details.

Class Organization:
A three-hour class is guerelling enough without having to listen to a 180-minute lecture. As well, the human mind absorbs information more fully when material is presented in different formats. Therefore, the class is organised as follows:

1. The first hour and a half will consist of lecture and discussion. A variety of auditory and visual methods (overheads, PowerPoint etc....) will be incorporated with the lecture.
2. The last hour and a half will consist of group work where a question relating to the work assigned for the week will be debated.
3. There are two weeks where a film will be shown in lieu of group work, please see the course calendar listed below for details.

Required Texts:

*Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* Art Spiegelman
*Giovanni’s Room* James Baldwin
*Disappearing Moon Cafe* Sky Lee
Course Book (available in the bookstore)
Evaluation:
Weekly Response Papers 20%
Participation 10%
Midterm 15%
Final Essay 25%
Final Exam 30%

100%

Assignment Descriptions:

Response Papers: 20%
You must prepare a 1-3 page SINGLE SPACED response to the work assigned. A more detailed description, with an example, will be given prior to the first due date. Response papers are graded according to the quality of prose, analysis and creativity.

Participation: 10%
If you do not make one single comment during lecture, you will not be penalized. This grade is based completely on group participation. You must contribute to debate and dialogue with your classmates and vice versa. The final grade is a combined value drawn from evaluation by your peers (5%) and the instructor (5%). Your attendance to the group work component is mandatory. Each unsubstantiated absence will result in a 2% deduction.

Midterm 15%
The midterm comprises passage identification and analysis. The instructor will provide the works covered in the midterm. Any and all passages in the midterm will have been studied in class.

Final Essay 25%
The final essay has two components:

1. A proposal worth 5% of the overall mark.
2. A comparison and contrast essay or a close reading essay on one or two of the works studied over the term. You will be provided with essay topics to guide your thesis and analysis. More information will be provided later in the term.

Final Exam 30%: a combination of short answer and essay questions. More information will be provided towards the end of term.
Course Schedule:

January 4th Week One:

Readings Due: None

Lecture Topics: outline of the course and requirements

Group Work: None

Assignments Due: None

January 11th Week Two:

Readings Due: Wayne Booth "Starting Over" (Course Reader), Candace Bushnell "My Unsentimental Education: Love in Manhattan? I Don't Think So..." (Course Reader), Ralph Ellison "King of the Bingo Game" (Course Reader)

Lecture Topics: literary analysis, high culture and low culture

Group Work: None

Assignments Due: written diagnostic (in-class exercise)

January 18th Week Three:

Readings Due: Primo Levi "The Drowned and the Saved" (Course Reader), first half of Maus

Lecture Topics: graphic novels, the importance of 1945 in the title of this course, Spiegelman's characters: why animals? Narrative voice and diction

Group Work: what skills and talents does Vladek use to survive? Are these qualities admirable? Why do you think Spiegelman characterises his father in this way?

Assignments Due: none

January 25th Week Four:

Readings Due: last half of Maus, handout on Tom Stoppard Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

Lecture Topics: modernism to postmodernism, narrative flow and fragmentation

Film viewing of first half of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

Assignments Due: response paper on Maus
February 1st Week Five:

Reading Due: second handout on Tom Stoppard *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

Lecture Topics: Theatre of the Absurd; “meaning” in the modern world; social hierarchies; film as literature

Last half of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

Assignments Due: none

February 8th Week Six:

Readings Due: James Baldwin *Giovanni’s Room* (the whole book)

Lecture Topics: sexual crises, social dislocation, time and place

Group Work: TBA

Assignments Due: response paper on *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

February 15th Week Seven:

Readings Due: Arthur Miller *Death of a Salesman*

Lecture Topics: “The American Dream” and the ideal of success, what is a modern man? Realism in drama

Film viewing of *Death of a Salesman*

Assignments Due: none

February 22nd Week Eight – Reading Week!

March 1st Week Nine

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March 8th Week 10

Readings Due: Leslie Marmon Silko “Storyteller” (Course Book), Adrienne Rich “Snapshots of a Daughter” (Course Book), Robert Kroetsch “Seed Catalogue”

Lecture Topics: poetry as story, autobiography – and a brief introduction to colonialism and gender issues

Group Work: TBA

Essay Workshop: close-reading essays and essay organisation
Assignments Due: Essay Proposal

March 15th Week Eleven

Readings Due: Sky Lee Disappearing Moon Cafe (the whole book), “Reading and Writing about Literature” (Course Book)

Lecture Topics: narrative voice and temporality, issues of race and identity in contemporary Canadian literature

Group Work: TBA

Essay Workshop: comparison and contrast essays and “how to write a English essay”

Assignment Due: response paper on one of the poems read in week ten

March 22nd Week Twelve

Readings Due: Ray Bradbury “The Exiles” (Course Reader), Ursula Le Guin “The New Atlantis” (Course Reader), Episode One The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy (viewed in class).

Lecture Topics: technology and anxiety, utopias and dystopias

Group Work: TBA

Essay Workshop: common errors in essay writing

Assignments Due: response paper on Disappearing Moon Cafe

March 29th Week Thirteen:

Final papers due and exam review

Online Component: This course uses an online classroom assistant called Nicenet (www.nicenet.org). You can access info on assignments, course info and handouts online.

Plagiarism:
The definition of plagiarism provided by the English Department at the University of Waterloo states, “Plagiarism is the act of presenting ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one’s own.” We do not merely request that you cite your sources - YOU MUST CITE ALL SOURCES. Otherwise, you will commit a serious academic offense.

If you have any concerns or questions please see the instructor, or visit the following website for more information: http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html
If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, there is a helpful website produced by the University of Waterloo to clarify the issue:

"How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors"

Late Policy: Extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis, and no extensions will be negotiated after the due date. Any papers without an approved extension will be penalized 5% per day including weekends.

Other Course Policies:

Student Grievances: "Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.html" (Senate Undergraduate Council).

Disability Services: "Note for students 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 without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term"(Senate Undergraduate Council).

Note: The syllabus is subject to change WITH notice.