ENGLISH 108 H (02): Alienation and Isolation
Winter 2000
Instructor: James Wallace
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   Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 -- 1:00, or by appointment

Course Description:

We will study the treatment of alienation and isolation in a selection of plays and novels, from ancient to modern. While the texts converge upon a single thematic terrain, of particular interest will be the way each advances our understanding of what it might mean to be alienated or isolated within the cultural and historical moments the texts represent. Thus a primary concern for this course is the way alienation and isolation are related, their similarities and their differences from one another over time. Our consideration of alienation and isolation will be geared towards discerning the particular clusters of features, within each text, by which alienation and isolation are variously figured. Through close reading, discussion, considered argumentation and textual analysis, we will have an opportunity to explore a range of issues pertinent to representations of alienation, isolation and their contexts. I hope you will enjoy and find rewarding the many challenges afforded by this university level course of critical textual analysis.

Required Texts:

Camus, Albert The Outsider
Chopin, Kate The Awakening
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor Notes From Underground and The Double
Kafka, Franz Amerika
Melville, Herman Billy Budd
Shakespeare, William Othello
Sophocles Antigone

Recommended Text:

Aaron, Jane E. and Murray McArthur The Little Brown Compact Handbook, Canadian Ed.

Participation and Attendance:

Attendance at all classes is mandatory. I expect that you will endeavor to participate fully in all class discussions.

Late Assignments:

All assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Marks will be deducted from an essay assignment not handed in on time without proper documentation at the rate of 10% for each day late. Issue sheets will receive a grade of zero if submitted late without proper documentation.
**Academic Offences:** The Faculty of Arts requires that I inform you of the following:

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.

**Assignments:**

Issue Sheets: For each class you will write a short paragraph (50 to 100 words) on one or two ideas or questions you have, either about a text we are currently discussing (or about to discuss) or on an issue raised in discussion that you would like to address and relate to a text. *Issue sheets are due at the start of class.* You are expected to use these issue sheets as an opportunity to generate some concrete starting points for a potential essay topic of interest to you and relating in some way to the overall course design. Be prepared to take up these issues in class discussion. There will be a total of 18 issue sheets (each worth 1% of final grade); there is a bonus of 2% for handing in all 18. **Note:** Only 1 issue sheet will be accepted per class.

---- 20% of final grade.

Midterm: The midterm test will consist of both short answer and an essay question. You will have 80 minutes to complete the test.

---- 20% of final grade.

Essay Outline and Thesis Statement: A one page description of your chosen topic and the argument you will make in your essay. You should strive to make clear to me in this assignment not only what your thesis (your argument or position with respect to the text or texts) is, but what evidence you intend to use to support it. In addition, this outline should also provide a breakdown of any sub-arguments you will want to make and their relation to your main argument.

---- 5% of final grade

Essay: You will write a 7 or 8 page double spaced essay on a topic of your choice, one which has been arrived at in consultation with me.

---- 35% of final grade.

Final Exam: The exam will cover material from the midterm to the end of classes.

---- 20% of final grade.
Tentative Schedule:

Jan. 4 – introduction
Jan. 6 – introduction; Antigone
Jan. 11 – Antigone
Jan. 13 – Antigone
Jan. 18 – Othello
Jan. 21 – Othello
Jan. 25 – Othello
Jan. 27 – Notes From Underground
Feb. 1 – Notes From Underground
Feb. 3 – Notes from Underground
Feb. 8 – The Double
Feb. 10 – The Double
Feb. 15 – The Double
Feb. 17 – Midterm
Feb. 22 – Classes Canceled
Feb. 24 – Classes Canceled
Feb. 29 – Amerika
Mar. 2 – Amerika
Mar. 7 – Amerika
Mar. 9 – Billy Budd
Mar. 14 – Billy Budd; Essay Outline and Thesis Statement Due
Mar. 16 – Billy Budd
Mar. 21 – The Awakening
Mar. 23 – The Awakening
Mar. 28 – The Awakening; Essay Due
Mar. 30 – The Outsider
April 4 – The Outsider