

AML 2410: Issues in American Literature & Culture
Section 8974: Novel Experience & Expression

Fall 2009

MWF Period 7

Room: Turlington 2346

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Course website: <http://garyhink.net/course/f09>

This course examines American novels with a specific focus on the connection between initial or unique experience(s) and innovative forms of expression—in other words, “novel” in both cases. This perspective guides two related approaches and goals. On the one hand, we will investigate “new and unusual” ordeals for individuals during events and situations of 20th-century American history: urban migration, consumer culture, “the Roaring Twenties” (*Gatsby*, *Jazz*); mental illness, drug use, paranoia, “the Sixties” (*The Bell Jar*, *Naked Lunch*, *Crying of Lot 49*); alcoholism; “post-war” condition(s), before the diagnosis of “PTSD” (*Slaughterhouse Five*, *Ceremony*); family, grief/mourning, “the past” as narrative (most texts, especially *City of Glass* and *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*). Distinct from historical discourse of “the past,” we will examine the literary expression of experience, specifically the prevalent form of non-linear narrative. From this inquiry, we will also consider the “event” of literature in terms of experiencing both reading and writing, for first-hand insights of “novel experience.”

This course satisfies UF’s General Education requirement for the Humanities content area, detailed in the Undergraduate Catalog: <<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html#requirements>>

Required Texts

Note: all texts available at **Goerings Book Store** (1717 NW First Ave)

Abbott, H. Porter. <i>The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative</i>	2 nd Edition (2008)
Auster, Paul. <i>City of Glass</i> (1987)	Penguin (1987)
Burroughs, William S. <i>Naked Lunch</i> (1959)	Grove Press (2004 or 1992)
Fitzgerald, F. Scott. <i>The Great Gatsby</i> (1925)	Penguin (2003 or 2007)
Foer, Jonathan Safran. <i>Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close</i> (2005)	Mariner (2006)
Morrison, Toni. <i>Jazz</i> (1992)	Vintage (2002)
Plath, Sylvia. <i>The Bell Jar</i> (1966)	Harper (2006 or 2000)
Pynchon, Thomas. <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i> (1966)	Harper (2006 or 1999)
Silko, Leslie Marmon. <i>Ceremony</i> (1977)	Penguin (2006 or 1986)
Vonnegut, Kurt. <i>Slaughterhouse Five</i> (1969)	Dial (1999 or 1991)

Recommended:

Gardner, Janet. <i>Writing About Literature</i> 2 nd Edition	Bedford (2009)
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Assignments and Grade Distribution

6 Reading Responses	(500 words each)	40%
Analytic Essay	(1600-1800 words)	20%
Final Project	(2000 words)	20%
Attendance and Participation		20%
– including Blog Entries (weekly / ungraded)		
– including discussion intro. (two days; not a presentation)		

Assignments

Reading Response Entries

(6 responses: 4 critical + 2 creative; 500 words each)

These informal assignments serve to illustrate attentive reading of assigned texts. Evaluation will correspond accordingly, with credit assigned **(1)** for submitting work on-time; **(2)** for demonstrating both critical reading of assigned texts and attention to class lecture/discussion topics, particularly by describing insights and connections; **(3)** for providing thoughtful and relevant responses to prompts, with **(4)** specific examples from respective readings, while **(5)** minimizing and/or avoiding summary, repetition, digression, and any unnecessary discussion.

Response prompts will appear online (on course blog and on e-Learning, where they should be submitted).

Analytic Essay: Narrative (i.e. "Close Reading" Assignment)

(1600-1800 words; no secondary sources)

This **formal essay** will present an analysis of one novel we've read using our method and topics from Abbott; support for this interpretation will be discussion of (only) textual evidence. We will practice this interpretive method during most class meetings; additionally, I will review essay-writing strategies and will provide a detailed assignment description with evaluation criteria. *Note*: revised essays (optional) are due two weeks before our last class; assignments can not be accepted on the last day, at which time I will return any/all evaluated work.

Final Project: Multimedia (Hybrid assignment: critical focus, creative form)

(2000 words; minimum 4 sources)

Composed for web, as hypertext narrative, using individual blog for medium/format. Using the methodology extensively developed by Prof. Gregory L. Ulmer, this project addresses one of our critical issues concerning contemporary American culture. The innovative presentation reflects our lessons and insights from the novels we will have read—specifically their expression of unique experience through experimental forms, particularly non-linear narrative and historical elements. Specifically, we will write with texts from a variety of sources, including fiction (2 sources), "scholarly discourse" (2 sources), autobiography, family history, and images. This composition technique integrates historical information and cultural material, as well as our personal experience—in the same style as our authors. More detailed description will appear on course website.

Blog Entries (1 minimum per week, beginning week 3; 100-200 words. Credit/no credit assigned.)

Every student will create and maintain a blog throughout the semester. Weekly entries are informal (ungraded); consider as "Reading Journal": *e.g.* post associative links/images, pose questions, note observations, describe insights – particularly connections between texts within and those outside of class. An enjoyable and productive way of engaging our "objects of study," this on-going work serves as "research" and material for the final project.

Note: blog entries due Wednesday each week, starting week 2, unless otherwise noted (*e.g.* weeks 8 & 14).

Extra Credit Opportunities

1) Comment upon or "blog about" a classmate's entry, (for participation *e.c.*).

2) Reply to classmate's Reading Response assignment, (150-200 words; for response *e.c.*).

Comments must be productive, relevant, perceptive, and above all, respectful in order to receive credit.

3) Compose a critical response on a week when you submit a creative response, (though not vice versa).

Course Objectives

In addition to practicing insightful reading and critical thinking, students in this course will work toward analyzing texts using a specific methodology and toward discussing literature in a cogent fashion; in written work, they will learn to support interpretations and arguments with textual evidence, while avoiding summary and uncritical repetition of ideas. From our examining texts both collectively and individually, students will ultimately be able to discuss literary forms and issues with new understanding and to put our insights into practice, demonstrating both familiarity and innovative effort.

The student learning outcomes for this course are detailed in the Undergraduate Catalog at
< <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html#requirements> >.

Humanities (H) and Composition (C) designations:

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Humanities or Composition. For more information:
< <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html> >

Composition courses provide instruction in methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e. grammar, punctuation, usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive, require multiple essays submitted to the instructor for feedback, and fulfill 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement.

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing (formerly "Gordon Rule"). For more information, see:
< <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html> >

Note: "C-" grade will not satisfy the University Writing Requirement nor receive CLAS Composition credit (C).

To graduate, students must complete courses that involve substantial writing for a total of 24,000 words. This course meets the requirement of E6 classes: Coursework with at least 6,000 words. In this class,

1. The student must write a minimum of 6,000 words in the course.
2. This written work must be evaluated on the effectiveness, organization, clarity, and coherence of the writing as well as the grammar, punctuation and usage of standard written English.
3. The student must be provided feedback on the written work submitted.
4. Teamwork or writing done by a group or team, class notes, in-class essay examinations, and term papers submitted too late in the semester to be returned to students cannot be used to meet the minimum word requirement. Drafts cannot be counted separately from final drafts as part of the total number of words completed during the course.

Note on 2009 Grade and GPA update:

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. For more information, see: < <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> >

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

Attending class is vital to one's success in this course, as we will frequently discuss and practice our critical approach to writing about literature; lectures will be markedly relevant to assignments. Class discussion will occupy most sessions, though – thus, daily participation is both expected and recorded for the "Attendance **and** Participation" percentage of the final grade. *Hint:* Participation illustrates having read for that day; this precludes my giving pop "reading check" quizzes, to which I will resort if necessary. More specifically, each student will be responsible for introducing a particular reading **twice** during the semester, starting **W 09-Sept.**

Arriving late receives ¼ participation penalty – **three times late will equate to an absence.** Finally, every absence after the third will **reduce the final grade** by a letter; students will not pass the course after their **sixth** absence.

Course Policies

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Quite simply: do not plagiarize in this or any class. We will review plagiarism rules for first essay.

Any essay that improperly presents material, whether deliberate or inadvertent, will not receive a passing grade for the assignment, under Academic Honesty rules. This includes primary, secondary, and *any* online sources (“electronic,” “web,” etc). Be sure to properly **quote/cite** all material, using MLA style. Plagiarism violations are subject to additional consequences beyond failing grade, under the Academic Honor Code.

All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University. The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1_4.017).

For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and collusion, see:
< <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php> >

Students with disabilities:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. Staff at the Disability Resource Center will assist any student who registers as having a disability. Official documentation of a disability is required to determine eligibility for appropriate classroom accommodations. The professional employees at the Disability Resource Program serve as full-time advocates for students with disabilities ensuring students have physical and programmatic access to all college programs.

For more information about Student Disability Services, see: <<http://www.ufl.edu/disability/>>

Statement on harassment:

It is the policy of The University of Florida to provide an educational and working environment for its students, faculty and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. In accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment. Sex discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and individuals who engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The University encourages students, faculty, staff and visitors to promptly report sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

For more about the University of Florida policies regarding harassment, consult the University of Florida Student Conduct Code at <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/conductcode.php>> and the policies on harassment at <<http://wwwhr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>>

Final grade appeals:

Please consult me with any questions about grades. If the issue is unresolved and students ultimately request review by the English Department, they can appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments *(subject to change; consult website for updates)*

W 26-Aug Course Intro. cont'd. (introductory lecture: post-war U.S. history and postmodern fiction)

F 28-Aug *Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* Chapter 1 **(Read for class discussion)**

Note: Deadline to Drop/Add Courses

M 31-Aug *Cambridge / Narrative* Chp 2-3 *plus* online fiction (TBA)

W 2-Sep *Cambridge / Narrative* Chp 4-5 *plus* online fiction (TBA)

F 4-Sep *Cambridge / Narrative* Chp 6 *plus* online fiction (TBA)

M 7-Sep **No classes— Labor Day**

W 9-Sep Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (through Chapter 4)

F 11-Sep *Gatsby* (Chapters 5-6)

M 14-Sep *Gatsby* (Chapters 7-9) **plus** *Cambridge / Narrative* Chp 7-8

W 16-Sep *Cambridge / Narrative* Chapters 10 & 12

F 18-Sep *Cambridge / Narrative* Chapters 11 & 14 **Due: Response 1**

M 21-Sep Plath: *The Bell Jar* (through Chapter 9)

W 23-Sep *The Bell Jar* (Chapters 10-14)

F 25-Sep *The Bell Jar* (Chapters 15-20) **Due: Response 2**

M 28-Sep Burroughs: *Naked Lunch* (“Deposition” + beginning through “Ordinary Men & Women”)

W 30-Sep *Naked Lunch* (“Islam Inc” through “The Examination”)

F 2-Oct *Naked Lunch* (“Coke Bugs” through end + “Post Script”)

M 5-Oct Vonnegut: *Slaughterhouse Five* (through Chapter 5)

W 7-Oct *Slaughterhouse Five* (Chapters 6-8)

F 9-Oct *Slaughterhouse Five* (Chapters 9-10) **Due: Response 3**

M 12-Oct Essay Workshop

W 14-Oct Essay Workshop

F 16-Oct **No classes—Homecoming** **Due: Analytic Essay**

Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments (subject to change; follow online updates)

M 19-Oct	Silko: <i>Ceremony</i>	(through p. 141)	
W 23-Oct	<i>Ceremony</i>	(pp.142-198)	
F 25-Oct	<i>Ceremony</i>	(pp.199-242)	
M 26-Oct	Morrison: <i>Jazz</i>	(through Chapter 5)	
W 28-Oct	<i>Jazz</i>	(Chapters 6-8)	
F 30-Oct	<i>Jazz</i>	(Chapters 9-10)	Due: Response 4
M 2-Nov	Auster: <i>City of Glass</i>	(through Chapter 6)	
W 4-Nov	<i>City of Glass</i>	(Chapters 7-8)	
F 6-Nov	No class (away at conference)		
M 9-Nov	Auster: <i>City of Glass</i>	(Chapters 9-13)	
W 11-Nov	No classes—Veterans Day		Due: Response 5
F 13-Nov	In-class Film Screening (TBA)		
M 16-Nov	Pynchon: <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i>	(through Chapter 3)	
W 18-Nov	<i>Crying of Lot 49</i>	(Chapters 4-5)	
F 20-Nov	<i>Crying of Lot 49</i>	(Chapter 6 + online reading)	
M 23-Nov	Discuss: Final Project		Due: Response 6
W 25-Nov	Discuss: Final Project		
F 27-Nov	No classes—Thanksgiving		
M 30-Nov	Foer: <i>Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close</i>	(through p. 173)	
W 2-Dec	<i>Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close</i>	(pp. 174-259)	
F 4-Dec	<i>Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close</i>	(pp. 267-326)	
M 7-Dec	Due: Final Project	Discuss / present electronic narrative projects.	
W 9-Dec	Last Class		