

ENGL 350: Twentieth-century literature to WWII

MWF 11:30-12:20 @ LAAH 467

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Office hours: Tuesdays 12:30-3:00; Fridays 3:00-4:00

Course Description

We will explore Anglophone literature of the twentieth century before World War II: more specifically, the period known as modernism. The term *modernism* refers not only to a time period, but also to a literary style that both responded to and played an active part in the historical process of modernization. Under modernization, a variety of historical shifts—including improvements in communications and transportation technologies, demographic upheavals, political challenges like suffragism and the labor movement, the rise of mass consumer culture, the intensification of industrial capitalism, concepts developed by Darwin, Marx, and Freud, and the development of world war—resulted in profound changes in the texture of everyday life, in social standards governing morality and sociability, in the function of art within society, and in beliefs about what it means to be human.

To explore the literature that dealt with such shifts, we will examine seven sites of modernism: Paris, small-town USA, London, Ireland, India, Harlem, and Hollywood. We will follow a rigorous and ambitious reading list, which includes seven experimental novels, a handful of exciting short stories, a variety of non-fiction essays written by modernists about modernism, and a few unforgettable poems. We will also view modernist films, including *Princess Tam Tam*, featuring Josephine Baker, and *To Have or Have Not*, together with its screenplay. In addition to this reading list, students will actively and regularly participate in class discussion, hand in daily “quotations,” take three tests, and write a final reflection paper. Just like the literature of modernism, this class, with enough effort and a positive attitude, will be as rewarding as it is challenging.

Prerequisite: 3 credits of literature at 200-level or above.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will learn how to:

- Read extremely challenging texts
- Elucidate the relationship between style and cultural critique
- Define modernism and understand its historical contexts
- Reflect on transnationalism and its effect on literature
- Identify the most salient moments in a text
- Compare Western and non-Western modernism

Primary Texts (Books to Buy)

Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*

Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*

Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*

Jean Toomer, *Cane*

Nathanael West, *The Day of the Locust*

Grade Breakdown

10% Attendance and participation (100 points)

28% Weekly quotations (14 at 20 points each = 280 points total)

45% Tests (3 at 150 points each = 450 points total)

17% Reflection paper (4-5 pages, 170 points)

Grading Scale

Taken from official A&M recommendations from the registrar's office

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day and to have the course texts with you. Because this course depends upon your active participation, your grade can be lowered for poor attendance. You are permitted two unexcused absences, no questions asked. For every class missed afterward, you will lose 10% of your attendance grade.

A&M policy defines which types of events might qualify you for an excused absence. You can see these reasons here: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>. Any illness over three business days (e.g., this includes missing a consecutive Tuesday and Thursday for illness) requires written medical documentation. You must communicate in a clear and timely manner about any absence you believe should count as an excused absence (illness, family emergencies, and university-sanctioned events). In general, notify me as soon as you *anticipate* an excused absence, and then you must *document* it.

Students who wish an A for participation in class discussions should make at least two or three substantive remarks every single class session. Lukewarm and half-hearted contributions will not

earn you an A in participation, even if you have a perfect attendance record. Sleeping, talking, or texting in class will count against this grade, as will working on coursework for other classes. Habitual tardiness, which is disrespectful not only to myself but also to your fellow classmates, will also count against your participation grade. Please keep in mind that this class is intimate enough to encourage lively exchange among your peers. These attendance and participation policies are designed to encourage you to make the most of this opportunity to create rich, productive, and interesting class discussions.

Attendance and Participation Grading Rubric

A-level participation (36-40 points): Flawless attendance; 3-4+ substantive comments in class discussion per week; never late, tired, or distracted; timely explanation of emergencies or problems in understanding course material; always has books ready; helps other students learn; thoroughly understands the syllabus

B-level participation (32-35 points): Good attendance (perhaps 2 unexcused absences); 2-3 substantive comments in class discussion per week; very rarely late, tired, or distracted; timely explanation of absences/tardies; helps other students learn; thoroughly understands the syllabus

C-level participation (28-31 points): Poor attendance (3-4 unexcused absences); 1-2 substantive comments per week; late, tired, or distracted one or more times per week; sometimes fails to notify me about absences/tardies, but is responsive to my emails/concerns about participation rate and/or to my requests that the student come to office hours for help; occasionally shows signs that student lacks sufficient familiarity with the syllabus

D-level participation (24-27 points): Unacceptable attendance (5-6 unexcused absences); little contribution to class discussion per week; often late, tired, or distracted; does not usually follow up on my suggestions to attend office hours or improve participation rate; disrupts quiz sessions; has not read, does not understand, or does not consult syllabus

F-level participation (0-23 points): Unacceptable attendance (more than 6 absences); little or no contribution to class discussion; established record of missing quizzes; habitually late, tired, or distracted; does not respond to my emails or verbal suggestions about improving performance; has not read, does not understand, or does not consult syllabus

Weekly Quotes

For each week of class, you will **choose a short passage** among the pages we read for that week. This passage, which can be as short as a phrase or as long as a paragraph, should be something that interested you. It could have angered you or made you laugh, or maybe you think it's important for some other reason. You will 1) copy down the entire passage you're referring to and indicate the page number (if possible), and 2) write a short, proofread paragraph (**at least 150 words**) that explains your interest in the quote and its significance for the text.

You will post this response onto eCampus—under Content—by the end of the day each Monday

(e.g., 11:59 PM). I will always give you timely written feedback about these responses. It may seem unbelievable, but by the end of the course, you will probably find yourself writing much more than one paragraph without any trouble at all (and feel free to)! If you would like more guidance regarding these responses, please come see me in office hours.

0 points: You never turned in a response

1-2 points: You turned in a very incomplete response **and** turned it in extremely late

3-4 points: You turned in a very late response **or** turned in an incomplete response. This response may not reflect you **having read and carefully thought about** the story.

5-6 points: You turned in an okay response barely fulfilling the assignment (or a good one late). This response may be a little short or not actually identify a quote. It might use a super-long quotation from the story as means to get up to 200 words.

7-8 points: You turned in a good, helpful response (or turned in a great one late). This response is **correct** but does not really move beyond the obvious or superficial. This response may echo other students' ideas instead of charting new territory.

9 points: You turned in a well-written, interesting response that generates discussion This response will come up with specific ideas that **no other student** thought of. It should connect style and content (the form of the story and the ideas in it).

10 points: You turned in an exceptional, fantastic response (generally only 1 response per day). This response may be longer than 200 words or link to other texts. This response may link up to historical events or ideas by philosophers or critics.

Tests

You will have three tests in this course. Each text consists of a sheet of paper with **nine quotes** from the texts we've read for that unit. You must **identify and discuss five out of those nine quotations**: 1) author's full name, correctly spelled, according to how you see it in the syllabus schedule; 2) the full title of the text, in quotation marks, correctly spelled; 3) the context of the quote (where did the quote come from in the story—beginning, middle end? who is speaking? what is about to happen?); 4) the significance of the quote for the whole text. This type of exam not only tests whether you paid close attention to the poem, story, novel, or essay, but also tests how **deeply and critically** you have thought about how each moment in a text contributes to the whole. You should refer to ideas discussed during class, but the most successful exams will not merely parrot back what was said in class, but will also generate *new ideas* about the text.

I don't want to make your hand fall off! First, when you identify the author and title, you do not need to use full sentences. Second, recognize that in a 50-minute exam consisting of five questions, you can spend *ten minutes* on *each* quotation. Third, remember that quantity is not the same as quality. Write no more than a paragraph for each answer. Think very carefully before you begin writing so that you do not write weak material before you finally “get to” a great idea.

Pages of your test may be lost if you do not secure them. To prevent this catastrophe, **use blue books, carry a stapler with you, or bring a folder to put your pages in.** Whatever method you choose, make sure your pages are safely secured together. *No dog-earing.* Make-up exams are possible in the event of a **documented and unavoidable** medical or family emergency.

Extra Credit

For extra credit, you may select an author from our syllabus and read **two more** of this author's poems, stories, or essays. (These are typically available on the internet if you search enough, but I will be more than happy to help you find copies in the library or photocopy you any stories that I have access to in print form.) After reading these two additional pieces, I want you to write for **two double-spaced pages** about what these stories told you about that author's point of view and style that you could not discern from the text(s) actually assigned for the class.

Late or Missed Work

Late quotations or reflection papers lose 10% off per day and are graded at my convenience. Tests may only be made up for a documented, unavoidable, excused absence. It is not my job to remind you to submit late work or provide documentation for absences you believe should be excused. It is not my job to apprise you of course material or announcements you missed during any absence. It is **your responsibility** to keep track of your missing or late work, to inform me of A&M-approved reasons to grant you an excused absence, and to learn of any announcements you missed. Ask fellow students or attend office hours if you need assistance.

Academic Integrity

The Aggie Honor Code defines the standards to which you are expected to conform. These standards include a stringent, vigilant avoidance of dishonest academic behaviors, such as cheating, plagiarism, fabricating, unapproved collaboration, and multiple submissions (e.g., submitting one assignment to more than one class or reusing work from a prior course). A more thorough set of definitions regarding academic dishonesty can be found at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/RulesAndProcedures/HonorSystemRules.aspx#definitions>.

If I suspect you of academic dishonesty, A&M has clearly outlined the process for submitting and examining this suspicion, which includes your right to appeal. Possible sanctions include a wide range of consequences, from receiving a zero for the assignment, receiving a lowered grade for the course, receiving an F* grade for the course, participating in writing workshops or community service, being put on Honor Cord probation, or being expelled. You can learn about this process here: <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/pdf/AHSO%20Flow%20Chart.pdf>.

Cheating is a dangerous short-term solution that will not solve the long-term problems that could tempt you to commit academic dishonesty. I encourage you to come to office hours to discuss any problem that stands between you and your academic responsibilities. Do not rob yourself of the educational opportunities you are enjoying at this point in your life. *We can find a solution.*

Disability Notice

Per A&M policy, “The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call [979-845-1637](tel:979-845-1637). For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.”

I am happy to work with you regarding any physical or psychological disabilities or learning impairments that could adversely affect your course performance. I urge you to come by office hours to discuss any accommodations we can make to help you succeed. Typically, a student wishing accommodation should register with Disability Services (DS); doing so will help us identify DS resources to which we would otherwise not have access (such as paid notetakers). Forms you may need are available at <http://disability.tamu.edu/forms#StudentForms>.

ENG 350 Course Schedule

Welcome to the Course		
Wed, Jan 20	Syllabus trot; introductions	
Unit 1: PARIS		
Fri, Jan 22	Ernest Hemingway, <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (1926)	
Mon, Jan 25	Ernest Hemingway, <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (1926)	Quote
Wed, Jan 27	Ernest Hemingway, <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (1926)	
Fri, Jan 29	F. Scott Fitzgerald, “Babylon Revisited” (1931)	
Mon, Feb 1	Jean Rhys, <i>Voyage in the Dark</i> (1934)	Quote
Wed, Feb 3	Jean Rhys, <i>Voyage in the Dark</i> (1934)	
Unit 2: SMALL-TOWN AMERICA		
Fri, Feb 5	Willa Cather, “El Dorado: A Kansas Recessional” (1901)	
Mon, Feb 8	Ezra Pound, H. D.	Quote
Wed, Feb 10	Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, William Carlos Williams	
Fri, Feb 12	TEST 1	
Unit 3: LONDON		
Mon, Feb 15	Wyndham Lewis, <i>BLAST</i> manifesto (1914)	Quote
Wed, Feb 17	Katherine Mansfield, “The Daughters of the Late Colonel” (1922)	
Fri, Feb 19	T. S. Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i> (1922)	
Mon, Feb 22	T. S. Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i> (1922)	Quote
Wed, Feb 24	Virginia Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (1925)	
Fri, Feb 26	Virginia Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (1925)	
Mon, Feb 29	Virginia Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (1925)	Quote
Wed, Mar 2	Virginia Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (1925)	

Unit 4: IRELAND		
Fri, Mar 4	J. M. Synge, <i>Riders to the Sea</i> (1904)	
Mon, Mar 7	W. B. Yeats, "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," "When You Are Old," "The Hosting of the Sidhe," "Adam's Curse," "September 1913," "The Wild Swans at Coole," "Easter, 1916," "The Second Coming"	Quote
Wed, Mar 9	W. B. Yeats, "A Prayer for My Daughter," "Sailing to Byzantium," "Leda and the Swan," "Among School Children," "Crazy Jane and the Bishop," "Lapis Lazuli," "Long-legged Fly," "The Circus Animals' Desertion"	
Fri, Mar 11	James Joyce, "The Dead" (1914)	
Mon, Mar 21	Elizabeth Bowen, "Her Table Spread" (1930)	Quote
Wed, Mar 23	TEST 2	
Unit 5: INDIA		
Mon, Mar 28	E. M. Forster, <i>A Passage to India</i>	Quote
Wed, Mar 30	E. M. Forster, <i>A Passage to India</i>	
Fri, Apr 1	E. M. Forster, <i>A Passage to India</i>	
Mon, Apr 4	Mulk Raj Anand, <i>Untouchable</i>	Quote
Wed, Apr 6	Mulk Raj Anand, <i>Untouchable</i>	
Fri, Apr 8	Mulk Raj Anand, <i>Untouchable</i>	
Unit 6: HARLEM		
Mon, Apr 11	Jean Toomer, <i>Cane</i>	Quote
Wed, Apr 13	Jean Toomer, <i>Cane</i>	
Fri, Apr 15	Jean Toomer, <i>Cane</i>	
Mon, Apr 18	Zora Neale Hurston, "Sweat;" Josephine Baker, <i>Princess Tam Tam</i>	Quote
Wed, Apr 20	Josephine Baker, <i>Princess Tam Tam</i>	
Fri, Apr 22	TEST 3	
Unit 7: HOLLYWOOD		
Mon, Apr 25	Nathanael West, <i>The Day of the Locust</i>	Quote
Wed, Apr 27	Nathanael West, <i>The Day of the Locust</i>	
Fri, Apr 29	<i>To Have and Have Not</i> (read first half of screenplay)	
Mon, May 2	<i>To Have and Have Not</i> (movie)	Quote
Tues, May 3	<i>To Have and Have Not</i> (movie)	

Reflection essay due by end of Sunday, May 8 (11:59 PM) on eCampus