Department of English & Writing Studies

Twentieth-Century British and Irish Literature

English 3554E (001)

Summer Day 2014

Instructor: Andrew Wenaus

Date/Time: Monday to Friday 11:00am-1:30pm

Location: Somerville House 2316

Prerequisites
At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Antirequisite(s): English 2331E, 2332F/G, 2333F/G, 2334E, 2335F/G and 2336F/G.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description
This course asks the question “What does it mean to be modern?” Modernism is the name given to a movement that dominated the arts and culture of the first half of the 20'h century. We may be best to consider Modernism as a critical construct rather than a historically concrete moment. That is, Modernism is an area of study that comes into being retrospectively as a result of critical discussion. A major influence on many art forms, this course will focus on the novel as one of the key sites of Modernism. Modernist novels often reject 19th century realist conventions such as chronological plots, continuous narrative, omniscient narrators, stable characters and singular points of view, and closed endings. These experimental Modernist novels offer an emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity (on how we experience rather than what we experience); they examine the ambiguity of experience rather than fixed narrative points of View, stable characterization, and clear-cut morality; and they have a tendency towards self-reflexivity in the sense that the novel is about writing and writing itself examines its own nature, status, and cultural role.

In this lecture style course, we will examine five experimental facets of the Modernist Novel: Space, Character, Time, Plot/Anti-Plot, and Narration. We will also consider some works of Modernist poetry and theatre as a way of contextualizing this intrepid period in literary history more fully. We will interrogate the relationship between geographical space and the impressions of mental space in Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness (1899) and the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Thomas Hardy; looking at James Joyce’s A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916) and the poetry of W.B. Yeats, we will consider the changing, unstable, and nuanced representation of character and history in Modernist literature. In our examination of Virginia Woolf’s To the Lighthouse (1927) and the poems of Ezra Pound and H. D., we will consider the way the passing of time is expressed at various rates-both slow and rapid-and why this kind of experimentation is a significant artistic development. We will examine E.M. Forster’s A Passage
to India (1924), Samuel Beckett’s play Endgame (1957), and poems by T. S. Eliot and the significance of the anti-plot and anti-climax in narrative technique. We will take a look at the radical legacy of Modernism in Jeanette Winterson’s Sexing the Cherry (1989) and the poetry of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney; finally, we will consider B.S. Johnson’s infamous experiments with chronology in his “book in a box,” The Unfortunates (1969). Whatever texts mean to the individual, all readers should find some texts that will engage their curiosity and inspire them to think about this exciting-sometimes mind-boggling-period in new and creative ways.

Objectives:
Successful students who complete the course will be able to:

- Achieve an understanding of Modernism and the Modernist Novel;
- Achieve a sense of the historical significance of the Modernist Novel;
- Develop skills for effective critical analysis, close reading, and textual interpretation;
- Develop skills for writing logical, organized, and clear essays on literary topics;
- Develop skills for presenting academic material orally and moderating discussion amongst colleagues and peers in a seminar context;
- Expand skills for engaging in secondary sources as a means of informing, interrogating, and engaging in literary debate.

Course Materials

Methods of Evaluation
Short Essay (4-5 pages) Due Week 3 in class 15%
Mid-Term Test Week 4 in class 15%
Research paper (10-15 pages) Due Week 6 in class 30%
Attendance and Participation TBA 10%
Final exam TBA 30%

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade.
**Timetable:**

| Week 1 | Introduction.  
|        | Space, Mental Space, Impressionism: Gerard Manley Hopkins and Thomas Hardy selected poems. *Heart of Darkness*  
|        | *Heart of Darkness* Continued.  
|        | Character, Absence, Stability, Nation: W. B. Yeats selected poems. Seamus Heaney selected poems. *Bildungsroman to Kunstreman: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*  
| Week 2 | *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Continued  
|        | Time, Orientation, Pace: *To the Lighthouse*  
|        | *To the Lighthouse* Continued  
| Week 3 | **SHORT ESSAY DUE**  
|        | Plot, Anti-Plot, Climactic Voids. T.S. Eliot selected poems.  
|        | *A Passage to India*  
|        | *A Passage to India* Continued.  
| Week 4 | *Endgame*. Ted Hughes and Geoffrey Hill selected poems.  
|        | **MID-TERM TEST**.  
|        | *Sexing the Cherry*  
| Week 5 | *Sexing the Cherry* Continued.  
|        | Chronology, Uncertainty, Chaos: *The Unfortunates*  
| Week 6 | **Research Paper Due.** *The Unfortunates* Continued. Final Thoughts. Review.  

**Assignments:**

**Short Essay: Due: Week 5 in class**  
Length: 4-5 pages  
In consultation with me, you will develop a topic that engages with the idea of Modernism. The purpose of this exercise is to guide your thinking toward the experience and interrogation of the Modernist Novel. You may, for example, ask questions like: Is the Modernist Novel really “New”? How does the Modernist Novel frustrate conventions of narrative, space, character, etc.? Is the Modernist Novel a frustrating experience?; What is the purpose of poetic language in the Modernist Novel?; and so on. While this short essay will not be a research paper, it must be a formal academic treatment of a specific concern. More details to follow.

**Mid-Term Test: Length: In Class**  
This will be held during tutorials on [Week 4], and will be 1 hour in length. It will consist of a series of identifications followed by a section of terms/definitions.

**Research Paper: 30% Due: Week 13 in class**  
Length: 10-15 pages  
You will engage with secondary source material as a means of intervening and offering insight into an established literary debate. Be eccentric and daring! Just be sure that your writing is clear and lucid, your flow of ideas is logical, and you stress the significance of your argument through close reading and critical analysis. More details to follow.
Participation: Regular attendance and involvement in class and seminar discussion is essential. The intensity and thoughtfulness with which you pursue the seminar topic and research paper in consultation with me will also have a bearing on your participation grade.

Late Submissions: Essays are due on the specified date. They are to be handed in at the beginning of class. Late essays will be penalized 3% per day including weekends. Essays submitted more than a week (7 days) late will receive a grade of O/F. If you cannot submit your essay on time due to illness or on compassionate grounds, you will need a letter from a physician or academic counselor of your home faculty indicating that you were ill or unable to attend to your work during the time in question.

Accommodation
Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com http://www.turnitin.com.
Support Services
Registrarial Services [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca)
Student Support Services [https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login](https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login)
Services provided by the USC [http://westernusc.ca/services/](http://westernusc.ca/services/)
Student Development Centre [http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/)

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: [http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.