Spring 1-15-2002

ENG 3808-001

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Goals
By the end of the semester I hope a number of things will have happened:
1. We will have talked about a number of texts, in the process getting acquainted with the themes and techniques most characteristic of the modern British period
2. We will have talked about the period itself: the historical events and cultural forces that shaped and were in turn shaped by these texts and their authors;
3. We will have talked about the theoretical issues raised by these texts: why experiment with style or narrative technique? At what point do new ideas about life demand new literary forms? How relevant is a writer’s gender, social class, or racial identity to his or her work? What is the relationship between literature and the sociopolitical context out of which it emerges?

Requirements:
Two papers, one short (2-3 pp.) and one long (6-8 pp.)
One group presentation
Two exams: midterm and final
Occasional in-class writing assignments
Weekly reading responses

Weekly reading responses: Each week, as designated on the syllabus, you need to hand in a one-page typed response to some aspect of the assigned reading. You choose which class day to hand it in on, but no matter what, you must be in class to turn it in, and the response's topic must be the reading assigned for that day. (The point is for you to formulate your ideas about the reading before we discuss it). Ideas for responses are listed on the final page of the syllabus: I suggest you choose ONE question to respond to, and that you vary the kind of question you answer each week. Also feel free to ignore the questions and respond on your own terms. The only requirements: keep focused on a single issue for the whole response; quote directly from the text at some point; and type. Conclude your response with any questions you have about the reading.

I will occasionally ask people to read or summarize their response, so hold onto them until the end of class, when I will collect them. I will grade these on a ten-point scale, on the basis of completeness (is it a full page, does it include a direct quotation?), thoughtfulness, and development (does it go into detail about whatever issue it raises?).

Group presentation: As soon as possible (I'll ask for this information within the first week or so), pick a text from the syllabus that particularly interests you and find 1-2 other students with the same interest. Ideally this will be the same text about which you'll write your final paper. Immediately begin reading material about the work (come see me for bibliographic suggestions). A few days before we cover that text in class, make an appointment to come see me with your group to talk about your presentation. I'll ask your group to run the class
on the day you select. I suggest you begin by making a brief presentation about what you see as key issues in the text (give historical/biographical info as relevant). Then lead the class through a series of discussion questions (I suggest you come with 5-10). Be inventive: feel free to use visual aids (let me know ahead of time if you’ll need a VCR or cd player), to assign groupwork, or do whatever else you need to to make the class interesting and informative.
I suggest you provide a handout with whatever background and bibliographic info you think is essential. Don’t just provide a written version of your presentation, though. (If you get your handout to me an hour before class, I’ll be happy to have it duplicated for you.)

Grades
Papers: 35% (15/20)
Exams: 35% (15/20)
Responses and in-class writing assignments: 20%
Group presentation, class involvement/participation: 10%
I try to base essay grades on Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU’s English Department
Note that because I grade on a 100-point scale, missing assignments affect your grade tremendously.
Grading scale: 91-100: A; 81-90: B; 71-80: C; 65-70: D; below 65 = F

Policies
English Department Statement Concerning Plagiarism:
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including the immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.

Attendance: I expect students to be in class, to be prepared, and to participate in class discussion. A portion of the grade will reflect your involvement in class discussions and your degree of preparation. While I don’t have a specific absence policy, there are a number of things that you need to be there for: I will only accept responses handed in IN CLASS on the day for which the assignment they respond to will be discussed; I may ask that responses deal with a specific issue raised in class; I will often give page numbers for reading assignments in class; any in-class writing assignments I give may not be made up. If illness or personal emergency keeps you from class, let me know, and I’ll see that you’re not penalized; no matter what, it’s wise to call to find out what you’ve missed.

Late work: Formal essays handed in more than a week late will not be accepted at all. Essays may be rewritten; if handed in within a week of my handing them back, they’ll receive a new grade which will be averaged in with the original grade.
Late responses and in-class writing will not be accepted at all.
If you’re having problems with a writing or reading assignment, come see me! Stop by my office any time; on any day but Thursday, I’m likely to be there. I’m also a compulsive e-mail checker.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Syllabus (tentative)

M January 7: introduction to course

I. The Transition: late Victorian/Edwardian
Fri 11: Conrad, “Heart of Darkness,” in Longman. Response #1 due W or F

M14: Conrad
W16: Conrad
F18: Conrad. Response #2 due M, W, or F

M21: no class
W23: Forster, Howards End
F25: Forster. Response #3 due W or F

M28: Forster
W30: Forster
F February 1: Forster. Response #4 due M, W, or F

II. World War I
F8: no class

M11: in Longman, West, “Indissoluble Matrimony”
W13: Mansfield, “Prelude”
F15: Mansfield, “At the Bay.” Response #6 due M, W, or F

M18: Exam #1: Transition and World War I

III. The Struggle for Irish Independence/Modernist Experimentation
W20: Joyce Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Paper #1 due.
F22: Joyce. No Response due. I’ll be at a conference, so class will not meet, but keep reading!

M25: Joyce
W27: Joyce
F March 1: Joyce. Response #7 due M, W, or F

M4: Joyce
F8: Yeats, “The Second Coming,” “A Prayer for My Daughter,” “Sailing to Byzantium.” Response #8 due M, W, or F

Spring Break

W20: Yeats, “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,” “Lapis Lazuli,” “Circus Animals’ Desertion.”
F22: in Longman, Lawrence, “The Fox.” Response #9 due M, W or F

M25: Lawrence
W27: Woolf, To the Lighthouse
F29: Woolf. Response #10 due M, W, or F

M April 1: Woolf
W3: Woolf
F5: Woolf. Response #11 due M, W, or F

M8: in Longman, Auden, “Musee des Beaux Arts,” “In Memory of WB Yeats,” “Spain 1937”

IV. Postmodernism, Postcolonialism
W10: Beckett, Waiting for Godot
F12: Beckett. Response #12 due M, W, or F

M15: in Longman, Kureishi, My Beautiful Laundrette
W17: Kureishi

F26: Carter, “The Tyger’s Bride” in The Bloody Chamber. Response #13 due M, W, or F

There will be a final given during final exam week.