

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

Summer 2022

2022

Summer 6-15-2022

ENG 5061A-600: Engaging in Temporal Play: Nonlinear Narratives in Contemporary Literature & Media

Melissa Ames

Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_summer2022

Recommended Citation

Ames, Melissa, "ENG 5061A-600: Engaging in Temporal Play: Nonlinear Narratives in Contemporary Literature & Media" (2022). *Summer 2022*. 32.

https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_summer2022/32

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2022 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Summer 2022 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

English 5061A

Engaging in Temporal Play: Nonlinear Narratives in Contemporary Literature & Media -Syllabus & Course Policies-

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Ames

Office: 3821 Coleman Hall

Office Hour Format: Office hours will be held virtually via Video Conferences (Zoom Office Hour link is available in D2L).

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12-2pm; Wednesdays 7-8pm; Thursdays 10am-12pm; appointments can be scheduled within and outside of official office through Calendly (link available in D2L). My availability for any given week is typically quite broad and can accommodate different student schedules.

Email: mames@ciu.edu

Catalog Description: (3-0-3) Special topics in language and literature not ordinarily treated in standard courses. The topic will vary from semester to semester. WI.

Course Description: Time is one of the most fundamental parameters through which narratives are organized and understood. Because this age is one of unprecedented flourishing for alternative ways of understanding and inhabiting time, it is not surprising that the cultural narratives of the last half century have been obsessed with time itself. Non-linearity, or temporal distortion, is one of the most common features of modern and postmodern fiction. This course focuses on the temporal play found within various postmodern and contemporary novels, reading this stylistic device as a way of dealing aesthetically with an altered culture of time. Beyond reading a range of fiction (canonical, mainstream bestsellers, and some experimental digital texts), course study will also include media analysis (television and film) and scholarly research (delving into theories of temporality and narrative study more broadly). The class will consider how certain technological inventions, media influences, and national tragedies may have contributed to these new conceptions of temporality.

Course Objectives: After the completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Analyze time-related themes (e.g. life, death, memory, history) across a variety formats,
2. Critique how temporality is presented in literature and popular culture,
3. Note how nonlinear and temporal play are utilized by different authors/producers for different purposes & effects,
4. Analyze how the form a cultural artifact takes on affects its social/political utility,
5. Study cultural trends (i.e. the popularity of various genres) in light of historical events;
6. Situate texts within their historical context and understand how this impacts their production and reception,
7. Integrate diverse studies through an interdisciplinary framework,
8. Engage with and contribute to existing scholarship,
9. Defend these contributions through composition and oral presentation.

Texts and Materials:

Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*. Penguin, 2005.

*Atkinson, Kate. *Life after Life*. Back Bay Books, 2013.

***Barnes, Julian. *The Sense of an Ending*. Vintage Books, 2011.

***Cleave, Paul. *Trust No One: A Thriller*. Atria Books, 2015.

Duffy, Damian/Butler, Octavia. *Kindred: Graphic Novel*. Abrams Comics, 2018.

*Egan, Jennifer. *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. Anchor Books, 2010.

***Haig, Matt. *The Midnight Library*. Viking, 2021.

***Montimore, Margarita. *Oona Out of Order*. Flatiron Books, 2021.

Morrison, Toni. *Jazz*. Random House, 1992.

**Piercy, Marge. *Woman on the Edge of Time*. Fawcett, 1985.

Reynolds, Jason. *A Long Way Down*. Atheneum, 2022.

***Searle, Rebecca. *In Five Years*. Atria, 2021.

**Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Random House, 1999.

*, **, & *** above indicate that the novels are a part of textual sets wherein one of the groupings will be selected by the student to read. Texts without an asterisk are books all students will read.

[Note: Additional Scholarly Articles Will Also Be Available Through Desire2Learn – noted on syllabus as (D2L)]

Course Requirements:**Participation/Collaboration (250pts):**

Participation & Collaboration – regular, on-time engagement with module resources and participation in class activity and peer dialogue (e.g. discussion board posts, peer engagement/feedback, assignment completion). While the instructor will assess this category independently as well (based on records & observations), please note that D2L provides a detailed report on student activity that includes engagement and time spent with class resources and on course management site, number of posts and responses made to discussion board threads, and whether/when activities, reading, resources, and feedback are accessed. Keep in mind that, to some degree, online classes aim to simulate the experience you would get in a face-to-face course, but this can only happen if you take advantage of all of the material and activities. For example, if you only log on to post a single response that is required to a discussion board thread and then log off without ever checking back to see the dialogue unfold that would be the equivalent of answering a question in class and then immediately popping in your earbuds or exiting the room without hearing how others respond to it. (250pts)

Major Assignment/Projects (700pts):

Scholarly Article Explication & Discussion Board Management – during their assigned week, students will post an explication of their assigned scholarly readings posing questions that prompt a productive class dialogue linking readings and materials to one another and to overarching course topics. (150pts)

Film Review – students will funnel their study of temporal play into the mainstream genre of the film review (100pts).

Book Club Project – student will work collaboratively during one week to read and discuss a contemporary best-selling book with a time-centered narrative. The result will be a collaborative

document/presentation that will be shared with the class so that all students walk away with a rich understanding of the way narrative time is being employed in popular novels today. (150pts)

Applied Project – this final project provides an opportunity for students to direct the course content (narrative structure, temporality, publishing/popular culture trends, time-related themes) to their interests and professional development goals. Options for final projects include a traditional analytic research paper, a creative writing piece with research-based preface, or a teaching portfolio/unit with a research-based rationale. (200pts)

Proposal – This initial step of the applied project allows students to pitch their idea and receive early-stage feedback from the instructor concerning areas of consideration. (50pts)

Multimodal Presentation – At the completion of this project, the student’s final product will be presented to the class in an audio-visual format fitting for the project’s intended goals and audience. Potential final formats may include a traditional 15-20 minute formal presentation fitting for an academic conference; a teaching demonstration/talk highlighting project materials in action; a professional development session aimed to train fellow educators in regard to the project’s focus; a creative reading and craft talk; etc. (100pts)

Course Grade: Your grade in this course will be calculated using a straight point system and standard grading scale. Your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown and grading scale:

Major Assignments/Projects:	750pts
<u>Participation/Collaboration:</u>	<u>250pts</u>
Total Points Possible:	1000pts

A = 90%-100%

D = 60%-69%

B = 80%-89%

F = Below 60%

C = 70%-79%

Instructor Class Policies:

Mission to Support Student Learning: Please always feel free to reach out to me for additional support, to request an extension, etc. The policies listed below are the defaults. They are in place because we want to treat you as professionals and foster the dispositions, skills, and behaviors needed to succeed in your career and professional development. That said, the most important thing is to make sure that you have the skills necessary for success and I will always do my best to work with you. I encourage you to always take ownership and agency over your learning and growth.

Assignment Due Dates: Course work progresses through conceptually-themed weekly learning modules. Assignments are typically due by 11:59pm on the date listed on the syllabus unless otherwise stated in a module or assignment sheet. Based on feedback from past online graduate students, this class is designed with regular Wednesday/Sunday deadlines. The hope is that this design will allow students to work throughout the week at a pace that aligns with their individual availabilities. The one deviation from the Wednesday/Sunday deadlines falls during the final week of the term due to our shortened week and peer presentations. *Assignments and activities not submitted/received by the stated syllabus/module deadline receive a zero. However, extensions may be granted if students reach out in advance.* Students are welcome to work ahead as desired, however, if they do so they should continue to monitor and contribute to ongoing

course dialogue in the current weekly modules. Feedback typically will not be given until deadlines for activity/assignment completion has passed.

Time Commitment:

Due to the nature of condensed summer classes, anticipated weekly workloads are notably higher than a traditional 15-week Fall/Spring course. However, because we are all only human, the course content for this six-week course has been markedly reduced compared to its fifteen-week version. In order to make the schedule more manageable, fiction reading loads have been reduced by allowing students to choose between related text sets (with the option of completing additional texts for extra credit). Likewise, the weekly scholarly journal articles have been made optional rather than required, but students will engage with all of their contents to some extent by reviewing their peers' explications of their assigned article sets and all students will have the opportunity to integrate scholarly research into their final applied project.

Class Attendance/Engagement: Because this course emphasizes discussion and collaborative activity, active participation is essential. Class discussion, peer responses, and group work are designed for particular modules and *their lack of completion will negatively affect your in-class work/participation grade*. Being "present" and regularly engaged in our course management system and ongoing dialogue helps build positive peer and peer-instructor relationships and fosters a productive professional learning community.

Inactivity/Absence: Once a student fails to complete one entire weekly learning module their grade may be reduced by one-letter. *A student who misses two or more learning modules (the equivalent of one-third of the course) may not be eligible to pass the course*. These penalties can be waived for extenuating circumstances. *Students are encouraged to be proactive and reach out to the instructor when issues are impacting their ability to attend class sessions and/or complete module work*.

Presentations: Please make sure to meet deadlines when you are scheduled to give a presentation. If you miss a deadline for a scheduled presentation you will receive a zero and will not be able to make up the presentation.

Plagiarism: In accordance with English Department and University policies, "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author represented as one's original work – has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to an including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office." The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else's work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing might constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to turning in the final draft. In short, students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

Instructor Access and Response Time: One-on-one video meetings are available. These virtual "office hours" are intended for support and mentorship and students are encouraged at these meetings to discuss anything about their professional development, their coursework, etc.

Communication via email is also welcome. Although I have a reputation for being a super speedy email responder, please allow up to **24 hours** for me to respond during normal business hours (M-F 9-5) and longer on nights, weekends, and holidays. Please note that you can expect feedback and assessment (i.e., comments and grades) to be returned within approximately one week. [In most cases I aim to provide feedback within 24-72 hours]. I will always send an email and possibly post a News Bulletin Update in the event of any emergency that might impact the course schedule. Make sure to set your D2L settings so that you receive notifications for new items.

Preferred Pronouns/Names: My preferred pronouns are she/her and my preferred academic title is Dr. (Studies have proven that students will often call male professors Dr. but not female professors so I like to help correct that imbalance 😊). Please feel free to share your preferred pronoun and/or name and titles.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services.

Student Success Center & Writing Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302. The Writing Center is also a resource that students can utilize to improve their performance in this course. For more information visit their website (<http://castle.eiu.edu/writing/>). To schedule an appointment, call 217-581-5929, utilize the widget on our D2L site, or stop by Coleman Hall, Room 3110 during open hours.