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ENG 2099G-099: Literature and Human Values: Love, Hate, and Obsession

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ENGLISH 2099G LITERATURE AND HUMAN VALUES: LOVE, HATE, OBSESSION

Dr. Buck, Professor

Office: Coleman Hall, Room 3040

Telephone: Office: 581-5012 (Please leave voice mail if I'm not there)

Mailbox: English Dept Office, Coleman Hall, Room 3155

Office Hours: MWF ~~10:00-11:00~~ and by appointment. 9-9:45

Textbooks: -Abcarian and Klotz, *Literature and the Human Experience*

--Forster, *A Passage to India*

--On Reserve--Griffith, *Writing Essays about Literature*

--On Reserve--*The Little, Brown Handbook*, 11th edition

Course Objective

This literature seminar is designed to develop your skills in critical thinking and analytical expression based on the reading of literary texts around our selected theme. This course will 1) introduce you to a variety of works of literature, 2) instruct you in the distinction of literary genres, 3) help you to become more sensitive and attentive readers, and 4) guide you in articulating--both in class discussion and in written discourse--a mature, informed reaction to literary works.

Course Requirements

The requirements of this course include two formal papers, two exams, writing exercises (scope 2 typed pages) done in-class and at home, and grammar editing exercises. In-class writing may be unannounced. Since this is a seminar, you will be required to discuss and present your work to the class throughout the semester. Formal Papers I and II (scope 5 pages--you may always write more) will be analytical and interpretive essays on selected works. The exams will test your understanding of the theoretical content of the course; they will consist of an objective portion along with an essay portion. Paper and exam grades will be based on what you have to say (that is original and insightful); and how well you say it (clarity, development, and technical soundness).

Folder for Process Writing Materials

You will need to purchase a manilla folder for this class. That is where you will be keeping all your writing process materials for each unit. Please always bring your folders to class.

Always keep your writing process materials in an organized fashion so that you are sure not to lose anything. You will turn everything in to me at the end of each unit along with your formal paper (see attached sheet for dates).

Writing process materials do not need to be typed but if handwritten, they must be legible and neatly presented. If I cannot read them, you do not get credit for them.

Active Attendance

You are expected to attend every class because teaching/learning requires dialogue and without you we can have no dialogue. Our class work on the analysis of literary works is a crucial part of this course and you will be required to participate actively in the discussion of texts. Come to class ready to articulate your knowledge and formulate your questions for the class.

An absence policy is important 1) so that I can be equitable to all members of the class and 2) so that you will be successful in this class. Please note that more than four unexcused absences in this course will result in failure of the course.

Definition of an excused absence:

1. University obligation, in which case you will need to present me in advance with a letter explaining the purpose and date of your upcoming absence.
2. Emergency or medical illness, in which case you will need to call my office number and leave voice mail at 581-5012 before class begins on the day of your absence explaining the reason for your absence. No email will be accepted for reasons of unreliability which I will explain in class.

--If you must miss class, I will expect you to find out from someone in the class what you've missed so that you'll be prepared for the next class meeting. Any worksheets or handouts or assignments will only be distributed once; it is your responsibility to photocopy assignments from another student if you are absent.

--Only students with an excused absence on the day of any exam or in-class writing assignment may take an alternative exam or quiz, of different format, within the week of the scheduled exam or in-class writing assignment.

--No electronic devices of any kind, including computer lap-tops, may be used at any time during class.

Tardiness

--Please be on time for class; habitual tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful of other class members. I will be taking roll each morning as soon as class begins. If you come in late, it is your responsibility to notify me after class so that I take your name off the absence sheet. If you fail to notify me at the end of class on the day you are late, you will be recorded as absent. Please do not ask me for a letter of recommendation if you are habitually tardy or absent from class or are unprepared with home assignments.

Late assignments

All written assignments must be submitted when due; no late assignments will be accepted. Papers are due when class begins on the designated dates. Make-up work will be permitted for excused absences only. All assignments must be turned in during class in print version at the designated times; no electronic versions will be accepted.

Typing and Presentation

Papers and at-home writing assignments must be typed (double-spaced) in MLA format. Any grammar or paragraph exercises done at home and all pre-writing process work on formal papers may be handwritten.

Course Grading

The final course grade will be based on an average of the following grades.

--2 formal papers with process materials, and exams (10% each) = 60% of final grade (all equally weighted)

--Oral work (attendance at every class, active participation, presentations) and writing exercises, including writing process (home and in-class) = 40% (equally weighted)

Failure to complete any component of the course will result in failure of the course.

Scale for the course is 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; below 60% = F

Where to Go For Help with this Course

1. Come to see me in my office during my office hours and by appointment.
2. Go to the Writing Center, where graduate students can help you with planning, drafting, revising your papers. Their phone number is 581-5929. But note that No one (not even the Writing Center, nor parents, nor tutors) may read, proofread, or edit your writing over the course of the semester; you may read sections of the paper out loud to someone for feedback but you must always keep your paper in your own hands so that you have control and responsibility over your own work.

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 (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Plagiarism

The English Department requires that instructors quote to all students the university's policy on 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 immediate assignments of a 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.

Use or reproduction of any material or ideas off the internet without proper documentation is considered plagiarism and will be penalized as above. Respect for the work of others, in other words, encompasses all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

COURSE READINGS

Please read and do the assignment before coming to class on the date given here.

Lit = *Literature and the Human Experience*

Griffith = *Writing Essays about Literature*

Handbook = *The Little, Brown Handbook*

**This calendar should be used as a guideline. We may change some dates depending on the needs of the class.

UNIT I

WEEK ONE: CRITICAL READING STRATEGIES

Jan 11 Introduction to the course and how you will be evaluated

Jan 13 Why do we Read? Why do we Read Literature? Read all the following:
"Why We Read Literature," Lit, pp. 3-4; "Literature is Aesthetic," Griffith, p. 23
"Reading Actively and Critically," Lit, pp. 5-6
"Forming a Critical Perspective," Handbook, pp. 138-153 and pp. 131-133
"Annotating while you Read," Lit, pp. 19-22

WRITING EXERCISE DUE FRIDAY: SUMMARY WRITING (minimum 2 typed pages)

Use the above readings for content, PLUS your own ideas. Consult Handbook, pp. 134-135 to review what summary writing is. Challenge is to avoid plagiarism.

1. Why do we read literature? Classify and list as many different reasons as you can. What is the importance of reading in our lives?
2. What is your response to people who say they never read literature?
3. What is a good working definition of active, critical reading? What strategies are employed in this method of reading?

Jan 15 WRITING EXERCISE DUE TODAY

I will give you notes and we will do exercises in class.

Plagiarism and Documentation review

Not all Dictionaries are Equal

General-Purpose and Specialized Encyclopaedias and the Reference Room

Reference books on critical reading and thinking

Go Browse the Reference Room at your Leisure

WEEKS TWO TO FIVE: READING ANALYTICALLY FOR THE ELEMENTS OF FICTION

Jan 18 Holiday

Jan 20 Summary Writing vs Analytical Writing

Read Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (handout)

(Think carefully about questions on the text; be ready to discuss them)

Read "How do We Interpret," Griffith, pp. 4-9

How to Prepare a Presentation (handout I will give you in class and Lit, "Exploring Fiction Questions," pp. 10-11)
Assignment of Presenters

Jan 22 Types of Love / Hate--**Places and Objects**

Setting and Theme

Read Cisneros, "The House on Mango Street," Lit, pp. 147-148; Bio, p. 1539

Read Griffith, pp. 61-65 (setting); pp. 32-36 (theme)

WRITING EXERCISE DUE TODAY (minimum 2 typed pages)

Option 1

Write a personal essay that is organized, like Cisneros's story, around some place or object (home, neighborhood, toy, or something else) that symbolizes important emotions and meanings for your life.

Option 3

The narrator yearns for what she calls "a real house." Write an essay describing A REAL (place or object) that you yearn for, making sure that you incorporate rationale for its significance.

Jan 25 Types of Love / Hate--**Parents**

Character and Conflict

Read Tan, "Two Kinds," Lit, 464-472; be prepared to discuss questions, p. 472

Bio, p. 1602

Read Griffith, pp. 54-60 (characterization)

Read Cheever, "Reunion," (handout)

Jan 27 Types of Love--**Siblings**

Read McCullers, "Like That," (handout)

Jan 29 Types of Love / Hate--**Husbands and Wives**

Plot

Read Carver, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love," Lit, pp. 1037-1046; be prepared to discuss questions, p. 1046

Bio, p. 1537

Read Griffith, pp. 44-53 (plot)

Read Fromm, "Is Love an Art?", pp. 1259-1262; questions to discuss, p. 1261.

Feb 1 **Love and Desire--Love and Friendship**

Point of View

Read Cooper, "A Clack of Tiny Sparks: Remembrances of a Gay Boyhood," p. 339-346; be prepared to discuss questions, p. 346. Bio, p. 1540.

Read Updike, "Summer," (handout)

Read Lit, pp. 9 and 1618 (point of view)

Feb 3 **Love / Hate and the Self**

Tone and Imagery

Walker, "Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self," (handout)

Feb 5 **Love of Humanity**

Essay Argumentation

King, "An Experiment in Love: Nonviolent Resistance" (handout)

The Dalai Lama, "The Ethics of Compassion" (handout)

- Feb 8 **Hatred and Conformity**
Irony
 Jackson, "The Lottery," pp. 416-422
- Feb 10 Read Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues", Lit, pp. 704-727; Bio, p. 1531
 Take careful notes and annotate the story (pre-writing exercise)
 Writing Sentence Workshop
 Presentation of Papers MLA format
 Present tense and time
 Tense shifting
- Feb 12 Holiday

WEEK SIX: NOW IT'S YOUR TURN
A FIRST TRY AT WRITING ABOUT FICTION--WRITING AN INTERPRETIVE ESSAY

We will not be discussing "Sonny's Blues" in class. Your job is now to figure it out on your own.

WRITING WEEK

FORMAL PAPER I PROMPT

FIRST DRAFT PAPER I DUE FEB 19--MINIMUM 5 TYPED PAGES

How do the plot, setting, and characterization in "Sonny's Blues" help us to figure out the role music plays in the theme of love, hate, and obsession of the story? You must address the following: 1) What effects does Baldwin achieve by rearranging the order of events? 2) Think about setting as home, neighborhood, community. 3) Make sure you discuss the importance of music in the conclusion and the title. 4) Why and how is music important to each of the characters?

- Feb 15 Come to class with your process writing folder. By today you should have
1. annotated notes on the story
 2. a working thesis (consult your handbook on thesis if needed, pp. 27-32)
 3. an outline of your paper in any form you like (consult your handbook if needed, pp. 33-45) in which you consider how you are going to logically organize your arguments
 4. the first paragraph of your paper

Question and Answer Session--Anything you want to ask about the story

Feb 15-17 If you are stuck, see me in my office.

Griffith, pp. 227-243 (Drafting the Essay)

Use Griffith, pp. 218-224 as a sample model

Writing sentence workshop

- Feb 17 Writing Sentence Workshop

- Feb 19 **COMPLETE FIRST DRAFT PAPER I DUE**
BRING TWO COMPLETE COPIES TO CLASS
 Preparation for conference
 Writing Sentence Workshop

WEEK SEVEN: REVISION WEEK

- Feb 22-26 No formal class--INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES
COME TO MY OFFICE AT YOUR APPOINTED TIME

This week you should be

1. Going to individual conferences
2. Revising your paper for content and clarity (Handbook, pp. 54)
3. Editing your paper for sentence strength (Handbook, pp. 60-65 and exercises we did in class)
4. Proofreading your paper (Handbook, p. 66)
5. Retyping a clean, final draft

AND

PREPARING FOR THE POETRY UNIT

1. Look through your Literature anthology (pp. 149-193; 473-513; 787-814; 1081-1143; 1376-1422). Browse through it and read some poems at your leisure. Decide on a poem that you would like to work on for your formal paper. You must observe the following criteria for your selection:
 - a. It must be a poem that is new to you, that you have never read before.
 - b. Select a poem that you enjoy but that you do not fully understand, that still has some mystery to you, or that you're really puzzled about.
 - c. Select a poem that intrigues you so much that you want to spend a lot of time with it.
 - d. You must pick a poem (not song lyrics, or other subgenres)
 - e. You must pick a poem centered on our theme of hate, obsession, or love.
2. On a sheet of paper, write the title of the poem, the author, and the page # it appears on in your textbook. Please hand this in to me on March 1.

March 1

FINAL PAPER I AND FOLDER DUE and Poem Selected