ENG 3704-051: Contemporary American Literature

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English 3704, summer 2005
Guzlowski
Contemporary American Literature 1000-1200 M-F

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Phone 581-6973, email jzguzlowski@eiu.edu
Hours: M-F 9-1000 and 1200-100, and by appointment at other times

Special Needs: Students with special needs who require academic accommodations should contact Disability Services at 581-6583

Course Objectives: The purpose of this class is to give a general background in the American Literature written since 1950. The course will focus on the central literary movements of this period (for example, later modernism, confessional poetry, the beat experience, existentialism, hippie-ism, postmodernism, neo-regionalism, and dirty realism) and the social, historical, and cultural conditions (for example, the Minority Rights movement, the rise of the suburbs, the Vietnam war, and the Mallification of America) which in part give rise to these movements. Along with this general background, we will read and discuss a number of literary works that will serve as examples of these movements.

Course Requirements: Reading of Assigned Texts
Mid Term 100 points
Final Exam 100 points
Quizzes 100 points

Grades: 270-300 points = A 240-269 points = B
210-239 points = C 180-209 points = D
0-179 points = F

Reading of Assigned Texts: This course requires much reading and a couple of the works are difficult. I've tried to space the big readings out so that we aren't doing one big thing after another. But, pretty much, you have to keep reading.

Exams: They will be comprehensive and will contain objective and subjective components. You will be asked to 1) identify characters, situations, images from the literature, 2) identify and explain quotations from the works we will be reading, 3) answer essay questions about them.

Quizzes: There will be 20 quizzes during the semester. These will be reading quizzes mainly. The questions will sometimes be objective, sometimes subjective. Each quiz will be worth 5 points. If I offer extra credit questions on the quiz, tell me that I'm committed to not giving extra credit.

Plagiarism: Note the English Dept's statement: "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 Dict.)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.
Syllabus: The following may change because of various unforeseen factors. Also, note well that I do not give the titles of specific poems that we will be reading; this information will come before each assignment.

A) Intro to historical and literary backgrounds

B) The Existential and Confessional World
   Singer, Enemies, A Love Story
   Jarrell, poem
   Bishop and Roethke poems
   Lowell, poem
   Bellow, Seize the Day

C) Beats, Hippies, Radicals, and Post-Modernists
   Baraka, Dutchman
   Ginsberg, "Howl"
   Kerouac, On The Road
   Plath, Sexton poems
   Vonnegut, Slaughterhouse 5
   Rock and roll, handouts

Mid-Term

D) Minimalism, Dirty Realism, and Beyond
   Morrison, Sula
   Raymond Carver, Cathedral stories
   Easton, Brett. Less Than Zero
   Various Poets: Rita Dove, Robert Pinsky, Louise Gluck, Mary Oliver, Ai
   Tim O'Brien, The Things They Carried
   Oates, Black Water

FINAL