Summer 6-15-2014

ENG 4300-051: Senior Seminar: The Pleasures of the Long Poem

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ENG 4300.051 Senior Seminar: The Pleasures of the Long Poem

Course Description: Through the lens of Jean Baudrillard's playful yet insightful America, this seminar will examine the "hyperreality" of three major American poets grappling with the making of this "vast space" as it shapes both witness to and aesthetic expressions of a history like no other in the world. We'll read selections from Whitman's Leaves of Grass, Hart Crane's The Bridge and William Carlos Williams's Paterson in their quests for an American epic that can explore the complexity of a "primitive" pulse of innovation yet bear testimony to the rapidly changing cultural landscape unfolding before them.

Course Requirements and Format: The course format will be that of seminar discussion, and the requirements will be a reading journal (20%), two six-to-seven-page essays (60%) [One 12-15 page essay may be substituted here with permission of the instructor.] and active preparation and participation in the course (20%). (Group 4)

Prerequisite and Electronic Writing Portfolio Submissions: Students must have completed English 1002G or its equivalent before enrolling in ENG 4300, a "writing intensive" course. Juniors and seniors may elect to submit an essay from ENG 4300 to their Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP). If so, you must do so no later than the last day of class—EWP submissions are not accepted after completion of the course, and you are responsible for consulting the web site of Center for Academic Support and Achievement for instructions. See http://www.eiu/~assess for more information.

Required Texts:
Jean Baudrillard, America (Verso, 2010).
Handouts—as distributed in class.

General Policies:

Grading Standards: I shall follow the EIU English Department Guidelines, distributed in class. In all cases, I shall use a plus and minus system to distinguish, say, a high B from a low one.

Attendance: I do take roll, and I evaluate attendance only indirectly in the context of your participation in the course.

Conferences: These are at your request unless I ask to see you. Please ask for help as soon as you feel you need it; please don't wait until the last couple of weeks of class.
Submission of work: Essays should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only, titled and indicate the following: name, date, and course and section number. Exercises and quizzes must be legible.

Late Essays: For each day that the essay is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an A essay due on Thursday will be an F by the next Thursday. If there are particular difficulties, please see me.

Plagiarism:

The English Department Policy

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and the representation of them as one's own 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 assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

If I discover an act of plagiarism, I shall exercise the right to the fullest extent possible. (See http://www.eiu/~judicial/code.html for more information.)

Information for students with disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Student Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Syllabus—ENG 4300.051 Senior Seminar: The Pleasures of the Long Poem

Please note that, in order to avoid cancelling the class, we have arranged for the three of us to meet once each week (with breaks to deter insanity) on Tuesdays. The credit will still be for ENG 4300 and for 3 cu’s. In addition, I am happy to meet individually any day M-TH after 1 pm.

T 5/20: Jean Baudrillard, America

Discussion Leader: Loudon

Discussion leaders should prepare a handout with questions, observations and comments that facilitate our conversations. If you get these to me by 3 pm Tuesdays as an electronic attachment in Word, I am happy to print and to copy them for the evening’s work.

T 5/27: Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass

Selections: “Song of Myself” (26-78)  
“Song of the Open Road” (126-135)  
“Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (135-140)  
“A Song for Occupations” (177-183)  
“Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking” (206-212)  
“From Democratic Vistas” (757-773)

Discussion Leader: Loudon  (Essay #1 DUE, if doing two short ones.)

Film: The Brooklyn Bridge (Dir. Ken Burns, PBS, 58 min, 1981; DVD 2004)

T 6/3: Lawrence Kramer, Hart Crane’s The Bridge: An Annotated Edition

Discussion Leader:

Film: The Broken Tower (Dir. James Franco, Focus World, 110 min, 2011)

T 6/10: William Carlos Williams, Paterson (Revised Edition)

“An Essay on Leaves of Grass” in Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass (836-834)

Discussion Leader:

Essay and Reading Journal DUE.