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ENG 2009G-003: Literature and Human Values: Labor, Power, Class

Zahlan
Eastern Illinois University

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Literature and Human Values: Labor, Power, Class

COURSE OBJECTIVES
As a component of Eastern's General Education curriculum, this course will enable motivated students to improve their critical thinking and written and oral communication, as well as to acquire knowledge requisite to responsible global citizenship. During the semester, we will read, discuss, and write about plays and novels, written in different times and places, that raise questions as to how societies are organized: Who orders whom around and by what authority? Which groups are respected and which groups despised? How is work assigned and whose labor is valued and rewarded? We will study ways in which language and literary form reflect, shape, or undermine the ideologies that determine social realities.

DR. Z.'S OFFICE HOURS: Mondays: 1330-1430 (1:30-2:30), 1630-1730 (4:30-5:30); Thursdays: 1400-1600 (2:00-4:00); By Appointment

TEXTS
Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart; Margaret Atwood, The Handmaid's Tale;
Karel Capek, R.U.R.; Charles Dickens, Hard Times;
F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby; Aldous Huxley, Brave New World;
Clifford Odets, Waiting for Lefty; Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest
Suggested: MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers
(Each student should also have a Handbook of usage and a collegiate desk dictionary.)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (Corrected)

WEEK I
Monday, 26 August: Introduction and Assignments
Wednesday, 28 August: Begin The Great Gatsby (Read at least two chapters for today.) In-Class Writing

WEEK II
Monday, 2 September: LABOR DAY: No Class Meeting
Wednesday, 4 September: Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (Have the novel read for today.)

WEEK III
Monday, 9 September: The Great Gatsby (continued) Assignment of Paper I
Wednesday, 11 September: The Great Gatsby (concluded)

WEEK IV
Monday, 16 September: Odets, Waiting for Lefty: Dramatic Presentations as Assigned Carmen Gaytan, Val Gallt, Ted Michalsen, Joe DeLuca, Olivia Brown, Katie Shelden

Wednesday, 18 September: Waiting for Lefty (continued)

-New Syllabus 1-
WEEK V

Monday, 23 September:  *Waiting for Lefty* (concluded)
Begin *Things Fall Apart* (Read Part One for today.)

Wednesday, 25 September: *Things Fall Apart* (Announce lecture for Week VI)

WEEK VI

Monday, 30 September: *Things Fall Apart* (Be sure to have finished the novel by today.)

Wednesday, 2 October: *Things Fall Apart* (continued)

Thursday, 3 October: *Achebe lecture* (Details in class)

WEEK VII

Monday, 7 October: *Things Fall Apart* (continued)

**Paper I: typed, polished, documented draft due in class.**
(Be sure to store your paper on a diskette and/or to make two copies; the workshop copy will be marked up in class.)
Evaluation Workshop (Participation = 10% of Paper I grade)
[Tuesday 7 October: Late penalties (5 pts. per day) begin for Paper I submission by any student who did not participate in Evaluation Workshop.]

Wednesday, 9 October: *Mid-Term Exam* (Bring test booklets to class)

WEEK VIII

Monday, 14 October: *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Read the play for today.)

**Revised Paper I due in class**
Hand in last week's draft with editorial marks and evidence of revision, Peer Evaluation sheet, and your revised paper.
Discussion of Mid-Term Exam
Assignment of Paper II (Prospectus due 10 November)

Wednesday, 16 October: *The Importance of Being Earnest*--*Dramatic Presentations*
Sarah Vetter, Kara Hilligoss, Hilary Craig, Andrea Walton, Lisa Bootz, Jim Sheridan, Dan Blauw, Rachel Fountain

**Conference Sign-Up** (Discussion of Paper I)

WEEK IX

Monday, 21 October: *The Importance of Being Earnest* (concluded)
Begin Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Read one-third of the book.)

Wednesday, 23 October: Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Read one-half the book for today.)

WEEK X

Monday, 28 October: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Complete the novel for today.)

Wednesday, 30 October: *The Handmaid's Tale* (continued)

WEEK XI

Monday, 4 November: *The Handmaid's Tale* (concluded)
Begin *Brave New World* (Have half the novel read by today.)

Wednesday, 6 November: *Brave New World*

WEEK XII

Monday, 11 November: *Brave New World* (Complete the novel for today.)

**Prospectus for Paper II due in class.** Conference Sign-Up

Wednesday, 13 November: *Brave New World* concluded; Begin *R.U.R.*

-New Syllabus 2-
WEEK XIII
Monday, 18 November: Capek, R.U.R. (Read the play for today.)
Discussion of Prospectus
Research Presentations scheduled for last two weeks of semester

WEEK XIV
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY—NO CLASS MEETING

WEEK XV
Monday, 2 December: R.U.R. (concluded)
RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED
(Attendance required during presentations; no make-ups for missed presentations)
Wednesday, 4 December: Paper II due in class on this date.
RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED

WEEK XVI
Monday, 9 December: RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED
Wednesday, 11 December: RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED
FINAL EXAM REVIEW SHEETS

FINAL EXAM (CUMULATIVE) (Bring test booklets to your final exam.)

GRADE CALCULATION
Participation (including Drama Presentations) and Daily Preparation (including quizzes): 25%
Mid-Term Exam: 10%; Cumulative Final Exam: 20%
Paper I: 15%; Paper II: 25%; Research Paper Oral Presentations—5%

COURSE JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT
Keep a separate notebook or journal in which you write your responses to reading assignments and class discussion. For each work that we read, please identify in your journal those issues of labor, class, and power that you see in the text and your own thoughts about them. Identify also attitudes to the issues—the social and political views expressed in the text. In your journal, also take notes on your background reading in history, political science, and current events. From time to time, you will be asked to write responses in class, and you should add them into your journal when they are returned. You will find a journal very useful in reviewing for exams and in planning your papers and oral presentations. I will not collect or grade journals.

DRAMATIC READINGS
Groups of students will be asked to choose scenes from the three plays that we are reading and to present rehearsed reading performances to the class. Groups should be prepared to explain their choice of scenes and to comment on their interpretation of scenes and plays.

PAPER I ASSIGNMENT
PAPER I (800-1000 words/3 to 4 typed double-spaced pages) is due on 7 October. Paper I is an essay analyzing some specific issue of labor, class, or power in any one or two works assigned for the course. As appropriate, you may refer to other works (literary or non-fictional) by the author you are discussing, historical background works, or works of political or social theory. Be sure to credit ideas that you use in your analysis. Be sure to quote accurately, indicate all quotes and paraphrases, and document accurately just as you would for a "research paper" (use the MLA system).

-New Syllabus 3-
PAPER II ASSIGNMENT

PAPER II, due Wednesday, 4 December is a researched analytical study (1000--1600 words) discussing an important issue of labor, class, or power in the contemporary United States, in the light of issues raised in works read this semester. Can you make connections, for instance, between depictions of social hierarchy in texts assigned for the course and existing American social structures? Can you compare the assignment of and rewards for work in societies depicted in works read and in the U.S.? How does the distribution of social and economic power represented in assigned novels and plays compare with the situation in the United States today?

Your topic must be very specifically focused, and your analysis must be based on informational reading and research. Find several substantial and serious articles and/or books published in the last five years that raise questions about the social issue that interests you. For example, you may be interested in the status of working people as treated in *R.U.R.*, *Brave New World*, and/or *Waiting for Lefty*. If so, you could locate and read books and articles on the status of American labor today and discuss issues raised in the literary works in the light of the information you find about the actual situation of the working conditions, unions, and the social status of workers today.

Consult journals in political science and sociology or serious general magazines such as *The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, The Nation, The New Republic, The New York Review of Books*. I will provide a sample list of books that might prove useful, and, of course, you will make use of the usual research techniques to locate materials.

Please keep in mind that electronic media materials must be documented as conscientiously and accurately as any other material. Be aware also that is necessary to ascertain the authority, reliability, accuracy of all materials and that it may be particularly difficult to do so in the case of electronic media. Be sure that you evaluate as well as indicate the source of information and that you process material from electronic sources as critically and creatively as you do books or articles that you read and then use in writing your own essays and reports: DOWNLOADING IS NOT RESEARCH.

The specific focus of the paper will be determined by each student in consultation with me. A prospectus (one fully-developed paragraph [5 to 7 sentences], typed and double-spaced) is due on 10 November. The prospectus should clearly identify the issue to be discussed, the approach to be taken, and the point of view to be argued; it should also indicate literary works and non-fictional books and articles that will be referred to in the paper.

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION

During the last two weeks of the semester, each student will present the material of his/her final research paper, according to an assigned schedule. The presentation should be carefully timed to last 10 minutes.

**English 2009: Course Policies**

**STANDARDS & POLICIES:** Class attendance, punctuality, preparation, and participation are expected and required. Students are responsible for all material covered in class and all announcements or assignments made in class as well as for all assignments on the syllabus. Assignments are to have been completed by class time on the date for which they appear on the syllabus. The books in which the day's assignments are contained should be brought to class.
Remember that "class participation" counts towards the course grade. Unannounced quizzes on assigned material may be given at any time. There will be no opportunities to "make up" missed quizzes.

EXAMS: There will be no opportunities to make up a missed exam or oral report other than in cases of documented medical emergency; (signing in at Health Service does not constitute documentation of a medical emergency).

The Mid-Term and Final Exam should be written on test booklets, available at the Union Book Store. Please write tests in ink and on the appropriate booklets.

ALL PAPERS AND OTHER WRITTEN WORK must be handed in on the date due.

1. Work turned in late without advance clearance will not be accepted.
2. Clearance does not constitute an "excuse." Work turned in late with clearance will be penalized, usually at the rate of 5 points per day of lateness.
3. Any lateness may delay the grading and return of the paper, perhaps until the end of the semester.

BE SURE TO KEEP A COPY OF EVERY PAPER YOU HAND IN. IN THE CASE OF A MISSING PAPER, THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPLYING A COPY.

A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF PAPERS: Papers must be typed (double-spaced) or computer-printed on heavy or medium-weight white 9 x 11 paper. Leave adequate margins. Each paper must have a separate title sheet which includes the title of the paper, course title, instructor's name, student's name, and date of submission. Repeat the title at the top of the first page of text. Papers must be stapled or clipped.

In the case of computer printed papers, be sure to hand in letter-quality copies clearly and legibly printed. Also make sure that pages are separated, numbered, and clipped together in correct order, and that pages are numbered.

ONLY PAPERS THAT ARE NEAT AND IN CORRECT FORM CAN BE ACCEPTED.

DOCUMENTATION: Use the "new" MLA system to cite both primary and secondary sources used in your papers. The new system is fully explained and illustrated in the latest edition of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Each student should have access to a copy.

Inform yourself about documentation conventions for electronic media information and materials. All such materials must be documented and citation forms are illustrated in recent handbooks; go to the Writing Center for assistance. Electronic-media materials must be evaluated for quality at least as scrupulously as print materials. Please remember that you must absorb and process all materials: downloading is not research.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All written work (papers, exams, tests, quizzes) must be original and independent. Please make sure that you understand the meaning of plagiarism and the policy of the English Department:

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 assignment of the grade of F for the course.

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."