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ENG 2011-002: Literature, the Self, and the World

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Course Objectives:
The primary aim of the class is to deepen your understanding of and appreciation for fiction. You will be introduced to stories that are an important component and reflection of your culture and also other cultures and eras with which you are less familiar. In our class discussions, we will analyze narrative structure, style, and devices, along with the ideas of these literary works. By the end of the course, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the texts, the authors, and the elements of those texts, such as motifs, themes, and points of view. Finally, as the course’s title (Literature, the self, and the world) suggests, we will consider how and why reading fiction (or the art of storytelling itself) might help you gain insight into yourself and situate yourself in relation to the world.

Prerequisite: English 1002G

Texts:
Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God
Kingston, The Woman Warrior
Martin, We Are the Stories We Tell
Woolf, To the Lighthouse
Stories either provided in hard copy or accessed through Booth Library’s E-Reserve

Policies:
1. You are expected to attend all classes. More than three unexcused absences will lower your participation grade to an F. As outlined in the student catalogue, I will consider an absence excused only for “reasons of illness, emergency, or university activity.” When possible, you should notify me in advance of an anticipated absence.

2. If you are absent, you are still responsible for knowing the material and for turning in any assignments for that day. I recommend getting several classmates’ phone numbers and email addresses so you can keep up.

3. Latecomers (who arrive after 10 minutes) receive partial absences, and must see me after class so I can mark their attendance. Every three instances of tardiness may count as one absence.

4. All assignments must be typed and printed in black ink, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1 inch margins. Remember to staple your paper in the upper left-hand corner.
citing secondary sources, use the MLA style of documentation.

5. Assignments must be handed in within the first 10 minutes of class on the day they are due unless we have worked out a prior arrangement. Work handed in after that time will lose one letter grade for each class period it is late. No work will be accepted a week after the deadline.

6. You are responsible for saving copies of any work turned in for grading.

7. All our work will be the product of careful, detailed, close reading. Since the reading load for this course is heavy and the material challenging, make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to complete the assigned reading. Keep in mind that if you come to class unprepared, you will lose participation credit. Even if you miss class, you are responsible for completing all of the readings.

8. I expect you to arrive ready to participate in discussion. The quality as well as the frequency of your contributions determine your participation grade.

9. You are responsible for information given in class, including key terms, ideas and facts during both lectures and discussions.

**Grading:**
Leading one class discussion: 10%
Two critical reading responses: 20%
Argument essay: 20%
Midterm exam: 15%
Final exam: 20%
Class participation (may include quizzes): 15%

**Assignments:**
Leading one class discussion: I will assign these discussions the first week of class, and will scatter them throughout the semester. From your assigned reading, pick a significant passage (10 or more lines). Write a careful response (to be handed in after class), and then come to class prepared to read the passage aloud and to discuss its importance. Why and how does the passage help you understand the work as a whole? Does it raise a key issue? Contain a key image? Comprise a key moment of ambiguity? Help us interpret a character or key event? Conversely, why do you find the passage confusing or contradictory? What analysis questions does the passage raise that you find difficult to answer?

Two critical reading responses: it is your responsibility to choose two readings from the syllabus for critical reading responses. Neither of these two readings can be the one I assign to you for leading class discussion. Again, from each reading, choose a passage you find particularly important. Analyze the significance of the passage to any of the following topics (you may write about one of these in detail or cover a combination): character development, point of view, conflict, setting, theme, symbolism, or social/historical issues. Type the passage on a sheet of
paper separate from the response. Each response should be at least 2 pages. You must bring in
your response the day the class is scheduled to discuss the specific part of the text you have
analyzed. If you fail to hand in your response that date, you must write a new response to another
reading.

Argument essay: you will write a 5-6 page essay addressing issues or themes in a work of fiction.
Midterm and final: the exams will test your knowledge of readings and discussion topics covered
during the first half and the second half of the course through multiple choice, short answer,
essay, and/or other question formats.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will not be tolerated. I will follow the English
Department 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 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 a grade of “F” for the
course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others
should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.”

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.

Course Calendar
This is a tentative schedule, which will evolve as the class progresses. Changes will be
announced in class.

Week 1
M Aug 21: Introduction
W Aug 23: Babel, “My First Fee”

Week 2
W Aug 30: Woolf, “The Window” (To the Lighthouse, pp. 3-124)
F Sep 1: Woolf, “The Window”

Week 3
M Sep 4: No class; Labor Day
W Sep 6: Woolf, “The Window”
F Sep 8: Woolf, “The Window”
Week 4
F Sep 15: Woolf, “Time Passes” (pp. 125-143)

Week 5
M Sep 18: Woolf, “Time Passes”
W Sep 20: Woolf, “The Lighthouse” (pp. 145-209)
F Sep 22: Woolf, “The Lighthouse”

Week 6
M Sep 25: Woolf, “The Lighthouse”
W Sep 27: Woolf, “The Lighthouse”
F Sep 29: Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, chapters 1-9

Week 7
M Oct 2: Hurston, chapters 1-9
W Oct 4: Hurston, chapters 1-9
F Oct 6: Hurston, chapters 10-20

Week 8
M Oct 9: Hurston, chapters 10-20
W Oct 11: Hurston, chapters 10-20
F Oct 13: Fall break

Week 9
M Oct 16: Review
W Oct 18: Review
F Oct 20: Mid-term

Week 10
M Oct 23: Comparative discussion, Woolf and Hurston
W Oct 25: Comparative discussion
F Oct 27: Comparative discussion

Week 11
M Oct 30: Cunningham, “White Angel” (E-Reserve)
W Nov 1: Cunningham “White Angel”
F Nov 3: Paley, “An Interest in Life” (*We Are the Stories We Tell*, pp. 61-76)

Week 12
M Nov 6: Kingston, “No Name Woman” (*The Woman Warrior*, pp. 1-16)
W Nov 8: Kingston, “White Tigers” (pp. 17-53)
F Nov 10: Kingston, “White Tigers”

**Week 13**
- M Nov 13: Kingston, “Shaman” (pp. 55-109)
- W Nov 15: Kingston, “At the Western Palace” (pp. 111-160)
- F Nov 17: Kingston, “At the Western Palace”

**Week 14**
- M Nov 20: No class; Thanksgiving
- W Nov 22: No class; Thanksgiving
- F Nov 24: No class; Thanksgiving

**Week 15**
- M Nov 27: Kingston, “A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe” (pp. 161-209)
- W Nov 29: Kingston, “A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe”
- F Dec 1: Kingston, “A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe”

**Week 16**
- M Dec 4: Review
- W Dec 6: Review
- F Dec 8: Last class day