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ENG 3703-001: Modern American Literature

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English 3703: Modern American Lit.
Prof. Guzowski, Spring 03

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T 1230-200, W 9-12, Th 9-930, and by appointment

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to give the student a general background in the American literature from 1900 to 1950. We will discuss the central literary movements of this period (realism, anti-genteelism, modernism, imagism, the Harlem Renaissance, Folkism, and existentialism), and the social, historical and cultural conditions that in part gave 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.

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

Course Requirements: Reading of Assigned Texts
- Paper 100 points
- Reading Journal 100 points
- Mid Term 100 points
- Final Exam 100 points
- Quizzes 60 points

Grades: 414-460 points = A  368-413 points = B
322-367 points = C  276-321 points = D
0-275 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. Also, a number of the works touch on various adult topics, such as, atheism, infidelity, miscegenation, alcoholism, and spousal abuse. If you feel that such topics may not be appropriate for you, you may want to consider changing out of this section.

Papers: You will write one paper, at least 2500 words long, on the authors we'll be reading this semester. This paper should be argumentative (proving some significant point) and critical (i.e. using outside criticism). The paper will be graded on content, research, and form. Highest grades will go to ambitious papers that are most insightfully and thoughtfully written. Further, the papers must be typed and must use the MLA format. Papers will be due the last class day of the semester, May 1, 2003. A late paper will drop a letter grade for each calendar date it is late. More information regarding every aspect of this assignment will be handed out following mid-term.
Discussion: We learn about literature by reading it and talking about it. Except for a few occasions when I will be introducing literary periods, movements, I will not lecture. Class will revolve most of the time around your observations, insights, and questions.

Analyses: We learn about literature not only by reading and talking about it but also by writing about it. During the semester, each student will write 10 analyses of the works we'll be reading, five before mid-term and five after mid-term. No student can write more than one analysis per week. The analyses must be typed. They should be at least 250 words long. Each one should either analyze an important issue in the work you are responding to or answer some important question or questions that you feel the work raises. Summaries of class discussion or summaries of the work will not be accepted. Also, although I recognize the importance of personal responses to literature, they are not what I am looking for in your analyses.

The individual analyses must be turned in at the beginning of the class on which we start discussing the work the analysis analyzes. The reason for this is that I want your fresh analysis [no matter how hesitant] unaffected by the possible interference from the classroom discussion. An analysis may be revised within 10 days of being turned in. Late analyses will not be accepted. Plagiarism on these analyses will not be tolerated. See the section on Plagiarism below.

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 in a multiple choice format, 2) identify and explain the thematic significance of quotations from the works we will be reading, 3) answer essay questions about them.

Quizzes: There will be 12 quizzes during the semester. The questions will sometimes be objective, sometimes subjective. Each quiz will be worth 5 points.

Plagiarism: Note the English Dept's statement 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 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.

I have zero-tolerance for plagiarism of any kind. I will fail a plagiarist for the course and will notify the judicial board of the plagiarism. The judicial board has the option of dropping the student from the university. If you have any question about this, see me.
Syllabus: The following may change because of various unforeseen factors. (N) stands for Norton Anthology. (A) stands for The American Tradition in Literature.

A) Intro to historical and literary backgrounds

B) Realism and the Attack on Gentility:
   • Chopin, Kate. The Awakening, in (A)

C) Modernists and Imagists:
   • Dos Passos, "The Body of An American" (A)
   • Eliot, T. S., "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," The Waste land (A)
   • Hemingway, Sun Also Rises
   • Fitzgerald, F. S. The Great Gatsby (in Three Novels)
   • Lowell, Amy, "Patterns" and Elinor Wylie, "Wild Peaches" (A)
   • cummings, e.e. (A), Williams, W. C. (A)
   • Faulkner, Sound and the Fury

D) Harlem Renaissance:
   • Hughes, Langston "Mulatto," "Mother to Son," "The Trumpet Player" (N)
   • Cullen, Countee "Yet Do I Marvel" and "Heritage" (N)
   • Wright "The Man Who Was Almost a Man" (N)

Mid-Term

E) The Thirties and Folkism:
   • Hurston, Zora Neale, Their Eyes Were Watching God
   • Guthrie, Woody, various songs (handout)
   • Steinbeck, John, Grapes of Wrath

D) The Forties, Existentialism and World War II:
   • O'Neill, Eugene, Long Day's Journey into Night (N)
   • Williams, Tennessee, The Glass Menagerie (A)
   • Shapiro, Karl, "Troop Train" and "V-Letter" (handout)
   • Jarrell, Randall, "90 North," "Death of the Ball Turret Gunner," "Second Air Force " (N) and "Losses" (handout)
   • Pyle, Ernie, selections from Brave Men

Final