

ENGLISH 4354/5354: MODERNISM (CRN 19434/19470)

Fall 2014, 9:00-9:50 MWF, Irby 312

Dr. Mike Schaefer
Office: Irby 408
e-mail: schaefer@uca.edu

Office phone: 450-5119
Home phone: 329-0538

Office Hours: 10:00 am-12:00 pm MWF, 2:30-4:30 pm TTh, and by appointment

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Understanding of the unifying ideas and techniques of Modernism as an artistic movement

"Literature, whether handed down by word of mouth or in print, gives us a second handle on reality . . . enabling us to encounter, in the safe, manageable dimensions of make-believe the very same threats to integrity that may assail the psyche in real life; and at the same time providing through the self-discovery which it imparts a veritable weapon for coping with these threats whether they are found within our problematic and incoherent selves or in the world around us."-- Chinua Achebe, "What Has Literature Got to Do with It?"

"We know that art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth."—Pablo Picasso

"It's the function of creative people to disturb the peace. Some people ask me, 'Why don't you write plays that I know exactly what the specific answer to the question you're raising is by the end of the play?' And I always have to answer these people by saying that I find I can ask an awful lot more interesting questions if I don't have to supply the answers to them. If I limited the content of my plays to what I could give specific answers to, I think I'd write very dull plays. . . . If people would go into the theater realizing it's an arena of engagement, rather than escape, and if people would go to the theater to be upset and disturbed rather than merely being pacified and having their values reaffirmed, then on Broadway each year you'd have more than one or two half-way decent plays surviving. People have got to realize that art isn't easy, and the audience must bring to the art at least part of the responsibility that the perpetrator brought to it."—Edward Albee, interviewed in *The Spectator*, by Studs Terkel

2. Understanding of the differences among individual Modernists

"In art as in science there is no delight without the detail, and it is on detail that I have tried to fix the reader's attention. Let me repeat that unless these are thoroughly understood and remembered, all 'general ideas' (so easily acquired, so profitably resold) must necessarily remain but worn passports allowing their bearers shortcuts from one area of ignorance to another." —Vladimir Nabokov

"For every attitude that is supposed to be distinctively American one can find an opposite stance that is no less so . . . There is no such thing as an essentially American world view any more than there is an essentially American landscape. Anyone who thinks otherwise shows that they have not grasped the most important fact about America, which is that it is unknowable."—British historian John Gray, writing in *Granta* magazine, 2002

3. Awareness of the range and variety of secondary-source criticism on Modernism

"They ought to have me teach some of those college classes. I could teach them something. Most professors of English composition can tell students what's wrong with their pieces but they don't know how to make them good, because, if they knew that, they'd be writers themselves and they wouldn't have to teach. [The life of a professor is] [a]ll right for a person who is vain and likes to have the adulation of his students."—Ernest Hemingway, quoted by Arnold Samuelson in *With Hemingway*

TEXTS:

The Norton Anthology of American Literature, volume D, eighth edition
Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time* (Scribner)
William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (Norton Critical Edition)
John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* (Mariner)

READING SCHEDULE:

“To read well, that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent . . . Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written.”—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

- Weeks 1-3: (in *Norton*) “American Literature between the Wars”; T. S. Eliot—“Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “The Waste Land”
- Weeks 4-6: (in *Norton*) Ezra Pound—“To Whistler,” “A Pact,” “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley,” Cantos I, XVII, XLV
- Week 7: Ernest Hemingway—*In Our Time* **Essay 1 due at beginning of week 7 (Monday, October 6)**
- Weeks 8-9: (in *Norton*) William Carlos Williams—“Spring and All,” “To Elsie,” “The Red Wheelbarrow,” “The Dead Baby,” “The Wind Increases,” “A Sort of a Song” **Midterm due at beginning of week 9 (Monday, October 20)**
- Weeks 10-11: (in *Norton*) Wallace Stevens—“A High-Toned Old Christian Woman,” “Sunday Morning,” “Anecdote of the Jar,” “The Idea of Order at Key West,” “Study of Two Pears”
- Weeks 12-13: William Faulkner—*The Sound and the Fury*
- Weeks 14-15: John Dos Passos—*Manhattan Transfer* **Essay 2 due at beginning of week 15 (Monday, December 1)**
- December 10 **FINAL EXAM—2-4 pm**

ATTENDANCE: Attendance—**on time**—is mandatory. Four or more absences will lower your class participation grade, as will recurrent late arrival. If you miss six classes, you'll have one week after the last absence to see me with a believable excuse and a promise to sin no more; if you don't make this deadline, you'll be dropped from the course with a WF grade. And if you miss a seventh class following our conference about the six absences, you'll likewise be dropped with a WF.

EXAMS: Our midterm exam will cover the course material through October 3. The final exam will have one section covering the course material from October 6 to the end of the semester and then a second section taking in the whole course, asking you to make connections among the various works we've studied. Both of these exams will consist of essay questions, and both will be take-home rather than in-class in format. I'll discuss these exams and their make-up in greater detail in class about a week before their due dates.

ESSAYS: Each student must submit two original essays dealing with one or more of the works we cover in class or with outside works that fall within the time period of the course—roughly 1914-1940. Undergraduate students' essays should be 7-10 pages and must make use of at least five secondary sources; graduate students' essays should be 12-15 pages and must incorporate at least ten secondary sources. We'll have much to say as the course progresses concerning various approaches you might take to writing these essays, important secondary sources for each author, and specific grading criteria. Note from the outset that although your essay's content is the most important factor in determining your grade, how well you write (i.e., thesis, organization, style, coherence, grammar, etc.) will affect this grade as well, since even the best ideas in the world aren't really useful if you can't communicate them intelligibly to a reader. **You have the option to rewrite the first of these essays, with the revision grade averaged in with the original to produce the final grade for that paper; you may turn in this rewrite at any time through Friday, December 12.**

All essays are due at the beginning of class on the date assigned. I'll accept a paper late, but it will lose one letter grade for every class meeting it's late. **Note:** You must submit all required written work to receive a grade other than F for the course. Please type or print out your essay on non-erasable paper, and use only a paper clip to fasten your pages, not staples or plastic binders or any other form of attachment. The form and documentation techniques you employ in the essays should follow the guidelines specified in the *MLA* (Modern Language Association) *Handbook*, which can also be found, in condensed form, at the English Department website link <http://uca.edu/english/mla-formatting/>. Please type or print out your essays on non-erasable paper, and use only a paper clip to fasten your pages, not staples or plastic binders or any other form of attachment.

JOURNALS: Each student must keep a journal of his or her thoughts on the assigned readings, with one entry devoted to each reading before we discuss it in class. Ordinarily, I'll pose a question for you to respond to in each entry, with that response consisting of at least three paragraphs, and I'll also ask you to state what you feel is the most important issue for us to cover in class and explain briefly why you feel that's the case. Beyond those requirements you're also free to write as much more as you wish about whatever intrigues you, inspires you, confuses you, or upsets you about the work in question, and about this work's relationship to other works you've read and its relevance to human life in general and your own life in particular. There are two goals to this assignment, both of which you're probably already aware of. First, the act of writing stimulates thinking: even if at the outset you feel you have nothing at all to say about a given work, you'll find that putting pen to paper or fingers to keyboard will bring ideas forth; if you do have some ideas to start with you'll find that writing them down will cause you to extend and refine them. Second, as is obvious from what's been said above, these entries will provide a rich source of class-discussion and exam topics.

You'll submit these journals by e-mail to the address listed for me at the top of the syllabus. Each before-discussion entry must reach me no later than 24 hours prior to the first class meeting during which we'll discuss that work. I won't accept a journal entry after the due date, but you are allowed to miss one journal with no penalty. I'll grade you for each submission: if your entry shows an honest, thoughtful effort to come to grips with the work, you'll get somewhere from 8 to 10; if it shows a solid but not all that insightful effort, you'll get somewhere from 4 to 7; if you don't do the entry, or if you blow it off with superficial comments, or if you just crib ideas from critics and label them as your own, you'll get somewhere from 0 to 3. This does not mean that you're forbidden to read criticism to get your ideas going; you're welcome to do so, and to address critics' ideas in your journal, as long as you clearly identify which ideas are the critic's and which are your own in response to what that critic has to say. **Important note:** Don't worry about coming up with the "right" response to any given work; what we're interested in is your response to it, whatever that may be. And don't worry about spelling, punctuation, or grammar in your journal; just let your thoughts flow. The point of a journal isn't a finished, polished presentation, as it is for a more formal essay, but rather your immediate, engaged response to what you've read. At the end of the semester, I'll figure your final journal grade by taking the ratio of the total points you've earned to the total points possible. If we do twelve journals, for instance, then the total possible score will be 120; if you earn 100, then your percentage is 84, which means a B for your final journal grade. (My grading scale is 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, below 60=F.)

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS: Beyond writing longer and more heavily researched essays, as outlined above, each graduate student will make two oral presentations to the class on articles that raise crucial issues regarding one or another of our texts. I'll assign specific articles during our discussion of each text. These presentations will constitute part of the attendance/participation grade.

GRADES: Your final grade will come from the following percentages:

Attendance/Participation:	20%
Journal:	15%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Final Exam:	20%
First Essay:	15%
Second Essay:	15%

COURSE EVALUATIONS (in which *you* get to grade *me*): Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on Monday, Nov. 24, through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Knowingly presenting someone else's work as your own, whether in an exam, journal, or any other format, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism carries serious penalties, from failure on a particular assignment to failure for the course. If you ever have any questions on this subject, please feel free to ask me about them, without fear of embarrassment, and/or consult this file for more information:

<http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/files/2012/08/Plagiarism.pdf>

Here is UCA's official policy statement regarding academic integrity: The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

DISABILITIES: UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3613.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PLAN: An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE: If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. **Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.*