Syllabus

**"Witches, Bitches, Angels, and Whores: Images of Women in Literature"**

English 2370 (FYS)

Dr. Mary Ruth Marotte; email:  mrmarotte@uca.edu (best way to catch me!)

cell: 501-269-9428--I will not respond after 9 pm

Office: 407 Irby; Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 8-10; Thursday, 10:45-12:45; or by appointment

This semester we will be analyzing women's literature from the 19th century through contemporary society, considering how gender relations may be changing, and investigating the historical social, political, economic, and cultural forces that have shaped women’s lives. We’ll explore how women have been perceived in different cultural contexts, as well as relations of inequality organized along lines of race, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexuality, ability, appearance, and age.

In this course, you should be prepared to:

1. Examine the development of gender norms, identities, and roles as they are shaped by historical, political, and social factors, such as the representation of women in writings or art, whether philosophical, literary, etc.

2. Analyze various literary works by and about women for what they say about gender.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of the influence that theories about and definitions of gender have on writers’ beliefs about gender and about themselves.

4. Understand and decipher the way society and literature impact one’s gender development, and vice versa.

5. Consider our own lives, as either males or females, and be empowered to think critically on topics such as cultural and political values and norms.

Student Learning Outcomes 1. Understand systemic oppression in the context of race, class, gender and sexuality. 2. Create a comprehensive knowledge of gendered societal and cultural gendered norms. 3. Understand how power and privilege operate in our society. 4. Gain the critical thinking skills to discuss and write about issues in a thoughtful and well-articulated manner. 5. Inspire a critical consciousness that becomes a part of your everyday life.

Read the readings before class, not during or after class or right before the papers are due. The focus is on reading closely and thinking carefully about the nuances of the texts.

Required Texts: *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, Volume 2, Gilbert & Gubar; *The Bluest Eye*, Toni Morrison; packet of selected readings that I will distribute

You should be prepared to share your opinions and work through your difficulties with each text. Participation is vital!

**August**

Th    24    Introduction to course

T    29    Virginia Woolf, from *A Room of One’s Own, p. 237;* "Professions for Women,"

 p. 244; Rich, "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision" p. 982;

Th    31 Wharton, "The Angel at the Grave," p. 31; Austin, “The Walking Woman," p. 66

**September**

T    5    Olsen, "One out of Twelve: Writers Who Are Women in Our Century"-handout;

Glaspell, *Trifles*, p. 178

Th    7   Hurston, "Sweat," p. 349; "How It Feels to Be Colored Me," p. 357

T    12    West, "Indissoluble Matrimony," p. 469; Rhys, "Mannequin," p. 499

Th    14    **Peer review for papers--bring rough draft to class**

T    19    Visit to Baum Gallery; **1st PAPER DUE**

Th  21    Welty, "A Worn Path," p. 598

T    26    Muriel Rukeyser, p. 644; “More of a Corpse than a Woman,” “Night Feeding,”

“Myth”

Th  28    Olsen, "Tell Me a Riddle," p. 659

**October**

T    3    Lessing, "One Off the Short List," p. 810

Th  5    Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables," p. 835; Anne Sexton, p.918, "Her Kind,"

"Housewife"

T    10    Churchill, *Top Girls,* p. 1137

Th  12    *Top Girls*

T    17    **Midterm Exam**

Th  19    Fall Break

T    24  Boland, "Letter to a Young Woman Poet"; Rich, “Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers,” p. 965;

“Diving into the Wreck,” p. 970

Th  26  Sharon Olds'; p. 1278; “The Language of the Brag,” “Rite of Passage,” “The One

Girl at the Boys’ Party,” “This”

T    31    Old's continued; Eaven Boland, p. 1289; “Anorexic,” “Degas’s Laundresses”

**November**

Th  2    Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens,” p. 1295;  Kincaid, "Girl,"

p. 1339

T    7    Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek," p. 1399

Th  9    bell hooks' "Postmodern Blackness"--handout; Morrison, from *Unspeakable*

*Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature*

T    14    Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

Th  16    *The Bluest Eye*

T    21    *The Bluest Eye*

Th  23    **Thanksgiving Holiday**

T    28    *The Hours--film*

Th   30    *The Hours*--film

December

T    5    *The Hours*--film; **peer review workshop--bring rough draft to class**

Th    7    **2nd Paper due**

FINALS- week of  Dec. 11-15

Grade Distribution:

Reading Responses/Participation: 20%

First Paper: 20%

Second Paper: 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

**Reading Responses/Participation**: I will collect reading responses each day at the beginning of class, and your grade will depend upon your thoughtful consideration of the day’s reading. You should respond to these readings by working through any difficulties you might have with either the reading or the genre or both. These responses should avoid personal reflection in the manner of a diary or some such biographical project. Instead, venture into the critical as much as possible. What do you think the author is trying to get across with regard to her work? As the semester progresses, you might want to compare/contrast the various texts you’ve studied. These responses are a very important way to prepare to write your papers, and I treat them very seriously. Participation is rolled into this percentage of your grade. You should aim to be an active contributor to the class discussion, and you will be asked periodically to offer a particular insight into a reading.

**Papers**:  I will distribute three or four writing prompts that you may use for your papers.  These writing prompts will challenge you to engage with the works that we are covering in the course, how they may or may not coalesce in ideology or theme, how they engage you as a reader, and how they hold up as scholarly works.  Your papers should show me that you can both critically and imaginatively engage with the texts and effectively use outside sources to support your ideas.  The two papers should be 4-6 pages long, with at least 3 outside sources.

**Exams**: Exams will be a combination of identification and essay. Note-taking is essential in this course, as you will be held accountable for what you read, what I say, and how well you are able to synthesize both the texts and the theoretical readings that I’ve assigned.

**Attendance:** You will be allowed three absences. If you miss more than three times, your grade will drop one letter. After the fourth absence, I will drop it another letter. You get the picture. You WILL NOT make an “A” in this course if you miss more than four times.

**Academic Dishonesty**: Plagiarism does not refer only to flagrant copying; it includes also the uncredited use of any phrases, quotations, or ideas. Please be sure to cite any outside sources which you use. That said, I will not tolerate cheating in this class. If you are caught plagiarizing or otherwise cheating, you will immediately lose two letter grades off your final grade. If the assignment in question a major assignment, you will automatically fail the course.

Conferences: These are difficult texts. If you are unsure about the reading, want feedback on an weekly writing, or would like to talk about a text or idea, please come to my office for a conference. If you can't make it to my office hours, feel free to make an appointment with me.

University Policy and Disabilities: If you have any questions about a university policy, including Academic policies and the Sexual Harassment policy, please see the Student Handbook. The University of Central Arkansas 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 450-3135.

**Evaluations:** 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 the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction [insert date] through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

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**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.*