**English 4354/5354**

**CRN 19434/19470**

**Modernism**

**Fall, 2016**

**Irby 312**

**2:00-2:50**

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**Syllabus:**

Modernism is the term used to describe the dominant artistic movement of the early twentieth century. Like many of the terms we use to discuss literature, it is not easy to define. The Modernists were often profoundly unhappy with the world we usually call “modern.” As critic Terry Eagleton recently said, many Modernists tended to be as conservative politically as they were audacious artistically. Moreover, there were many writers of the same period who are not regarded as Modernists, even though they lived and worked at the same time as those writers who are so designated. If anything sets the writers called Modernists apart from other writers it is probably their willingness to experiment with literary form, their interest in the unconscious sources of art, and a feeling of alienation from social, religious, political, and even artistic systems of order. It might be said that the Modernists were expressing the fragmentation, doubt, and sense of loss of a century that began with what was, at that time, a war of unprecedented ferocity, with the violent overthrow of one of Europe’s last monarchies by a mass uprising, and with a pandemic that killed as many as 100 million people. Their works certainly expressed less confidence than their Victorian predecessors’. Because the Modernists were so concerned about their work as works of art, they were also often intensely interested in writers of the past and of other cultures who seemed, like them, to be exploring life in terms that had more to do with archetypes and mythic patterns and less to do with the concerns of the rational, scientific, capitalistic, and materialistic society they lived in. Like Romanticism before it, Modernism encompassed many art forms and many nations, but it was primarily an outgrowth of a European crisis of confidence. For our purposes, we will be limiting our study of Modernism to works by English language writers, both American and those from the British Isles. I think you’ll find this to be just fine because many of the important Modernists came from this group of writers.

We’ll begin our study of Modernists with British poets who witnessed the Great Wat first hand and puzzled over its meaning. Then we will look at two American writers, one of whom went on to become a British citizen while the other ended up supporting Mussolini and being incarcerated in an insane asylum for his efforts: T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound (who are not, by the way, fighting in the captain’s tower). Both poets do a pretty good job of examining the crisis Europe faced in the early twentieth century and the demoralization that accompanied that crisis. Next, we will look at the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, who was as concerned about the apparent collapse of Western civilization as Pound and Eliot but who saw this collapse as part of a larger historical cycle and who, like William Blake before him, imagined the poet as a prophet of the imagination. Then, we’ll shift gears and look at three of the great Modernist novelists: Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and William Faulkner, all of whom experimented extensively with the novel form and changed the way we think about it. We’ll conclude the semester with a play by the great Irish playwright Samuel Beckett, whose play about the end of the world finds tragedy is petty quarrels and the perpetual motion machine of human language.

There will be four essay exams, one of which will be the final, and a paper. The essay exams will require you to analyze and interpret the works we are reading and compare the artistic visions of the various writers. In the paper you will also be analyzing and interpreting the works, but here I will ask you to do some research as well. You will choose one of the writers and find three to five essays or chapters that you think help shed light on the author’s works. Then, you will discuss your own analysis of the writer’s works but in light of the ideas of the critics you have consulted.

**Reading List:**

*World War One British Poets*

Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*, New Directions.

T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land and other Poems*, Paul Negri, ed., Dover.

William Butler Yeats, *Collected Poems*, ed. Timothy Webb, Penguin.

James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Penguin Books.

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, Knopf Doubleday Publishing.

Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*.

**Graduate Students:**

All graduate students will be expected to attend a tutorial in addition to the class. In this tutorial, the instructor and the graduate students will discuss the works in more theoretical terms, examine the works in terms of their critical reception, and discuss ways the graduate students can apply theoretical approaches to the works.

Graduate students will also compile an annotated bibliography on one of the writers the course covers.

Graduate students will also write a paper on a topic to be determined by the student in consultation with the instructor. This paper will be more comprehensive and involve more research than the paper the undergraduates will write.

**Evaluation of Written Work:**

Students will be evaluated on the coherence of their argument, the depth and clarity of their ideas, and the correctness of their grammar. Of these considerations, the first two are most important, but grammatical correctness or general writing competence is not far behind.

**Reading Schedule:**

**Weeks 1-2**

**The War:**

Rupert Brooke Entire; Isaac Rosenberg, “Break of Day in the Trenches,” “Louse Hunting,” “Dead Man’s Dump”; Siegfried Sassoon, “’In the Pink,’” “A Working Party,” “’They,’” “The Troops,” “Repression of War Experiences,” “Trench Duty”; Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est,” “Mental Cases,” “Futility,” “Apologia Pro Poemate Meo”.

**First Exam**

**Weeks 3-4**

**Ezra Pound: Achieving the concrete**

“Envoi,” “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley,” “Mauberley,” “In a Station of the Metro,” “Mr. Nixon,” “Villanelle: The Psychological Hour,” “The Seafarer,” “Cantos.”

**Weeks 5-6**

**T. S. Eliot: Into the Waste Land**

“The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock,” “Sweeny Among the Nightingales,” “Gerontion,” *The Waste Land*, and “The Journey of the Magi”

**Second Exam**

**Weeks 7-8**

**William Butler Yeats: Prophecy and Poetry**

“September 1913,” “Easter 1916,” “The Magi,”“The Second Coming,” “A Prayer for my Daughter,” “Sailing to Byzantium,” “Byzantium,” “Among Schoolchildren,” “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop,” “Long Legged Fly,” “Leda and the Swan,” “Lapis Lazuli,” “Circus Animals’ Desertion,” “Under Ben Bulben”

**Weeks 8-9**

**James Joyce: Life into Art**

*Dubliners*

**Third Exam**

**Weeks 9-10**

**Virginia Woolf: The Unraveled Sock**

*Mrs. Dalloway*

**Weeks 11-13**

**William Faulkner: Idiots and Southerners**

*The Sound and the Fury*

**Fourth Exam**

**Week 14**

**Samuel Beckett: “Me to play”**

*Endgame*

**Paper Due**

**Final Exam**

**Course Rules:**

First and foremost, you must never cheat or plagiarize. This is a question of basic honesty. I understand that having to rely primarily on your own ideas is difficult and scary, but, in the long run, it is worth it. So, don’t try to weasel out. Do your own work and take your beating. If you have any questions about what might be plagiarism, I urge you to ask me. If you disregard my plea and cheat or plagiarize, I will fail you for the course. There aren’t many capital offenses in this line of work, but cheating of any kind is one.

Students should familiarize themselves with all university policies, especially those pertaining to academic misconduct and sexual harassment in the *Student Handbook*.

“The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135.”

Please be courteous to and tolerant of all people in the class. To make the class work, we need to have free and open discussions, and these require people feeling comfortable enough to express their ideas. Naturally, I expect you to be courteous and respectful to me, and I will certainly reciprocate.

Please turn off all electronic devices. Actually, I’d love it if you left all electronic devices at home. The very last thing we need is to be distracted more than we already are.

Since discussion is such an important part of the class, regular attendance at class is imperative. You can miss up to three classes without endangering your place in the class, but, after that, you had better have a compelling reason to miss class. Besides, you don’t want to hurt my feelings.

All the exams will be in class. If for some unavoidable reason you have to miss the exam, see me immediately and see about taking a make-up. I’m a reasonably reasonable person and can sometimes feel compassion, but the responsibility for arranging make-up exams is yours.

The following gives you all the official declarations:

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, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3613.

You should familiarize yourself with all the policies set forth in the *Student Handbook*, especially those concerning academic integrity and sexual harassment.

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, as 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 the university policy.

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.*

Evaluations (Fall & Spring)  
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.

Office Hours: MWF 12-1 and 3-4; TTh 10:40-12:15 and by appointment

Office Number: 410 Irby Hall