

English 263: Introduction to the Novel The American Novel Post World War II

Course Policies, Fall 2011
Section 001, Tu/Th 12:30pm - 1:45pm
AUP, Rm 189

Instructor: Craig Medvecky
Office: Curtin Hall, Room 294
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Course Description

English 263 (“The American Novel: Post World War II”) is a reading and writing intensive course that offers a survey of novels by American authors from mid to late twentieth century. The reading list focuses primarily on speculative fiction that represents and explores alternative constructs of social reality in a nuclear age. In addition to the novels listed below, students will also be required to read critical essays, or other ancillary materials in other forms, that will invite discussion of the various contexts that shape and reshape the value systems that the course presents.

Learning Outcomes

Through extensive practice in reading and responding to texts students will build on existing reading skills and to elaborate on their knowledge of how texts operate—i.e., how they represent, construct, and imagine the world. Accordingly, students should come away with greater awareness and appreciation of their own roles and responsibilities as writers and readers in the discipline of English studies, as they gain confidence in their ability to think and communicate in complex forms with clarity, coherence and depth. Further, through critical engagement with the ways in which human values are created and maintained in the literary, aesthetic and intellectual media, the course provides students with a means to fulfill a General Education Requirement for the Humanities.

Prerequisites

To be eligible for English 263, students must have received a four (4) on the EPT or received a grade of C or better in English 101. If you work with an advisor at the SAC, please email a copy of your VISA statement to me during the first week of class.

Required Course Materials

Students are expected to bring the appropriate books and materials to each class session, as discussions and exercises will frequently refer to specific passages from the week’s reading. All textbooks will be available at **Peoples Books**, 2122 East Locust Street; Milwaukee, WI

53211-3326; (414) 962-0575. I have contracted with Peoples Books because they make an effort to procure used editions of the course books and sell them for significantly less than cover prices, saving students money.

For those students who would prefer to purchase books from another source, I have included the ISBN# so that you can make sure to obtain the correct edition.

1. Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49*. ISBN-13: 978-0060931674
2. Burroughs, William S. *The Western Lands*. ISBN-13: 978-0140094565
3. Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. ISBN-13: 978-0345342966
4. Dick, Philip K., *Ubik*, ISBN-13: 978-0679736646
5. LeGuin, Ursula. *Lathe of Heaven*. ISBN-13: 978-1416556961
6. McHugh, Maureen. *China Mountain Zhang*. ISBN-13: 978-0312860981

Students will be required to purchase and read these novels. All other readings will be posted to D2L and/or distributed in class. In addition, students will need such school supplies as will allow them to print out assignments away from class and to hand-write assignments during class. In general, students are strongly encouraged to plan for, develop, and employ some system of organization that allows for ready access both to previously distributed course materials and their own accumulated writing. It is expected that all college-level work will be typed or printed out and that multi-paged assignments will be stapled.

Course Practices

Reading: Students will have a significant amount of reading to do before every class. Consequently, it is very important to keep up with the schedule. The success and vitality of each class period, including its activities and discussions, depends on how well students prepare for class. Student participation in class discussions and online forums is integral not only to each individual's personal success but also to the success of the classroom community as a whole. Accordingly, it is your responsibility to make certain that you have read the material and come prepared to raise questions and share your thoughts.

- As incentive in this regard, there will be reading quizzes distributed at random during the semester worth 10% of your final grade.

Writing: To help you prepare for class, I will occasionally ask you to write a response to readings and post your entries to a discussion forum on D2L. The D2L site is where you will find a place to explore your ideas and engage in exploration and reflection. It is a place to record observations and questions as well as first impressions. You are encouraged to use the space to raise questions, to record speculations, and to copy down significant passages without being inhibited by a need for "final" or "right" answers. I will provide more detail and specific instructions on these activities as we proceed in the course.

- D2L is intended as a supplement to class discussion; it is not busy work to be done in the last week of class. Posts are due before the class for which they are assigned. Late

posts will receive 1/2 credit. *Posts that are more than two weeks late will receive no credit.*

- Your D2L participation will be regularly evaluated and graded for 10% of your final grade. To clarify: if you opt not to participate in D2L discussion, the highest possible grade you can receive in this course is a B+, assuming everything else is perfect.
- In addition to your D2L work, you will be asked to compose three short essays (4-5 pages each) over the course of the term. Assignment sheets will be distributed 1-2 weeks ahead of the due date. Late papers will be downgraded one (1) letter grade per class period that they are late.

Class Discussion: Both you and I will have distinct roles. Our class discussions will be based on the interpretative insights and questions that you prepare for class, along with specific questions and focal points that I will introduce into the discussion. My role will not be to provide “correct answers” or expose “hidden meanings” behind literary texts, but rather to help you to ask rewarding questions about individual texts and to provide you with a range of alternatives in understanding not only how texts have been interpreted historically but also how those interpretations are open to individual or contemporary revision. The class discussions are intended to enact the processes of critical inquiry that you will be attempting to carry out in your reading and writing. In that regard, students are required to treat others’ work and contributions with respect. Professional conduct means being attentive to the discussion (both on-line and in class) and striving toward the expression of new and deeper contexts for one’s own comments as well as those of others. Professionalism does not include arriving late, leaving in the middle, listening to music, or text messaging during class.

- Your in-class participation will be regularly evaluated and graded for 20% of your final grade. To clarify: if you opt not to participate in class discussion, the highest grade you can receive in this course is a C+, assuming everything else is perfect.

Course Attendance Policies

Any student who is not in the classroom at roll call will be marked tardy for the day. Three tardies equals one absence. Any student who misses more than twenty (20) minutes of a class will be marked absent for the day. Five (5) or more absences during the semester will result in a reduction of a student’s final grade by one (1) letter grade per absence. For example, a student who has five absences and who would otherwise have made a B in the class will instead receive a C ... with six (6) absences the grade would become a D, and so on.

- **More than (6) classroom absences during the semester will result in a failing grade for the term**, regardless of what other work has been done.
- Students who arrive late or miss class are expected to catch themselves up on missed work, including handouts and homework assignments. You are responsible for your D2L entries even if you are absent. To help in this regard, the course D2L site will

provide convenient, 24 hour access to all past and present course materials. Please be advised, an absence is not an excuse for late work. The only excused absences will be for religious or medical reasons, provided the student presents a signed and dated note from Norris Health Center or some equivalent.

Calendar of Due Dates

The course calendar will be discussed as a separate handout and can be found on D2L. The calendar describes what we'll be working on in class on any given day and what work you should have completed to prepare for the day's discussion.

Grading System

Final grades will be determined according to the following rubric:

Essays 1-3 ... 20%
Class Participation ... 20%
D2L Participation ... 10%
Reading Quizzes ... 10%
2 Hour Final Exam ... 40%

- Essays 1 -3 ... 20%
 - These assignments will be graded for their thorough and thoughtful completion of the required objectives and timely submission of the work. In addition each essay will be graded holistically based on its argument, organization, development, clarity and correctness. Late essays will be down-graded one letter grade for each day that they are late (i.e. from a C to a D). They are due at the beginning of the class on the day specified by the instructor and/or the syllabus. They are to be printed or type-written in a suitable typeface, at a reasonable size on clean sheets of paper with one inch margins, and, if more than one page, stapled. Email is not acceptable as a means of submitting work. Students who have to miss class should submit work to the 'dropbox' on D2L before class on the day that it is due.
- Participation ... 30%
 - Students are expected to arrive on-time, to be prepared, and to engage in a focused discussion with their classmates about the readings and assignments. Regular and meaningful contributions to the discussion will constitute a significant part of a student's final grade. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous and professional manner at all times.
 - In addition participation grades will include a holistic evaluations interstitial writing assignments on D2L, per the rubrics posted for those assignments.

- Reading quizzes ... 10%
 - Reading quizzes will be distributed randomly 5 times throughout the semester. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and will cover basic comprehension for the day's assigned reading. No preparation should be necessary other than dutiful completion of the assigned homework.
- Final Exam ... 40%
 - A two hour final exam will be given from 12:30 - 2:30 pm on Friday, December 16, 2011, in AUP 189. The exam will be a combination of short answer and essay questions that test students' knowledge of course reading materials and concepts. Students should come prepared with ample blank paper and writing supplies.

Email and D2L

This class uses both email and the D2L online course system. If you have not already used these technologies, it is imperative that you become familiar with them as soon as possible. UWM provides all students, staff, and faculty with a Panthermail account that can be accessed with your ePanther ID and password at: <http://pantherlink.uwm.edu>. If you do not know your ePanther ID and password, please visit: <https://www-ssl.uwm.edu/uits/ePanther/pwhelp.html>.

- All course correspondence will be sent to your Panthermail account
- You should check your Panthermail regularly between class sessions
- If you choose, you may forward your Panthermail account to an outside email account of your choosing. To turn on mail forwarding and manage other features of your Panthermail account, visit <https://www-ssl.uwm.edu/IMT/ePanther/email>

Desire2Learn (D2L) is a UWM-hosted, on-line file sharing service. It can be a valuable resource for classes, instructors and students. This course will make regular use of the D2L online system. Frequently, students will be required to post responses to course materials and participate in threaded discussions. Anyone who is unfamiliar with D2L may refer to the handout provided on the first day and/or follow the help link below to learn more: <https://uwm.courses.wisconsin.edu/>.

Student Accessibility Center (SAC)

Students who work with an advisor at the SAC should bring their VISA statement to their instructor in the first week of class. Any student having questions or concerns about their unique learning abilities may visit the Center at UWM in 112 Mitchell Hall.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism has serious consequences for writers at every level of their academic career. Plagiarism can involve actual copying, having someone else write your papers, or even unintentionally borrowing without proper documentation. Any student caught plagiarizing

in this course will receive a failing grade and may be subject to further disciplinary action at the departmental or university level.

The UWM Writing Center

Students are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with The Writing Center. As a resource, UWM's Writing Center offers a wide range of reading and writing-related services free of charge. The highly trained staff maintains a close familiarity with the regulations and practices of the UWM English curriculum and offers a high degree of flexibility in scheduling one-on-one, peer-to-peer, confidential consultations for readers and writers at all levels of skill and experience in any stage of their writing process.

Locations: Curtin Hall Room 127, and Library East Wing

On-line: <http://www.writingcenter.uwm.edu>

Phone: 229-4339

Director: Margaret Mika, mmika@uwm.edu

Administrative Drop

Students who do not attend the first week of classes will be administratively dropped from the course.

Other University Policies:

For more information about the full range of UW-Milwaukee campus policies on-line, please visit: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>