

FALL 2007
MPW 940
LITERATURE AND APPROACHES TO WRITING THE NOVEL
CLASS 39234
Thursday 4:00-6:40 p.m. THH-109
3 Units

PROFESSOR: GERALD LOCKLIN

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OFFICE HOUR: At least one half-hour before class and as needed after class, in the classroom, in THH-355H, or outside, depending upon room availability.

PREREQUISITE: Admission to the MPW Program.

COURSE DESCRIPTION, GOALS, OUTCOMES: This course undertakes a discussion and analysis of literary classics and their influences as applicable to the writing of today's novel. Students analyze the development of book-length fiction. This course is required for all students with a fiction emphasis. It is strongly recommended to fiction students to take this course in their first semester. Lectures, discussions, written assignments. Class participation, spoken or written, should be articulate, specific, and offered in a spirit of civility, collegiality, and accomplishment of the course goals.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY: The instructor will grant any request for withdrawal from the class that is allowed by university regulations. Please consult the University Catalogue, the Schedule of Classes, and the MPW Student Handbook for applicable policies and deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from any class that the student is not attending.

GRADING: There will be six graded written assignments. These will be discussed in detail in class. The instructor abides by university standards for grading in graduate classes, reserving, for instance, the grade of "A" for the outstanding work. The instructor does not, however, have any predetermined "curve" or quota for the distribution of grades. The grade will be based upon the instructor's evaluation of the quality of the written work and the quality of the student's participation in class. The former is the more important; the latter is most apt to come into play when the written work is on the cusp between grade levels. It is, thus, essential that students be in regular attendance, punctual, neither disruptive nor distracting, and willing to participate generously when given the opportunity to do so. All assignments will be expected to be handed in on time in the classroom when called for. Occasional absences or tardiness for good reasons may

be excused at the discretion of the instructor, as may be late assignments. Necessary changes to assignments or to anything in this syllabus will be announced in class. It is the responsibility of the student to be in class and attentive in order to be aware of any such changes, or, if absent or inattentive, to obtain such information from classmates. The instructor utilizes minimal technology in conducting the class. Thus, students should write down everything that it is important for them to remember.

ACCOMMODATION OF DISABILITIES: Any student requesting accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that original work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by the instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCAMPUS*, the STUDENT GUIDEBOOK, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPU/gov>

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The review process can be found at:

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Virginia Woolf: *To the Lighthouse*

William Faulkner: *The Sound and the Fury*

James Joyce: *The Portable James Joyce* (selections to be assigned)

Gertrude Stein: *Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein* (selections to be assigned)

Ernest Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises*

Janni Visman: *Yellow*

Much criticism is available on the first five of these authors and books. Some reviews of the more recent Visman's book may be found online.

A few suggested books that might prove helpful this semester or in the future, but are by no means required are:

Patricia Waugh: *Metafiction*

Steven Connor: *Postmodernist Culture*

Harman and Holman: *Handbook to Literature*

Strunk and White: *Elements of Style*
Richard Ellmann: *James Joyce*
Stuart Gilbert: *James Joyce's Ulysses*
William York Tindall: *A Reader's Guide to Finnegans Wake*
Joseph Campbell: *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake*
E.M. Forster: *Aspects of the Novel*
Percy Lubbock: *The Craft of Fiction*
Henry James: *The Art of the Novel*
Virginia Woolf: *The Common Reader*
Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*, *The Secret Sharer*, and *The Preface to The Nigger of the Narcissus*
Ernest Hemingway: *A Moveable Feast* and *Death in the Afternoon*
Tom Stoppard: *Arcadia*, *The Invention of Love*, and *The Coast of Utopia Trilogy*

Volumes of Letters by any of the authors we study may also prove of interest, edification, and inspiration.

SEMINAR MEETINGS:

August 30: Lecture on Modernism

First Assignment: Read *To the Lighthouse*. Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading, will be due in class on September 13.

September 6: Lecture on *To the Lighthouse*.

September 13: First assignment is due. Lecture of William Faulkner.

Second Assignment: Read *The Sound and the Fury*. Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading of *The Sound and the Fury*, will be due in class on September 27.

September 20: Lecture on *The Sound and the Fury*.

September 27: Second Assignment is due. Lecture on James Joyce.

Third Assignment: Read the short stories "Araby" and "The Dead" from *Dubliners*. Read approximately the first hundred pages of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Sample the selections from *Ulysses*. Read the first and last pages of the "Anna Livia Plurabelle" section of *Finnegans Wake*. Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading of the selections from James Joyce, will be due in class on October 11.

October 4: Continue Lecture on James Joyce.

October 11: Third Assignment is due. Lecture on Ernest Hemingway.

Fourth Assignment: Read *The Sun Also Rises*. Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading of *The Sun Also Rises*, will be due in class on October 25.

October 18: Guest Lecturer. Instructor will be participating in the Annual Conference of the Western Literature Association, held this year in Tacoma, Washington.

October 25: Fourth Assignment is due. Continue Lecture on Ernest Hemingway.

Fifth Assignment: Read Gertrude Stein's novella *Melanctha*. Read thirty pages of her novel, *The Making of Americans*. Sample the prose poems in *Tender Buttons*. Sample her libretto for the opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* (which is available on CD). Sample her "Portraits" of Picasso and others. Sample her essay "Composition as Explanation." Read for pleasure sometime in your life her memoirs, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, "The Winner Loses," and "The Coming of the Americans." Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading of Gertrude Stein, will be due in class on November 15. (Notice that you have been given three weeks in which to read the selections from Gertrude Stein and write your fiction assignment.)

November 1: Lecture on Gertrude Stein

November 8: Lecture on Gertrude Stein.

November 15: Fifth Assignment is due. Lecture on Postmodernism.

Sixth Assignment: Read Janni Visman's *Yellow*. Piece of fiction, minimum of five pages, demonstrating at least one technique derived from the reading of *Yellow*, will be due in class on November 29.

November 22: Thanksgiving Holiday. No class.

November 29: Discuss *Yellow*.

December 6: Last Day of Classes. Sixth Assignment is due. Last day on which late assignments, if allowed by the instructor, may be handed in. Student evaluations of instructor will be conducted. Final lecture/discussion of semester's reading and writing.

Final Remarks: The instructor reserves the right to exercise that reasonable degree of flexibility regarding assignments, assessments, and other aspects of this syllabus that he has found useful to and sometimes necessary for the educational experience. Changes to the syllabus will be announced in class. He also assumes a degree of sophistication on the part of graduate students in regards to the openness of subjects, techniques, and language in contemporary writing, though this is not to be construed as an encouragement to test the bounds of libel or obscenity. He prefers a minimal level of technology in teaching, e.g. the human

voice, the human eardrum, the pen and paper, and so forth, although written assignments should be typed in standard manuscript form. No classroom lectures or discussions should be recorded by any means, nor should cell phones be turned on while in class, except by permission of the instructor. Students should not have laptop computers open in class. If he had his way, little technology would exist that did not exist at the time of that eminent pedagogue, Socrates . . . except, perhaps, movies and Lakers' broadcasts and *Sopranos*' re-runs. Because he believes that we should learn as much as possible in classes, not as little as necessary, and that there are corridors connecting the many chambers of the house of learning, he does not hesitate to digress on occasion at his own discretion onto art, music, drama, grammar, the seemingly trivial, or anything else that he feels may be of use to the education of the student. Please trust that there is method to his madness—should he, for instance, be compelled to break into song or dance. He enjoys teaching very much—the students, the literature, the classroom environment itself—which is why he is still teaching. He looks forward very much to this semester, this course, and the pleasure of your company. This will be his 43rd year of university teaching and writing, much of it in the M.A. Program in Literature and the M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing at California State University, Long Beach, where he started in Fall, 1965, after a previous year at CSU—Los Angeles. This is his second year as a part-time lecturer in the MPW Program at USC. He considers himself blessed to have been able to earn his living and support his family doing something that he, and many others, would have paid for the honor of doing.