




english

reading fiction
spring 2010, section b
mtwth 9:30-10:20

242

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m & th 
10:30-11:30

modernism now: digital platforms for studying fiction

Course site: <http://www.jenterysayers.com/platforms/>
Classroom: HGT DS005

WELCOME TO ENGLISH 242, READING PROSE FICTION!

COURSE THEME: “MODERNISM NOW: DIGITAL PLATFORMS FOR STUDYING FICTION”

This course is a survey of modernist fiction, with a twist. The content consists primarily of novels published between 1907 and 1953, by authors such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, James Baldwin, John dos Passos, Joseph Conrad, and Aldous Huxley. While reading these texts, we will focus less on giving literary modernism a single definition and more on the divergent ways it can be articulated through aesthetics, history, culture, and place. Since modernism is such a broad topic, we will narrow our attention to three lines of modernist inquiry: an obsession with what’s **new**, depictions of the **city** and urbanization, and the rise of certain **media and technologies** in the first half of the 20th century. That said, film, audio recordings, advertisements, and some poetry will supplement modernist novels throughout the quarter.

With a twist. And that twist is this: “Modernism Now” is also an opportunity for you to gain hands-on **competencies in using digital tools and web-based platforms** for humanities inquiry, specifically the study of modernist fiction. During one class meeting per week, we will investigate how to produce sustainable digital scholarship through new media and their intersections with several stages of the writing process, including conducting research, gathering evidence, and composing arguments. By the quarter’s end, you will gain knowledge in how to use the following for academic purposes: Twitter, the WordPress blogging platform, the Zotero research tool, Flickr’s Library of Congress photostream, the Modernist Journals Project, JSTOR’s Data for Research visualizations, UbuWeb, and Google Maps. No previous experience with any of these platforms, tools, or archives is required.

Since English 242 is a “W” course, you will be asked to iteratively develop and revise a web-based, ten- to fifteen-page research paper on a topic of your choice (within the domain of modernist fiction). By “iteratively develop,” I imply that you will gradually compose **your paper as a project** over the entirety of the quarter, instead of writing a bulk of it at the end. I will ask you to incorporate an annotated bibliography, an abstract, and plenty of collaboration and conversation into that process.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE QUARTER

From my vantage as an instructor of English and someone who is invested in studying new media and modernism, here are a few questions we’re likely to unpack throughout the quarter:

- In the early 21st century, how is literary modernism relevant to people’s **everyday lives**?
- How do you conduct a **history of perception**? In other words, if you cannot hear, read, or watch in the same way someone did back then, then how do you account for perceptual change over time (e.g., the ever-changing perceptions of what is and is not “new”)?
- What are some of the **various ways that modernism can be approached**, and why do the differences and similarities across these approaches matter?

- Instead of treating media—like film, the book, the blog, photographs, and audio recordings—as distinct objects, what might the **cultural intersections across media** tell us about history, writing, and technologies?
- Today, what is the **purpose of the novel**? What does the novel do?
- What do new media and online resources have to offer studies of the past and the novel? And vice versa? Or, more broadly, how does **digital scholarship reconfigure literature and history**?

I'm quite sure more questions will unravel as the quarter progresses, but those are my curiosities for now. Take them or leave them.

COURSE MATERIALS

First, the required texts available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

James **Baldwin**, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* [978-0385334570]
Joseph **Conrad**, *The Secret Agent* [978-0141441580]
Aldous **Huxley**, *Brave New World* [978-0060850524]
Virginia **Woolf**, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Annotated) [978-0156030359]

And the following is recommended:

James **Joyce**, *Ulysses* [978-0679722762] (we will read one or two chapters)

The balance of possible course material, which will ultimately be determined on a week-by-week or even a class-by-class basis—depending upon our conversations, your interests, and the trajectories of course—will become available on the course site at: <http://www.jenterysayers.com/platforms/>. These texts will be digitized, or they will already be digital, and uploaded for you to access online.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the quarter, you will be expected to produce an academic **essay** that:

- Is **web-based**,
- **Ten to fifteen pages** in length,
- Includes at least **two media** (e.g., film, audio, images, and text),
- Uses at least **eight reliable sources** for evidence,
- Is based in a persuasive claim and develops a **complex argument**, and
- Is preceded by an **abstract**.

Throughout the quarter, you will be expected to:

- **Chronicle** the development of your essay, including the changes you make to it, on a course blog and through other web-based media,
- **Share** your work with your peers and offer constructive feedback on their work,
- Actively **engage** in conversations and workshops during class meetings,
- **Develop competencies** in how to use new media in and for humanities research,
- Gather a strong sense of how to **critically interpret** and historicize modernist texts, and
- Explain how literary modernism is **relevant today**.

THE PAPER AS A PROJECT

When I say, “compose your paper as a project,” I mean you will pursue a quarter-long inquiry into a particular topic, using a certain method, through a piecemeal approach, in a space shared with your peers. This approach allows for feedback, revision, and consistent **attention to process**.

Here are some of the components of this process:

- **Cluster:** Early in the quarter, you will form small clusters (of five people) around a similar interest. Throughout the entire quarter, you will share materials with your cluster and offer feedback on each other’s work.
- **Collect:** Rather than having me provide you with the materials for your research, you will collectively aggregate those materials within and across your clusters. Those materials will be shared on the class blog, as well as through Twitter and Zotero.
- **Change:** People change, and so do projects. For this class, you’ll be asked to treat your paper as a process, rather than an end-product. In so doing, you’ll chronicle those changes.

Here are the components of your project:

- **Change Log:** You will submit at least six “change logs,” or blog entries where you will write about what you are reading and how that reading applies to your project, your take on modernism, and your own educational interests.
- **Keyword:** Early in the class, you will be asked to select a “keyword” that you want to use as a framing mechanism for your reading, writing, and research throughout the quarter. You will be asked to explain why you are selecting that particular keyword.
- **Example:** Here, you will be asked to “mobilize” your keyword by using it as a lens for closely reading and writing about a specific modernist text that interests you.
- **Question:** After you’ve written through one example, you’ll pan out and ask a broader research question about modernism. Your final paper will ultimately respond to this research question.
- **Annotated Bibliography:** In the middle of the quarter, you’ll compile a list of ten texts, with notes, aggregated around your keyword. The texts will vary in medium (e.g., film, image, poem, novel, or audio) and source (e.g., scholarly database, popular site, or university archives).
- **Claim:** Before you write your entire paper, you’ll be asked to articulate your argument in approximately fifty words.
- **Instances:** With your claim in hand, you will write four “instances,” or four paragraphs that articulate possible trajectories for your paper. The point here is to demonstrate how your keyword and texts could be read in different ways, through different approaches. These instances may or may not become part of your final paper.
- **Abstract:** To accompany your paper, you’ll write a humanities abstract, which will concisely explain your paper’s topic and its target audiences, stakes, and future.
- **Draft:** During the week before exams, you’ll circulate a draft of your paper for feedback.
- **Final Paper:** Your final paper will be web-based and somewhere between ten and fifteen pages in length.

THE SYLLABUS

Week	Nerding	Geeking	Making
1 (29 th -1 st)	<i>The Secret Agent</i>	WordPress	Clusters
2 (5 th -8 th)	<i>The Secret Agent</i>	Twitter/Zotero	Change Log#1
3 (12 th -15 th)	Modernist Poetry	Flickr	CL#2/Keyword
4 (19 th -22 nd)	<i>Ulysses</i>	UbuWeb/PennSound	CL#3/Example
5 (26 th -29 th)	<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	Wordle	CL#4/Question
6 (3 rd -6 th)	Choose Your Own	JSTOR/Modernist Journals	Annotated Bib
7 (10 th -13 th)	<i>U.S.A. / Brave New World</i>	YouTube	Claim
8 (17 th -20 th)	<i>Brave New World</i>	Step Away from the Screen	CL#5/Instances
9 (24 th -27 th)	<i>Go Tell It</i>	Web-Texting	CL#6/Abstract
10 (1 st -3 rd)	Review	Review	Draft
11 (7 th -10 th)	No Class	No Class	Final Paper

EVALUATION

Your final grade (on a 4.0 scale) will be determined using the following percentages and criteria:

>>> IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION (30% OF YOUR GRADE)

Participation in English 242 is about a network of ideas—sharing your thoughts and talking with, supporting, and listening to others. Class time will often be spent in large group conversations and workshops. I think that collaborative learning and collaborative teaching add interest, excitement, and investment to the classroom experience. Each helps you brainstorm for your projects, unpack concepts, learn from others, and develop proficiency in how to constructively critique other people’s work. That said, all of these aspects of in-class participation will be included in your participation grade.

>>> FINAL PAPER (30% OF YOUR GRADE)

Your final paper will be assessed as the final step of your project. It should meet the learning outcomes stated on page two.

>>> PROJECT DEVELOPMENT (30% OF YOUR GRADE)

You will be asked to contribute to the blog at least once each week, always in response to a particular prompt or to a peer’s entry. Evaluation of your blog entries will include: timeliness, thoughtfulness of questions posed, relevance of the entry to the course material, persuasiveness and complexity of the inquiry, and constructiveness of commentary on peers' posts.

>>> CO-FACILITATIONS (10% OF YOUR GRADE)

Twice during the quarter, you will be asked to co-facilitate the class with me and a peer (or two). During those co-facilitations, you will be responsible for actively participating in class conversations and relating those conversations to your project. Each time you co-facilitate, you will also be asked to briefly (in about a minute) address the class at the beginning of our meeting.

COURSE POLICIES

>>> PARTICIPATION

Since conversations are essential to the quality of this class, I expect that we shall work together to create an atmosphere of respect. College level discourse does not shy away from sensitive issues, including questions of race, gender, class, sexuality, politics, and religion, and neither will we. There are going to be differences in opinions, beliefs, and interpretations when we question texts and cultural issues. You need not agree with the arguments in what we read or with what others have to say—in fact, it is important to think critically and question texts. Still, you must do so intelligently and with respect. Respect for difference is instrumental to creating a classroom in which a variety of ideas can be exchanged and points of view can be explored.

What is crucial to English 242 is that you are enjoying and are comfortable in the course. If, for whatever reason, you are not, then please visit me during my office hours or by appointment. I understand that some people are more comfortable speaking in front of the class than others. That said, participation in office hours will also improve your participation grade.

If you are not comfortable bringing your concerns directly to me or are not satisfied with my response to your inquiries, then I encourage you to contact Professor Gillian Harkins, Director of Undergraduate Programs, at gharkins@uw.edu.

>>> PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing—as long as you cite them. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be immediately reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review.

Many students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism. It includes:

- A student failing to cite the source of an idea,
- A student failing to cite sources of paraphrased material,
- A student failing to cite sources of specific language and/or passages, and
- A student submitting someone else's work as her or his own.

If you have doubts about whether to cite or acknowledge another person's writing, just let me know. Better safe than sorry. And think about it—Google, databases galore, and the fact that I was a student, too, make it really, really easy for me to spot plagiarized work. So don't do it. For more information, you might also refer to UW's Student Conduct Code.

>>> ATTENDANCE

While I do not take attendance, attending English 242 will greatly enhance your chances of submitting a persuasive final project, learning about the material, collaborating with others, and sharing your ideas.

>>> DROPS

You can withdraw from courses during the first two weeks without an entry being made on the transcript. After that time, fees ensue. See the University's withdrawal policy for more information and dates.

I will update and revise these policies if the quarter so requires.

HELP WITH 242

>>> OFFICE HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

My office is located in Communications 218D, and my spring 2010 office hours are:

- **Monday and Thursday, 10:30-11:30**

If my office hours are not amenable to your schedule, then please don't hesitate to ask for an appointment. I'm around. I may ask you to meet with me when I think a conference would be useful. I am happy to meet with you whenever you have questions, concerns, or suggestions.

>>> E-MAIL AND CLASS LISTSERV

You can e-mail me at jentery@uw.edu. I will generally respond to e-mail within twenty-four hours, unless I am out-of-town for a conference or the like.

The course listserv is: engl242b_sp10@uw.edu. When you send an e-mail to it, all of English 242B will receive your message. Remember: if I send a message via the listserv (which I will do about twice per week), reply to me (jentery@uw.edu) and not the listserv, unless you want everyone on the list to read your e-mail.

>>> THE DSO

Please let me know if you need accommodation of any sort. I can work with the UW Disability Service Office (DSO) to provide what you require. I am very willing to take suggestions specific to this class to meet your needs. The course syllabus and policies are available in large print, as are other class materials.

CONTACT ME

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Thanks! And please let me know what questions or concerns you have! In the meantime, I'm looking forward to this quarter!