

Fall/Winter 2018-2019

AP/EN 2270 6.0A (Y)

Modernisms

Course Director:

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Delivery Format:

Seminar

Time:

Tuesday 11:30-2:30pm

Description:

What on earth happened to poetry between 1890 and 1940? And to prose fiction? What did it mean for writers to “dislocate” meaning, language, and form, as T. S. Eliot insisted that the modern writer must do? How and why is the city so prominent in texts of the period? Why are literary modernisms unthinkable without also considering Einstein, the typewriter, the cocktail, gas masks, and Freud? These are just some of the questions that this course sets out to answer. EN 2270 provides a selective survey of poetry and fiction by some of the most innovative writers—British, Anglo-Irish, and American—in the first half of the twentieth century. To complicate the meaning of “Modernism,” and identify the various and sometimes contradictory ways in which writers tried to “make it new,” we assess a wide variety of texts, and examine some of the cultural factors (gender, race, class, nationality) and historical experiences (World War I, especially) which conditioned the works and their initial reception. Attention is also paid to the cultural contexts of literary modernism: from Impressionism to Cubism to Futurism, Stravinsky to jazz and “the Shakespeherian rag,” the sights and sounds of “the new” are juxtaposed with the literary texts. The course will meet three hours per week: an 80-minute lecture and an 80-minute tutorial. Developing students’ verbal and writing skills is a particular focus of the course; essay-writing skills are enhanced by in-class peer editing sessions.

Category:

C

Historical Requirement:

N/A

Requirements:

WRITTEN WORK. Fall term: Essay #1, close reading exercise, 600 words (10% of final grade); Essay #2, 1500 words (20%). Winter term: Essay #3, 2000 words (20%).
TESTS. Mid-year test, late November (15%); final exam, April 2019 (25%).
CLASS PARTICIPATION. 10%.

Reading List:

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (Oxford World's Classics); William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (Vintage/ Random); F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Broadview); Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* (Vintage); Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time* (Collier/ Macmillan); H.D., *Selected Poems* (New Directions); Langston Hughes, *Selected Poems* (Vintage/ Random); James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Penguin); Nella Larsen, *Passing* (Rutgers UP); Ramazani, Ellmann, and O'Clair, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry, vol. 1* ; Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (Vintage/ Random); William Carlos Williams, *Selected Poems* (New Directions); Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford World's Classics).

Open To:

YR 2,3