

Fall/Winter 2019-2020

AP/EN 4585 3.0M (W) *Modernist Fiction: British, Irish, and American*

Course Director:

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Seminar time and place: Fridays, 11:30-2:30pm, R S101
Office Hours: Fridays, 2:30-3:30pm (or by appointment)
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Delivery Format:

Seminar

Time:

Fridays 11:30am-2:30pm

Description:

This course examines the fiction (both short stories and novels) of writers from Britain, Ireland, and America during the modernist period (circa 1890 to 1945). The apex of nineteenth-century fiction is often understood as coinciding with Realism in pioneering novels such as George Eliot's *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (1871). Her innovations rely, in part, on the exceptional rendering of details from "life" (both imagined and historical), but the book's centralizing, omniscient narrator also has much to do with building a readerly consensus about what constitutes the "real," as the historian Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth would argue. Fast forward fifty years to Virginia Woolf's experimental novel, *The Waves* (1931). Her text refuses any one narrative perspective (it is elaborated from six different points of view) and only allows the reader access to the outer world (traditionally couched as setting) through these myriad minds, dislodging, in the process, the very foundation of character in the novel. What happened? This course probes various answers to this question by examining the fluctuating techniques and devices of narrative; issues concerning temporality and space; historical, social, and cultural context; implications in terms of nationality, class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality; as well as how other arts inform literature during this time period.

Course Learning Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to assist students in developing a critically engaged understanding of modernist fiction by reading a range of authors and learning about the time period.

Learning outcomes:

- 1) Gain depth of insight into important writers from the early twentieth century
- 2) Gain knowledge about the period's historical, social, and cultural context
- 3) Develop and/or enhance an ability to engage in seminar discussion and debate
- 4) Be able to synthesize an argument about authors' works into a coherent, well-developed and persuasive essay

Category:

C

Historical Requirement:

N/A

Requirements:

Position paper (1000 words) - 15%
Final Research Essay (2500-3000 words) - 35%
One Seminar Presentation - 20%
Final Exam - 20% (during the exam period)
Class Participation - 10%

Reading List:

Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time*
Langston Hughes, *The Ways of White Folks*
James Joyce, *Dubliners*
Nella Larsen, *Passing*
Oscar Wilde, *Dorian Gray*
Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room*
Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*

Open To:

Honours Yr 3, 4