

World Literature II
COLI 111 Spring 2008
T, Th 8:30-9:55, SW307

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(When emailing, please put "coli111" in subject line)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Comparative Literature 111 is designed as a general introduction to world literature from 1600 to the present. Our course, however, will focus primarily on English and German literature of that period and will be organized both chronologically and by genre. As such, the course will be divided into three major parts, beginning with, first of all, two plays by the most significant literary figures in the English and German traditions: Shakespeare and Goethe, respectively. Second, we will explore the transition, in English and German lyric poetry, from the nineteenth century into twentieth-century modernism. Finally, we will read two experimental works of fiction from the middle of the twentieth century. Along the way we will encounter other genres and border-forms such as the fairy tale, the short story and the song.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading Structure

Participation: 10%
Commentaries: 25%
Presentation: 15%
Essay 1: 25%
Essay 2: 25%

Attendance

In order to get the most out of this course you should, ideally, attend every class session. Nonetheless, you are allowed three absences before your grade is directly affected. Every absence after the third will lower your mark by half a grade (from B to B-, for example, or from C- to D).

Participation

This course is not designed as a lecture only. It is also a discussion course and will function best when students participate. Naturally, it is not possible to provide an exact rubric for how you will be graded on your participation. If, however, you only

contribute two or three times throughout the semester, you are unlikely to receive full credit in this category.

Commentaries

During the course of the semester you will write 10 commentaries. These are in-class responses to the day's reading assignment which will be completed in the first 15 minutes of class and are normally one or two pages in length. Commentaries are both a way to ensure that everyone is keeping up with the reading and a way to get you thinking about the text before we begin our discussion. To receive full credit, you must respond directly to the prompt and demonstrate that you have read the text carefully and attentively. Commentaries are graded on a credit/no-credit basis. They are either acceptable or not. Remember that even a thoughtful, well-written commentary will be considered unacceptable if it does not demonstrate that you have read the assigned text.

If you are absent on the day of a commentary, or if one of your commentaries is unacceptable and you would like make it up, you may write a 750-word reading journal in its place. Please come speak with me after class or during my office hours if you would like to pursue this option.

Presentations

Everyone will be required to give, alone or in pairs, one 10-minute presentation on a topic (and on a date) to be determined early in the semester. I will provide a list of topics, though you will have some freedom to create your own topic if you choose. Keep in mind that the purpose of these presentations is not to bore the class to tears or overwhelm them with information, but rather to contribute, in an interesting and engaging way, to our knowledge and understanding of an author, genre, idea or issue relating to the course as a whole.

The Essays

You will write two 3- to 5-page essays for this course. The prompts for these essays will be handed out at least two or three weeks before they are due. These essays should be well-organized; they should be free of grammar, spelling and usage errors; and they should contain page-number citations for all quotes. You will have the opportunity to revise/rewrite each paper one time for an improved grade. The specific requirements for each paper will be described in greater detail when I hand out the assignments.

III. REQUIRED TEXTS

Margaret Ferguson, et al. (eds.), *The Norton Anthology of Poetry (Shorter Edition)*

Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust (Part One)*

Jack Kerouac, *Dharma Bums*

William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

Miscellaneous poetry and prose (handed out in class or on reserve in the library)

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I: Drama

WEEK 1

Jan. 29: Introduction

Jan. 31: *As You Like It*, Act I

WEEK 2

Feb. 5: *As You Like It*, Acts II-III

COMMENTARY #1

Feb. 7: *As You Like It*, Act IV

WEEK 3

Feb. 12: Finish *As You Like It*

COMMENTARY #2

Feb. 14: *Faust*, pages 65-149

WEEK 4

Feb. 19: *Faust*, pages 149-257

COMMENTARY #3

Feb. 21: *Faust*, pages 257-335

WEEK 5

Feb. 26: Finish *Faust*, Part One (pages 335-421)

Feb. 28: Fairy Tales

COMMENTARY #4

Part II: Lyric Poetry

WEEK 6

Mar. 4: William Blake and William Wordsworth

Mar. 6: John Keats

ESSAY 1 DUE

WEEK 7

Mar. 11: Heinrich Heine

Mar. 13: Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson

COMMENTARY #5

WEEK 8

Mar. 18: Gerard Manley Hopkins and Edward Lear

Mar. 20: William Butler Yeats and A. E. Housman

ESSAY 1 REVISION DUE

WEEK 9: *MARCH 21-30: SPRING RECESS*

WEEK 10

Apr. 1: Rainer Maria Rilke

Apr. 3: T. S. Eliot

COMMENTARY #6

WEEK 11

Apr. 8: Georg Trakl

Apr. 10: Wallace Stevens

COMMENTARY #7

Part III: Fiction

WEEK 12

Apr. 15: *Homo Faber*, pages 3-57

Apr. 17: *Homo Faber*, pages 57-101

COMMENTARY #8

WEEK 13

Apr. 22: *Homo Faber*, pages 101-166

Apr. 24: Finish *Homo Faber*

COMMENTARY #9

WEEK 14

Apr. 29: *Dharma Bums*, TBA

ESSAY 2 DUE

May 1: *Dharma Bums*, TBA

WEEK 15

May 6: *Dharma Bums*, TBA

May 8: TBA

COMMENTARY #10

FINAL: TBA

ESSAY 2 REVISION DUE

***Note: This course fulfills the “C” (composition) or “W” (writing) GE requirement.**

**** Note: Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated in this or any course at Binghamton University. The consequences of plagiarism range from failure of an assignment to expulsion from the university. If you have any questions, please consult me or the university’s official policies on plagiarism and academic honesty.**