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Office Hours: MW 7:00-7:50, MW 9:00-9:50, and by appointment

English 379N: Interwar US Literature (W)
MWF 10:00-10:50 P.M.
MEZ 1.104
Spring 2010

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course takes as its purview novels published by US writers in the 1920s and 1930s. The vexed and vibrant interwar period includes the Jazz Age and the Great Depression as well as the publication of major works by Nobel Prize-winning authors Pearl Buck, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Eugene O'Neill, Sinclair Lewis, and John Steinbeck. This period was also the golden age of detective fiction. The required readings offer a geographically diverse range of works: Faulkner's Mississippi; Hemingway's France and Spain; Hurston's Florida; Larsen's Chicago, New York, and Denmark; Downing's Mexico; McNickle's Montana; Niggli's Mexico; West's Los Angeles; and Wright's Chicago. We will place these works in their regional, national, and historical contexts, consider their stylistic innovations, and attend particularly to questions of class and race. Visits to the Harry Ransom Center, which has substantial collections from this period, will also be a part of the course.

TEXTS:
Hemingway, Ernest. *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)
Larsen, Nella. *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929)
Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying* (1930)
Downing, Todd. *Murder on the Tropic* (1935)
McNickle, D'Arcy. *The Surrounded* (1936)
Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)
West, Nathanael. *The Day of the Locust* (1939)
Wright, Richard. *Native Son* (1940)
Niggli, Josefina. *Mexican Village* (1945)

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:
ATTENDANCE: You should plan to attend every class. Excessive absences (more than 5) will lower your final grade one full letter. Please do not be late to class, as being late is disruptive and disrespectful to your classmates, and please do not bring laptop computers to class.

PRESENTATION: I will ask each one of you to facilitate class discussion one day during the semester. For this assignment, please plan to speak for 5-10 minutes solely about the reading assignment for that day. There are several possible formats for your presentation, but your main goal should be to share your thoughts and questions about the reading.

TWO-PAGE ESSAYS: Four (4) two-page, double-spaced analyses of four (4) different reading assignments of your choice. The short essays should be explorations of very specific questions, concerns, insights, observations, etc., that you have about the readings. Your discussion might focus on aesthetic (formal), historical, and/or cultural (gender, religious, political) concerns, for example. You are welcome to ask me for suggestions about what ideas to explore in these essays, though I strongly encourage you to make these decisions on your own. These short essays can be developed into one of the longer essays. PLEASE SEE SHORT ESSAY DUE DATES IN THE DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE BELOW.

FOUR-PAGE ESSAYS: Two (2) four-page, double-spaced analyses of a specific issue (literary, cultural, historical, political, etc.) or problem in one of the works we are reading. These papers should include an introduction with a clear, specific thesis and a general outline of your argument and its main points. In addition, the writing should be clearly focused, well-organized, well-polished, and demonstrate careful reading of the text/s that you discuss. Please use one-inch margins and twelve-point type, preferably Times New Roman, and correct MLA format. PLEASE SEE THE LONGER ESSAY DUE DATES IN THE DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE BELOW.

EIGHT-PAGE ESSAY OPTION: You have the option of writing one eight-page essay rather than two four-page essays. The requirements other than the page length are the same. If you choose this option, your essay is due on either one of the four-page essay due dates.

For those of you who are concerned about your writing, determined to earn a high grade in the class, and/or interested in working on your writing skills, I will read rough drafts of your papers. In addition, I have graded papers in my office from other classes that you can read in order to get some sense of how I grade.

***GRADES:** Your overall grade will be calculated in the following way:
Four 2-page essays – 40% total
Two 4-page essays OR one 8-page essay – 40% total
Attendance, class participation (quality and quantity), presentation – 20% total

*Plus/minus grades will not be assigned.

Daily Class Schedule (minor changes might be made throughout the semester)
Week 1 (January 18 - January 22)
M Jan. 18 **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY -- NO CLASS**
W Jan. 20 Introduction to the class
F Jan. 22 Introduction to the class continued

Week 2 (January 25 - January 29)
M Jan. 25 *The Sun Also Rises*
W Jan. 27 *The Sun Also Rises*
F Jan. 29 *The Sun Also Rises*

Week 3 (February 1 - February 5)
M Feb. 1 *The Sun Also Rises*
W Feb. 3 *Quicksand*
F Feb. 5 *Quicksand*

Week 4 (February 8 - February 12)
M Feb. 8 *Passing*
W Feb. 10 *Passing*
F Feb. 12 *Passing*
TWO-PAGE ESSAY #1 DUE

Week 5 (February 15 - February 19)
M Feb. 15 *As I Lay Dying*
W Feb. 17 *As I Lay Dying*
F Feb. 19 *As I Lay Dying*

Week 6 (February 22 - February 26)
M Feb. 22 *As I Lay Dying*
W Feb. 24 *As I Lay Dying*
F Feb. 26 *As I Lay Dying*
TWO-PAGE ESSAY #2 DUE

Week 7 (March 1 - March 5)
M Mar. 1 *The Surrounded*
W Mar. 3 *The Surrounded*
F Mar. 5 *The Surrounded*

Week 8 (March 8 - March 12)
M Mar. 8 *Murder on the Tropic*
W Mar. 10 *Murder on the Tropic*
F Mar. 12 *Murder on the Tropic*
FIRST FOUR-PAGE ESSAY DUE

Week 9 (March 15 - March 19) -- **SPRING VACATION**

Week 10 (March 22 – March 26)
M Mar. 23 *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
W Mar. 25 *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
F Mar. 27 *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Week 11 (March 29 – April 2)
M Mar. 29 *The Day of the Locust*
W Mar. 31 *The Day of the Locust*
F Apr. 2 *The Day of the Locust*
TWO-PAGE ESSAY #3 DUE

Week 12 (April 5 - April 9)
M Apr. 5 *Native Son*
W Apr. 7 *Native Son*
F Apr. 9 *Native Son*

Week 13 (April 12 - April 16)
M Apr. 12 *Native Son*
W Apr. 14 *Native Son*
F Apr. 16 *Native Son*
TWO-PAGE ESSAY #4 DUE

Week 14 (April 19 - April 23)
M Apr. 19 *Mexican Village*
W Apr. 21 *Mexican Village*
F Apr. 23 *Mexican Village*

Week 15 (April 26 - April 30)
M Apr. 26 *Mexican Village*
W Apr. 28 *Mexican Village*
F Apr. 30 *Mexican Village*

Week 16 (May 3 - May 7)
M May 3 Course exit questions and evaluations
W May 5 Final essay questions and concerns
F May 7 **FINAL DAY OF CLASS**
SECOND FOUR-PAGE ESSAY DUE

NO FINAL EXAM

COMPLIANCE WITH AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, your professor will cooperate with the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement's Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to make reasonable accommodations for students. If you have a disability, please register with SSD as soon as possible. If you already have university authorization for extra time to take tests or for a private place to take them, for example, please be sure to let your professor know as soon as possible. If any of you have suspected in the past that you might need extra time or a more private atmosphere in which to take a test, or otherwise need accommodations to complete the requirements for this course, now is the time to go to the **Office of Services for Students With Disabilities**. It is in the Student Services Building in room 4.104. The phone number is 471-6259.