

English 3353: Modern American Fiction
Spring 2013
Dr. Patricia Lee Yongue
Office: 221C Phone: 713-743-2944 Email: plyongue@uh.edu

Preliminary Course Description

Fiction in this time frame (1900-1940) is responsive to modernism, an early twentieth century artistic movement in western culture currently receiving a great deal of scholarly attention. We will pay attention ourselves to modernist practices and perspectives, but we will also consider the socio-cultural/historical backgrounds of American fiction, including popular fiction, and the origins and construction of heroism. We will consider such intellectual movements as literary naturalism and existentialism, which overlap modernism. My theoretical emphasis tends toward studying texts as both constructing representations of and representing culture and gender. I always emphasize the craft of fiction.

This is an advanced English course that satisfies three hours of credit in the English major and minor. Students enrolling in this course must have completed the university Core Communication requirement. **Competency in written English and composition at the advanced level is expected in all written assignments, including exam responses and essays.** Students should also have some background in the analysis of literature, including the function of figurative language. The course is not an introduction to fiction.

NOTE: ENGL 3353 **does not** satisfy the university Core requirement satisfied by ENGL 3351.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students participating responsibly will gain knowledge about and insight into the modernist era of American fiction.
2. Students participating responsibly will increase their ability to analyze literature critically and will be introduced to applications of gender and cultural criticism as well as to close text reading.
3. Students participating responsibly will gain experience in critical thinking and writing critically (from an informed position) and in skills and behaviors necessary for good citizenship and for professional maturity and productiveness.

Texts (Tentative List)

Crane, *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets*
Cather, *A Lost Lady*
Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*
Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*
Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Assignments

Students will be responsible for informed, engaging class discussion and for writing assignments as yet to be determined.

There will be a midterm (date and format to be announced) and a comprehensive final examination (format to be announced) on the date and at the time scheduled by the university. Quizzes are likely to occur if reading on time does not.

Attendance

I do have an attendance policy and will drop students for excessive absences. Generally, I allow three absences a semester before penalties (instructor drop or grade reduction) are issued. The three absences cover necessary absences (emergency, illness, etc.) and so should not be used frivolously. You should not take this course if you anticipate more than two or three absences. I also penalize consistent lateness (more than three times a semester) and count as an absence arrival 15 minutes after class starts and 15 minutes before class ends. Emergency situations, of course, will be handled as they occur.