

**Course Information: *LIT 4344: The Modern Novel. Spring 2013. Tim Redman.***

**Course description**

In this course we will read, see, and listen to significant American novels.

**Professor Tim Redman Contact Information**

**Office hours**

My office is JO 5.102. My extension is 2775; the full phone number is 972 883-2775. My office hours are Wednesdays from 3:30-4:00pm and Saturdays from 12:30-1:00pm and by appointment. I am usually available after class as well. My e-mail address is [redman@utdallas.edu](mailto:redman@utdallas.edu). The University has instituted a policy (see below) stating that instructors are not required to respond to e-mail coming from outside the University's own e-mail system. I do not fully agree with that policy (though I see its wisdom and its caution) and will strive to answer questions from any e-mail source. However, be sure that your subject line contains LIT 4344 at the outset. The best way to contact me is by e-mail; the worst is by leaving a message on my office phone.

**Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages that all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individuals corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

**Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

This course is an upper-division undergraduate course in the School of Arts and Humanities. It is open to students in any track within the School in keeping with our interdisciplinary tradition, respecting different learning styles following Gardner's work on multiple intelligences. Ideally, students should have already taken or be taking concurrently courses in arts and humanities at the upper-division undergraduate level. The assignments will draw from Literary Studies.

**Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

- 1) "Students will be able to write effectively using appropriate organization, mechanics, and style." This will be assessed for all six paper assignments – see grades for form and content below -- but in particular for the two assignments for literary studies. Each will be 800 words plus bibliography.

**Required Textbooks and Materials**

The novels as outlined in the assignments.  
A computer with Word and internet access.  
A good college writing handbook (I like Harbrace).  
A good college dictionary.

## Student Responsibility for Texts

The Campus Bookstore, Stanza, and Off-Campus Books have all been given book orders. Regrettably though understandably they frequently order too few books for the class size. The situation has come about because students use other sources to order their books, often going to the internet. “The bookstore was out” is not an excuse for not being prepared for class. **Students are required to have access to required textbooks prior to the second day of class.**

## Suggested Course Materials

The Library contains many resources for the serious study of the modern novel.

## Assignments & Academic Calendar

### Course requirements

Each of the three written assignments will count 20% towards your final grade. There will be a weekly short-answer quiz, consisting of five questions each worth up to two points. The top ten quiz grades, graded on a curve, will count 40% towards your final grade. The quizzes will also have two additional questions, 6) “What one idea did you take away from class today?” and 7) “What one question do you still have.” You must answer these questions. If you do not, two points for each unanswered question will be subtracted from your quiz grade for the week.

Robert Sylwester (1995) has classified knowledge as declarative (what you know) and procedural (what you can do with what you know). The quizzes largely test the former, the papers and the creative project the latter. Another way to think of this division is that the quizzes mostly require remembering and understanding, the papers require applying, analyzing, and evaluating. Intelligent participation in class discussion may raise your final grade by up to one full letter at the discretion of the instructor. Further, a truly spectacular creative project may result in my raising your grade by up to one full letter. There is no final exam in this course. However, we will use the time the final is scheduled to hold class. For further details on paper grading policies, quiz misses, see below. **Note particularly that in order to pass the course, you must score above 50% (more than 50 points) on the aggregate score of your best ten quiz grades.**

**All papers for the course must be turned in both in hard-copy (printed) format and as a WORD attachment to an e-mail to the instructor: [redman@utdallas.edu](mailto:redman@utdallas.edu).**

**One full letter grade will be subtracted from papers turned in after the close of each class regardless of excuse. However, no late penalty will be assessed if the Word attachment of the paper is sent on time to meet the deadline. But I will only grade hard copies of the paper.**

### Course calendar

Saturday, January 19: Course introduction. Film “The Last Picture Show.” Quiz #1.

Saturday, January 26: Finish film. Discuss novel. Quiz #2.

Saturday, February 2: Finish the novel. Discuss Bless Me Ultima. Quiz #3.

Saturday, February 9: Read To Kill a Mockingbird. Quiz #4.

Saturday, February 16: Film, “To Kill a Mockingbird.” First paper due. What elements of the coming-of-age novel are common to the first three novels? Quiz #5.

Saturday, February 23: A Woman Warrior. Quiz #6.

Saturday, March 2. The Great Gatsby. Quiz #7.

Saturday, March 9. Film, “The Great Gatsby.” Quiz # 8.

Saturday, March 16. St. Patrick’s Day’s Eve. Spring Break. No class.

Saturday, March 23. Read Their Eyes Were Watching God. Quiz #9.

Saturday, March 30. Film “Their Eyes Were Watching God.” Quiz #10. Second paper due: American self-invention is a prominent theme in the novel The Great Gatsby. Using the novel as a pivot point, how do other novels you’ve read so far reflect that theme?

Saturday, April 6. Read Tar Baby. Quiz #11.

Saturday, April 13. Read A House on Mango Street. Quiz #12.

Saturday, April 20. Read A Confederacy of Dunces. Third paper assignment: How does ethnic identity affect growing up? Quiz #13.

Saturday, April 27. Open. Quiz #14.

Saturday, May 4. Open. Quiz #15.

## **Grading Policy for Papers**

### **Grading guidelines for form**

Grades for form will be evaluated according to the following point scale.

Points Abbreviation Error

|   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| 1 | ab  | abbreviation error                                 |
| 3 | ad  | adverb or adjective error                          |
| 3 | agr | agreement error (subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent) |
| 2 | awk | awkward, needs rewording                           |
| 1 | _   | capitalization (letter underlined)                 |
| 3 | ca  | error in case                                      |
| 5 | cs  | comma splice                                       |

- 2 dan dangling or misplaced modifier
- 2 d informal language, inappropriate diction
- 5 frag sentence fragment
- 3 !? logic not clear
- 10 mf major form: ribbon, spacing, margins, etc.
- 3 new paragraph
- 3 <---- no new paragraph
- 3 // faulty parallelism
- 1 p punctuation
- 2 ref? reference unclear
- 2 rep repetitious, too wordy, redundant
- 5 run run-on sentence
- 3 shift in person or tense
- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ spelling (word underlined)
- 3 v verb error
- 2 word(s) missing, insert
- 1 ww wrong word

Other marks for form

[...] concerning this passage

invert order

link together

? unclear

! very nice, funny, exceptionally good point

eliminate this

Grading scale for form

92-100 A      83-91 B      73-82 C      65-72 D      0-64 F

Note: It is all right to have a friend proofread your paper for typos or errors in form, but ultimately only you are responsible for what you write.

## **Form**

You are expected to have mastered, by now, the conventions of English usage, spelling, and grammar. If you do not already own them, you must purchase a handbook of grammar and usage, and a dictionary. Points are taken off of your papers for errors in form. In particular, papers are heavily penalized for errors in sentence structure and punctuation.

### *The Sentence*

Style begins at the sentence level.

There are four correct types of English sentences: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. You need to master these types and how they are punctuated. The rules are not difficult.

You need to be able to differentiate between a phrase (a related group of words) and a clause (a related group of words with a subject-verb core). You need to be able to distinguish between a main (or independent) clause and a subordinate (or dependent) clause.

There are three major sentence errors: fragment, comma splice, and run-on. A fragment is punctuated as a sentence, but lacks a subject-verb core, or it is a subordinate clause standing alone as a sentence. Although fragments are sometimes used for emphasis in English prose, it is not suggested that you do so. A comma splice is the incorrect attempt to hook together two main clauses with only a comma. A run-on is a sentence that has gone beyond its boundaries, too many clauses trying to make up one sentence instead of being broken up into two or more sentences.

### *The Paragraph*

Rhetoric begins at the paragraph level.

A paragraph is used to develop one idea. It normally contains a thesis sentence that gives the idea. The thesis sentence is usually either the first or last sentence of the paragraph.

## **Content**

### **Grading guidelines for content (from Garrison, *How a Writer Works*, and CCCC)**

#### The "A" Paper

Conveys immediately a sense of person behind the words; an individual voice speaks firmly and clearly from the page.

Contains a significant and central idea clearly defined and supported with concrete, substantial, and consistently relevant detail. The essay is packed with information, and detail has a "just right" feel to it.

Displays freshness and originality of perception; moves through its ideas with an inevitability organic to its central idea.

Engages attention and interest at the beginning, progresses by ordered and necessary stages, and ends with a conclusion that summarizes the essay without being repetitive. Development is economical, original, well proportioned, and emphatic.

#### The "B" Paper

Possesses many of the same features of the "A" paper, but the style, originality, and level of excellence is less exceptional.

Information may be thin. Examples or illustrations may feel slightly forced or exaggerated.

Organization is clear; the reader does not confuse the sequence of information or ideas. However, transitions may be somewhat awkward, abrupt, mechanical, or monotonous.

#### The "C" Paper

Characterized by awkwardness throughout. It does not read smoothly aloud.

The central idea is apparent but too general, too familiar, or too limited. It is supported with concrete detail, though that detail may be occasionally repetitious, irrelevant, or sketchy.

The essay gives the reader an impression of fuzziness and lack of assurance on the part of the writer.

Organization is sometimes confused, especially between sentences. The reader sometimes has to stop and reread material to be sure of its meaning.

#### The "D" Paper

The main impression is one of haste, carelessness, lack of attention or simply an inability to draft even direct or simple statements.

The central idea is missing, confused, superficial, or unsupported by concrete or relevant detail. Content is obvious, contradictory, or aimless.

The essay has no clear and orderly stages and fails to emphasize and support the central ideal. Paragraphs are typographical rather than structural; transitions between paragraphs are missing, unclear, ineffective or rudimentary.

The essay may make some sense, but only if the reader struggles to find it. The writer has scanty control of the material.

## Course & Instructor Policies

### Paper submission policy and late papers

Papers are due at the end of class on the dates indicated in the course calendar. Late papers are penalized by one grade regardless of excuse. **Papers must be turned in both in a printed form, double-spaced, and in an electronic form, as a Word attachment sent with an e-mail to [redman@utdallas.edu](mailto:redman@utdallas.edu) with LIT 4344 on the subject line. If you send the paper as a Word attachment by the deadline but cannot make it to class, I will not penalize if for being late. But I only grade hard copy.**

### Paper Grading Policy

Your final grade for a paper will be based on the average of the grade for form and the grade for content, e.g., a "C" for form and an "A" for content will result in a paper grade of a "B," except that when the grade is an intermediary grade the grade for content will carry slightly greater weight, e.g., an "A" for form and a "B" for content will result in a paper grade of "B+," while a "B" for form and an "A" for content will result in a paper grade of "A-."

### Quiz Grading Policy

There will be weekly short quizzes, on the reading and class discussions and lectures, worth ten points each. The three lowest of your quiz grades, including missed quizzes, will be dropped, and the remaining quiz grades added and placed on a curve for your final quiz grade. In other words, I count the top ten grades. **However, you must score above 50% on your final quiz grade in order to pass the course. No makeup quizzes are given.**

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is required. You may miss up to three classes without incurring any serious penalty, but more frequent absences jeopardize your final grade. Further, these excessive absences may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in a lowering of your final grade. Tardiness disrupts the learning environment. Frequent tardiness will be penalized by the lowering of your grade entirely at the discretion of the instructor.

### Writing Tutoring

Free writing tutoring is available through the appropriate University office. You must make an appointment well in advance.

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## **Student Conduct & Discipline**

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part I, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## **Plagiarism**

You may get help revising or proofreading your papers from friends or family, fellow students, or writing tutors. However, the principal work on your paper must be yours. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether you mean to or not. Copying or paraphrasing passages from another writer's work without acknowledging what you've done is plagiarism. Allowing another writer to write any significant portion of your essay is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense in academia and can result in failure for the paper or failure for the course or worse.

## **Conduct**

In the 18th century the French defined liberty as the freedom to do anything that doesn't hurt other people. Behavior that distracts others or disrupts the learning environment, such as talking or tardiness, hurts other people and won't be tolerated. Cell phones and pagers must be turned off. Penalties for infractions are entirely at the discretion of the instructor.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy to the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

## **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***

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