

Modernist Literature

Professor Brian Kim Stefans

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 1-2:30 pm or by appointment.

Please note: If I am not in my office during my hours, I will return shortly, so please wait.

Time: 10:30 am - 12:20 pm

Place: Tues. F-222, Thur. H-118

This course will examine poetry, prose, drama and text/image art in Europe and America produced roughly during the years 1910-1950. General topics include stream-of-consciousness (Woolf), Cubism in writing (Stein), Surrealism (Breton, Duchamp), Futurism, Existentialism, the Theater of the Absurd (Beckett), the Epic Theater (Brecht), Imagism (Pound), "info-poetics" and the manifesto. Generally, the literature will be English-language, but some readings in Continental literature will be assigned in translation (Kafka, Brecht). The class will start with a basic review of developments in science and philosophy (Freud, Marx, Bergson, etc.), music, film and painting.

Required Texts

Please visit the website for a list of books required for this class. Additional reading material will be distributed, both electronically and in photocopies, throughout the semester.

Syllabus

Below is the basic syllabus, including paper due dates. For more detailed information, including reading assignments and links to resources, please use the website at <http://titania.stockton.edu/introtonewmediastudiesfall2007>.

Week 00: Sep.6

Introduction: What is Modernism?

Week 01: Sep.11-Sep.13

Intellectual Forerunners: Bergson, Freud, Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, etc.

Viewing of *Paris Was a Woman*

Week 02: Sep.18-Sep.20

Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*

Week 03: Sep.25-Sep.27

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Paper on Stein, Woolf and Bergson **due Sep. 25th** (5 pages, 3 references)

Week 04: Oct.2-Oct.4

Franz Kafka, "In The Penal Colony" and other stories

Short paper on Kafka **due Oct. 2** (2.5 pages)

Week 05: Oct.9-Oct.11

Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems* (selections)

Week 06: Oct.16-Oct.18

Other Modernist Poetry

Paper on Modernist Poetry **due Oct. 16** (5 pages, 3 references)

Week 07: Oct.23-Oct.25

Bertolt Brecht, *The Three Penny Opera*

Week 08: Oct.30 (Precepting)-Nov.1

Viewing of the *Three Penny Opera*

Week 09: Nov.6-Nov.8

Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*

Paper on Brecht **due Nov. 6** (5 pages, 3 references)

Week 10: Nov.13-Nov.15

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

Short paper on Beckett **due Nov. 14** (2.5 pages)

Week 11: Nov.20-Nov.22 (Thanksgiving)

Viewing of *Waiting for Godot*

Week 12: Nov.27-Nov.29

Dada & Surrealism (Art & Ideas)

Week 13: Dec.4-Dec.6

Futurist and Cubist Text/ Art

Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons*

Dada project **due Dec. 4**

Week 14: Dec.11

Recipes from the Futurist cookbook

Final paper due (8 pages, 5 references, synthesis of 2 or more writers)

Class Policies

Time Expectations: I expect about 8-10 hours of out-of-class time devoted to reading, writing and other assignments, with the addition of 1-2 hours of time between the Tues-Thur class for additional short assignments. Please schedule accordingly.

Class disruption: in addition to standard policies of class disruption – being rude, obnoxious, or playing on your cell phone – being habitually indifferent or unprepared for class will also be considered disruptive and can be grounds for punishment.

Absences: For every three unexcused absences, you will be marked down a grade. This includes days on which we are merely viewing a film. Excused absences include medical and family emergencies or legal issues; they do not include expensive vacations, promises to spouses or partners, etc. *If you have more than 5 absences, excused or otherwise, you will be docked a grade.*

Excused absences: An absence will not count as “excused” unless you can provide me with concrete documentation (that I can keep) within the first week following the absence.

Latenesses: I am not as stingy on latenesses as other professors, but I do record them, and if they are habitual (4 or more), they can count as an absence. *More than a half-hour late and it will count as half an absence.* You will be entirely responsible for getting information on what you missed from your peers. Do not ask me to send you and email or talk to you in person about missed material. Please get the phone number or email address of one or two trusted colleagues early in the semester for this information.

Email: I encourage you to contact me with questions, but please don't contact me to do any extra footwork for you because you were inattentive in class or missed many classes.

Late papers: I expect a hard copy of your paper due first thing on the due date in class, or in my office box by 4:30 that day. I will mark all papers that are handed in on-time with an “OT.” Papers that are handed in after the beginning of class will be marked late. Late papers are automatically docked a grade.

Format style: All papers should be in 12 point type (in Times Roman or similar font with serifs) with 1.5 spacing and 1 inch margins. They will be marked down, depending on how off they are, if not in this format. Research papers should have the proper biography and footnotes where applicable.

Paper returns: If a paper is handed in on time, it is guaranteed to be handed back by the following week. If it is late (including email submissions on the due date), there is no guarantee of when it will be handed back.

The class blog: Every week you will be required to post a comment to the class blog. This must be done by the noon, Monday.

Vocabulary Notebooks: You should keep a notebook of important vocabulary as it is introduced throughout the semester.

Concepts exercises: for every reading assignment that is an essay, you will be required to post to your blog a list of the 3-5 central concepts of the writing, also due on the noon of Monday prior to class. You should quote lines from the text that either support your claim or which you think are key to the text, even if you don't understand them.

Grading: Grading will primarily be based on your writing, but with much consideration given to classroom participation, presentations and in-class assignments.

- 60% short papers
- 30% final paper
- 10% responses and classroom participation, in-class assignments, etc.