

WRTG 41500
Senior Seminar:
The History and Theory of the Novel
MWF 2:00-2:50
Smiddy 432
Fall 2009

Instructor **Dr. Jack Wang**
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Office Phone **274-3493**
Office Hours **MWF 3:00-3:50 and by appointment**
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Course Description

What is a novel? How did the form come into being, and how has the form developed? These will be our guiding questions as we survey the history and theory of the novel from its inception to the present. By reading landmark novels and seminal criticism, students will come to a greater understanding of the social, economic, political, and philosophical forces that have shaped the making of fiction in the past four centuries and thereby come to a greater understanding of their own aesthetic choices. Though focused ostensibly on the novel, this course will in fact be an exploration of fiction in general and the techniques of formal realism that have come to define all literary writing.

Required Texts

Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe (0-375-75732-5)
Emma, Jane Austen (0-375-75742-2)
Madame Bovary, Gustave Flaubert (0-14-044912-4)
Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf (0-15-662870-8)
Lolita, Vladimir Nabokov (0-679-72316-1)
White Noise, Don DeLillo (0-14-007702-2)
Selected novel excerpts and essays posted on Blackboard.

Coursework

Essay One	30%
Essay Two	30%
Essay Three	30%
Participation	10%

The Essays

Some of our essays may have a creative component designed to combine theory and practice, but the emphasis will be on analysis, so be prepared to work largely in a critical and craft-oriented mode. All three essays will be clearly explained in due course, and all three must be completed in order to pass.

Participation

Because this is a capstone course required of all Writing majors, students are expected to contribute their thoughts in class on a regular basis. Because classroom participation is not just a matter of personal preference but one of academic responsibility, it is important for you to come to class every day prepared to speak.

Course Policies

Blackboard

All handouts will be distributed electronically through Blackboard, which can be accessed by going to <https://akron.ithaca.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct> and logging in with your e-mail username and password. Please download all required readings and bring a copy to class.

Attendance

Attendance is crucial to your success in this course, so please come to class every day prepared and ready to contribute. All students are allowed two unexcused absences. **Thereafter, every unexcused absence will result in a one-third letter grade deduction to your final grade. Students who have nine absences (excused or unexcused) will be dropped from the course, and if the last absence occurs after the period of withdrawal, they will receive an F in the course.** Whenever possible, please let me know ahead of time that you won't be in class. In cases of emergencies and school-authorized events, please document your absence. Remember, you are responsible for anything missed in class, including any changes to the syllabus.

Lateness

Chronic lateness will count as absences at my discretion, so please be on time.

Grading

All assignments must be typed and submitted in Modern Language Association (MLA) format. **Late work will be penalized 10% a day. Assignments more than two days late will receive a grade of F (0-59%).** On weekends, late work can and should be submitted electronically.

Academic Dishonesty

Anyone who attempts to present someone else's work—published or unpublished, in whole or in part—as their own will fail the course and may face further action by the College. Please use secondary sources responsibly, and please document any such use in MLA format.

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation will be provided to students with documented disabilities on a case-by-case basis. Students must register with the Office of Academic Support Services and provide appropriate documentation to the College before any academic adjustment will be provided.

Schedule

Week 1

W August 26 Introduction to The History and Theory of the Novel.

I: The Rise of Realism

F August 28 “Merlin” from *The Tale of King Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory (handout).

Week 2

M August 31 “Book I, Chapter I & VIII” from *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes; excerpt from *The Pilgrim’s Progress* by John Bunyan; and excerpt from *Anatomy of Criticism* by Northrop Frye (handouts).

W September 2 “Chapter 1: Realism and the Novel” from *The Rise of the Novel* by Ian Watt (handout).

F September 4 *Robinson Crusoe* (Preface, 4-64).

Week 3

M September 7 **Labor Day. No class.**

W September 9 *Robinson Crusoe* (65-144).

F September 11 *Robinson Crusoe* (145-212).

Week 4

M September 14 *Robinson Crusoe* (213-82).

W September 16 Letters VI-XV from *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson (handout).

F September 18 Excerpt from “Fielding as Novelist: ‘Tom Jones’” by Watt (handout).

II: Free Indirect Discourse and Objective Narration

Week 5

- M September 21 Excerpt from “Narrated Monologue” by Dorrit Cohn (handout).
W September 23 *Emma*, Chapters 1-17 (3-105).
F September 25 *Emma*, Chapters 18-25 (105-53).

Week 6

- M September 28 *Emma*, Chapters 26-40 (153-249).
W September 30 *Emma*, Chapters 41-55 (249-353).
F October 2 Movie: *Emma*.

Week 7

- M October 5 **Essay One due.**
Movie: *Emma*, continued.
W October 7 Movie: *Emma*, continued.
F October 9 *Madame Bovary*, Part One (3-63).
“Flaubert and Modern Narrative” and “Flaubert and the Rise of the Flaneur” from *How Fiction Works* by James Wood (handouts).

Week 8

- M October 12 *Madame Bovary*, Part Two (65-143).
W October 14 *Madame Bovary*, Part Two (143-213).
F October 16 **Fall Break. No Class.**

III: The Modern Novel

Week 9

- M October 19 *Madame Bovary*, Part Three (215-327).
W October 21 “Modern Fiction” by Virginia Woolf (handout).
F October 23 *Mrs. Dalloway* (3-64).

Week 10

- M October 26 *Mrs. Dalloway* (64-119).
W October 28 *Mrs. Dalloway* (120-94).

F November 30 Excerpt from *Ulysses* by James Joyce (handout).

Week 11

M November 2 “Plot in the Modern Novel” by J. Arthur Honeywell (handout).

W November 4 Movie: *Mrs. Dalloway*

F November 6 Movie: *Mrs. Dalloway*

IV: Postmodernism and the Present

Week 12

M November 9 **Essay Two due.**

W November 11 “The Questions of Postmodernism” by David Lehman (handout).

F November 13 *Lolita*, Foreword & Part One (3-79).

Week 13

M November 16 *Lolita*, Part One (79-199).

W November 18 *Lolita*, Part Two (200-247).

F November 20 *Lolita*, Part Two (247-309).

November 21-29 Thanksgiving. No classes.

Week 14

M November 30 “The Literature of Replenishment” by John Barth (handout).

W December 2 *White Noise*, I: Waves and Radiation (3-105).

F December 4 *White Noise*, II: The Airborne Toxic Event (109-63).

Week 15

M December 7 *White Noise*, III: Dylarama (167-271).

W December 9 *White Noise*, III: Dylarama (272-326).

F December 11 “The Novelist Today: Still at the Crossroads?” by David Lodge (handout).

Finals Week

W December 16 **Essay Three due.**