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ENG 3090G-099: Literary Masterworks (Honors)

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ENGLISH 3090G--LITERARY MASTERWORKS (Honors)

Fall 2001
 Section 99: W 1800-2030
 Coleman 3609 [old 313]

Dr. Zahlan
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

What are "Masterworks" and who says so? What is "Western Culture" and how did it get this way? As we read and enjoy canonized literary works of the European tradition--from *Antigone* to poems by W.B. Yeats, we will address these questions. Analyzing narratives, poetry, and drama by Sophocles, the Pearl Poet, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Molière, Voltaire, Austen, Chekhov, and Yeats, we will reflect upon the relation of traditional culture to an increasingly diverse (and some say post-literate) world.

Eastern's General Education curriculum is designed to help students develop and improve their abilities to read and write, to reason, and to analyze. It aims to impart knowledge of science and history and awareness of multicultural issues and social responsibility, as well as to encourage aesthetic consciousness and intellectual curiosity. As an upper-division course that meets general education requirements, "Literary Masterworks" will help advanced undergraduates develop knowledge of important literary texts and of the Western tradition. It will also encourage critical thought and intellectual questioning as to the goals of education and the nature of culture. This course is "writing intensive"; writing is an important means for learning and your written expression is an important basis of evaluation.

TEXTS

Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (ed. Jones);
 Jacobus, *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Drama*;
 Pearl Poet, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (trans., ed. Stone);
 Voltaire, *Candide* (trans. Butt); Yeats, *Collected Poems* (ed. Finneran);
 Suggested: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed.
 (Each student should also have a *Handbook* of usage and a collegiate desk dictionary.)

DR. Z.'S OFFICE HOURS

Tuesdays, 11:00-12:00; 4:45-5:45 (1645-1745) Wednesdays, 4:00-4:45 (1600-1645);
 Thursdays, 2:00-3:15 (1400-1515); Additional Hours by Appointment

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

WEEK I

Wednesday, 22 Aug.: Introductions: Cultural Literacy and the Canon
 Course and Assignments; Sign up for Drama Presentations
 Introduction to Greek Drama and *Antigone*.

WEEK II

Wednesday, 29 Aug.: Sophocles, *Antigone, Drama*; read play and commentaries for today.
Drama Presentation I
 Assignment of Paper I due 3 October and Paper II due 28 November.
 Sign up for oral reports and presentations.

WEEK III

Wednesday, 5 Sept.: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (read text and commentaries).
 Report(s): _____

WEEK IV

Wednesday, 12 Sept. : Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (Complete at least first 20 chapters.)
 Report(s) _____

WEEK V

Wednesday, 19 Sept.: *Don Quixote* (Complete Part One for this date).
TEST I at 7:30 (Bring exam booklets to class.)

WEEK VI

Wednesday, 26 Sept.: Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Drama* (Read play and commentaries for today.)
Report(s): _____

WEEK VII

Wednesday, 3 Oct.: *Hamlet* (concluded)
Paper I due in class on this date--be prepared to share your paper with the class

WEEK VIII

Wednesday, 10 Oct.: Molière, *The Misanthrope, Drama* (read play & commentaries for today).
Drama Presentation II: _____
Paper I Revisions due in class.

WEEK IX

Wednesday, 17 Oct.: Voltaire, *Candide* (have the text read for this date).
Report(s): _____
Discussion of Paper I; Review of Paper II assignment.

WEEK X

Wednesday, 24 Oct.: Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; read at least forty chapters by this date.
Report(s): _____

WEEK XI

Wednesday, 31 Oct. : *Pride and Prejudice* (complete the novel by this date.)
Report(s): _____
TEST II at 7:30 (Bring exam booklets to class.)

WEEK XII

Wednesday, 7 Nov.: Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard, Drama* (read play and commentaries).
Drama Presentation III: _____
One-paragraph Prospectus for Paper II due in class on this date
(Schedule conferences.)

WEEK XIII

Wednesday, 14 Nov.: Discussion of Paper II Prospectuses
Poetry by W.B. Yeats
Read, read aloud, and think about (especially) the following poems:
"The Lake Isle of Innisfree"; "When You Are Old";
"Who Goes with Fergus?"; "The Song of Wandering Aengus";

"Adam's Curse"; "No Second Troy";
"September 1913"; "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death";
"Easter 1916"; "The Second Coming" "A Prayer for My Daughter";
"Sailing to Byzantium"; "Leda and the Swan"; "Under Ben Bulbin."
(For reports, choose poems from below the line.)

Poetry Presentations: _____

WEEK XIV--THANKSGIVING RECESS (no class meeting)

WEEK XV

Wednesday, 28 Nov.: **PAPER II DUE IN CLASS**

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED

WEEK XVI

Wednesday, 5 Dec. RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS AS SCHEDULED

CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM: _____

GRADE CALCULATION

Test I and Test II--20%; Paper I=15%;

Paper II (including Prospectus) and Research Presentation--25%;

Cumulative Final Exam--15%;

Class Preparation and Participation (including quizzes and oral presentations)--25%

ENGLISH 3090G: WRITTEN AND ORAL ASSIGNMENTS

I. **JOURNAL:** Each class member should keep a notebook or journal in which both initial and considered responses to reading assignments and class discussion are regularly recorded. From time to time, you will be asked to write written responses in class, and you should insert them into your journal when they are returned. Additionally, you should keep a list of terms and other words to add to your vocabulary. I will not grade your journal--it is a tool for you to use in mastering the work of the course.

II. **ORAL PRESENTATIONS :** During the semester, each student will participate in two oral presentations to the class, in addition to a final research paper report. Presentations must be given on the assigned date--no make-ups will be possible.

A. **Background Reports on Assigned Works:** One of these presentations will address a focused aspect of historical background or intellectual context in a text assigned for the course. Such reports may also address in some way the question of how the work reflects and/or has influenced the development of western culture. These researched presentations should be illustrated with references to and readings of appropriate passages of poetry, drama, or narrative. (10-15 minutes)

Be sure to mention by name any sources that you use; be sure to communicate clearly to the class the source of all information and opinions. Be sure to time and practice your report. For commentaries, use notes on cards rather than sheets of paper; stand up straight, and make eye contact.

B. **Dramatic Readings:** Students will combine forces for dramatic readings of selected scenes from three assigned plays, as indicated on the syllabus. Drama reports will include some commentary as well as rehearsed readings of a scene or scenes. For dramatic readings, be sure you are very familiar with the dialogue and its meaning, and then act. (15 to 25 minutes)

C. **RESEARCH REPORTS:** During the final two weeks of the semester, each student will make a formal oral presentation based on the work of the research paper.

III. PAPERS

Paper I (1000-1500 words) is due on Wednesday, 3 October. Paper I is an essay comparing/contrasting a focused aspect of motivation, character, philosophy, and/or world view of two of the following: Antigone, Sir Gawain, Don Quixote, Hamlet. Discuss the characters not as though they are "real people," but as they are created and presented by their authors. What, in your view, does the text convey about the character's ideas and the significance and effect of those ideas in the world of the text? Support your critical points with specific references to and quotations from the works discussed.

Paper II (1500-2000 words), due Wednesday 28 November, is a carefully argued essay comparing a focused aspect of the cultural significance of a canonical European literary work written before 1900 to that of a twentieth-century work or works written by an author (of your choice) awarded a Nobel Prize for Literature. (In the interests of variety, each student will select a different one of the Nobel Prize winners to write about and present to the class; let me know at any time that you wish to "reserve" a writer.)

As you read at least one and preferably several major texts by the twentieth-century Nobel laureate you choose, consider whether his/her works are likely to survive into the future, as compared to others and as considered in the context of place and time. Focus your discussion on qualities, themes, or concerns that you consider important to and characteristic of the authors you compare. You may wish to consider whether and how your earlier author's works have shaped or influenced Western culture, and you may wish to assess the chances that your modern author will prove equally influential in the future. Paper II topics must be approved by me--please consult. A one-paragraph (polished and printed) prospectus is due in class on 7 November.

IN ALL PAPERS: Formulate and develop a clear argumentative thesis and support critical observations with specific references to and quotations from the text(s) you discuss. As appropriate, refer to other works by authors you are discussing--or other authors; you may consult works of history, philosophy, political or literary theory. Be sure to quote accurately, indicate all quotes and paraphrases, and document carefully (using the MLA system). In making use of electronic media, remember that downloading should not be confused with research. Material from computer sources must be assimilated, processed, and documented as thoroughly as material from print media. ALL PAPERS must be clearly and legibly (darkly) printed: see Course Policies for requirements.

COURSE POLICIES

STANDARDS & POLICIES: Class attendance, punctuality, preparation, and participation are expected and required. Students are responsible for all material covered in class and all announcements or assignments made in class as well as for all assignments on the syllabus. Assignments are to have been completed by class time on the date for which they appear on the syllabus. The books in which the day's assignments are contained should be brought to class.

A SPECIAL NOTE ON ATTENDANCE: This section of English 3090 meets once a week; it is therefore imperative that students miss no class meetings. Each class meeting constitutes one week of the course. Remember that "class participation" counts towards the course grade; a participation/preparation score will be assigned each student for each class meeting other than the first, and absence will necessarily result in a "0" for the day's participation as well as on any graded work due or done in class. Unannounced quizzes on assigned material may be given at any time. There will be no opportunity to make up missed quizzes.

A NOTE ON PREPARATION: Since this course meets only once a week, the assignments are long. Students who take this class must read entire novels and other complex texts "on their own," and sustain concentration and interest over a week's time. Maturity, discipline, independence, and self-motivation are required.

ORAL REPORTS MUST BE PRESENTED ON THE ASSIGNED DATE. All students are expected and required to listen attentively to and be prepared to comment on the reports and presentations of their classmates. Failure to present reports on the assigned date will result in a grade of "0."

EXAMS: There will be no opportunities to make up a missed exam or oral report other than in cases of documented medical emergency; (signing in at Health Service does not constitute documentation of a medical emergency). Major Tests and the Final Exam should be written on test booklets, available at the Union Book Store. Please write tests in ink and on the appropriate booklets.

English 3090 Course Policies continued:

ALL PAPERS AND OTHER WRITTEN WORK must be handed in on the date due.

1. Work turned in late without advance clearance will not be accepted.
2. Clearance does not constitute an "excuse." Work turned in late with clearance will be penalized, usually at the rate of 5 points per day of lateness.
3. Any lateness may delay the grading and return of the paper, perhaps until the end of the semester.

BE SURE TO KEEP A COPY OF EVERY PAPER YOU HAND IN. IN THE CASE OF A MISSING PAPER, THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPLYING A COPY.

A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF PAPERS: Papers must be computer-printed (or accurately typed) on heavy or medium-weight white 9 x 11 paper. Leave adequate margins. Each paper must have a separate title sheet which includes the title of the paper, course title, instructor's name, student's name, and date of submission. Repeat the title at the top of the first page of text. Papers must be stapled or clipped.

Be sure to hand in CLEAR AND DARK LETTER-QUALITY COPIES--NO PALE or DOT-MATRIX COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED. ALSO, MAKE SURE THAT PAGES ARE SEPARATED, NUMBERED, AND CLIPPED TOGETHER IN CORRECT ORDER.

ONLY PAPERS THAT ARE NEAT AND IN CORRECT FORM CAN BE ACCEPTED.

DOCUMENTATION: Use the "new" MLA system to cite both primary and secondary sources used in your papers. The system is fully explained and illustrated in the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Each student should have access to a copy.

Inform yourself about documentation conventions for electronic media information and materials. All such materials must be documented, and citation forms are illustrated in recent handbooks; go to the Writing Center for assistance. Electronic-media materials must be evaluated for quality at least as scrupulously as print materials. Please remember that you must absorb and process all materials: downloading is not research.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All written work (papers, exams, tests, quizzes) must be original and independent. Please make sure that you understand the meaning of plagiarism and the policy of the English Department:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the course.

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please note that arrangements must be made through the Office of Disability Services; you should, therefore, contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Literary Masterworks--Oral Report Sign-Up Sheet

During the semester, each student will participate in three oral presentations to the class:

1. a group dramatic reading of an excerpt or excerpts from an assigned play;
2. a critical and/or factual report on an assigned work to be given on the date the work is discussed in class;
3. a final research paper report--a presentation of your research project.

You have signed up for the group dramatic readings, and the final research reports will be scheduled later in the semester. This list allows you to sign up for a report on the works other than the three plays already signed up for. You may sign to read aloud to the class and comment critically on one of the poems of W.B. Yeats that we will be reading later in the semester, or you may choose to report on some specific aspect of historical background or intellectual context in one of the other texts assigned for the course. Students should confer with classmates who are working on the same work to avoid repetition; students who wish to work together may do so. Individual reports should be timed to last approximately 10 minutes; joint reports 20.

As you read, study, and prepare your reports, keep in mind the question as to why these works have become canonical and how they reflect and/or have influenced the development of western culture.

WEEK III: Wednesday, 5 Sept.: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

Reports: 1. _____ 2. _____

(Sample Topics: The Code of Chivalry; Courtly Love, The Cult of the Virgin Mary)

WEEK IV: Wednesday, 12 Sept.: Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (Complete at least first 20 chapters.)

Report: 3. _____

(Sample Topics: Romances of Chivalry; The Spanish Inquisition, Spain and the Muslim World, Life of Cervantes, Class System in 15th and 16th-century Spain)

WEEK V: Wednesday, 19 September: *Don Quixote*

Reports: 4. _____ 5. _____

WEEK VI Wednesday, 26 September: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Reports: 6. _____ 7. _____

(Sample Topics: Elizabethan Attitudes Towards Revenge, Revenge Plays, Elizabethan Attitudes Towards the Supernatural (Ghosts), Shakespeare's Use of Historical Sources)

WEEK IX: Wednesday, 17 October: Voltaire, *Candide*

Report(s): 8. _____ 9. _____

(Sample Topics: The Enlightenment; Legend of Eldorado; Social Organization in Voltaire's Europe; Role of Religion and the Church in Political and Social Structures in Voltaire's Western Europe)

WEEK XI: Wednesday, 24 October: Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Report: 10. _____ 11. _____

(Sample Topics: Historical Background of P&P: What was going on at the time?; Class Structure in Austen's England; Gender Roles in Austen's England; Costumes, Dances, Manners; Social Life in Austen's England; Attitudes Towards Marriage in Austen's England)

WEEK XIII: Wednesday, 14 November: Poems by W.B. Yeats

12. _____ 13. _____

14. _____ 15. _____

16. _____ 17. _____

NOTE: Report on a poem of your choice from among the last ten (10) listed in the syllabus.