

**I. Objectives of the Course**

Through class participation, the close reading of assigned literary works, objective tests, two formal essays (5 printed pages), a midterm examination, and a final examination, the student will be graded on his/her ability:

- A. To identify and examine the major themes, styles and movement which define contemporary literature.
- B. To recognize and define the various literary-historical backgrounds against which contemporary literature appears.
- C. To establish and explore the timeless concerns of the literature to be read in the course and how those concerns speak directly to the contemporary reader.

**II. Student Requirements for Completing the Course**

- A. Brief quizzes which will precede the discussion of assigned literary works. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes.
- B. Several in-class writing assignments. There are no make-ups for these assignments.
- C. Two critical essays (5 printed pages) to be assigned later. One letter grade will be deducted for each day a paper is late.
- D. Midterm examination composed of factual and essay questions devoted to the literature covered in the first half of the course.
- E. A comprehensive final examination composed of factual and essay questions.
- F. Satisfactory participation in class discussion, which can only be accomplished if the attendance policy is observed.

**III. Attendance Policy**

- A. Although attendance is not mandatory, it is to the student's distinct benefit to be present in class, and the student will be held responsible for any assignments made when he/she is absent. After three (3) absences, one point will be deducted from the final grade for each additional absence.
- B. Students who are late must assume personal responsibility to see that the record is altered at the end of class. This record will not be changed at a later date.



#### IV. Grading Practices

The grade will be determined by an evaluation of the entire semester's work, with special emphasis on fulfillment of course objectives. Grading will generally adhere to the following:

Class participation	5%
Quizzes and in-class writing	15%
Two formal essays	40%
Midterm exam	15%
Final exam	25%

NOTE: My grading system is A, B, C, D, F. No plus (+) or minus (-) on final grade.

#### V. Textbooks

The Pittsburgh Book of Contemporary Poetry

On the Road, by Jack Kerouac

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, by Robert Pirsig

The Crying of Lot 49, by Thomas Pynchon

Catch 22 by Joseph Heller

Mumbo Jumbo, by Ishmael Reed

Song of Solomon, by Toni Morrison

Sophie's Choice, by William Styron

The Things They Carried, by Tim O'Brien

My Mother: A Demonology, by Kathy Acker

#### VI. Weekly Outline of Topics to be Covered

August 26-28	Background and Poetry
August 31-September 4	<u>On the Road</u>
September 7-11	<u>Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance</u>
September 14-18	<u>Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance</u>
September 21-25	<u>The Crying of Lot 49</u>

**VI. Weekly Outline of Topics to be Covered (continued)**

September 28-October 2	<u>Mumbo Jumbo</u> 1st essay due
October 5-9	<u>Mumbo Jumbo</u> Midterm Exam
October 12-13	Midterm Break
October 14-16	<u>Song of Solomon</u>
October 19-23	<u>Sophie's Choice</u>
October 26-30	<u>Sophie's Choice</u>
November 2-6	<u>Catch 22</u>
November 9-13	<u>Catch 22</u>
November 16-20	<u>The Things They Carried</u>
November 23-24	<u>The Things They Carried</u> 2nd essay due
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Recess
November 30-December 4	<u>My Mother: A Demonology</u>
December 7	Last Class
December 10-11, 14-16	Final Examinations

**VII. Office Hours**

My office is located in Humanities Hall, Room 105, and my office hours are the following:

Monday - Friday 1:00-2:00 p.m.

If these hours are ever inconvenient, appointments can be arranged. Please do not hesitate to see me about anything that is of concern to you.

**VIII. Honor Code**

I assume that you are familiar with the Honor Code and that you know what plagiarism is.