STUDIES IN MODERNISM
English 438/538
4 Credits; 3 hours lecture per week
No Prerequisites; English 206 recommended

**Rationale for conversion:** The conversion will give students greater opportunity to read more widely in the focus of the course and to practice critical thinking and writing. The conversion will increase the number of primary and secondary texts and/or online resources needed for student research as well as allow a greater understanding of how best to select and deploy this research toward the composition of an analytical writing assignment of much greater length and complexity than previously warranted.

The four credit version will:
- add a primary and secondary text;
- add instruction in research (digital and print) appropriate for advanced study in Modernism;
- increase the length and complexity of writing and research to incorporate digital scholarship.

The core syllabus below represents the three credit version most recently taught.

**GOALS, SCOPE, AND STUDENT OUTCOMES (AND SLASH-COURSE DIFFERENTIATION)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:** In studying selected literary texts of Anglo-American Modernism (1890’s to 1940’s), the course simultaneously tasks the student to gain a working knowledge of the aesthetic, cultural, political, and philosophical contexts of the era. As a studies course, the focus shifts within this larger frame from term to term, both in genres studied (short story, novella, and novel; poetry; drama), as well as in individual works. Example texts include the works of Stephen Crane, T.S. Eliot, Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, G.B. Shaw, James Joyce, E. M. Forster, Wallace Stevens, etc. Overall, the goal of the course is for students to grasp the relative contextual issues that arise from individual works studied, and then to select and focus on one of these Modernist texts in order to further research the issue, era, author, and extant critical discussion—all toward the composition of a longer analytical/interpretive essay (10-12 pages).

**SCOPE:** The scope of the class links literary texts with the historical/cultural/aesthetic/intellectual contexts relevant to the works in question. Through formal lecture, assigned supplementary background readings, and their own research, students will be expected to introduce these contexts as aspects of their interpretations.

**UNDERGRADUATE (400 LEVEL) STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Understand the textual and narrative innovations of a selection of Modernist works as set against the 18th and 19th century conventions of the genre in question.
- Identify how such experimental aspects of texts in question correspond to 20th-century issues such as psychoanalytic thought pertaining to gender, race, and class, and/or
perception and subjectivity, individualism vs. collective politics, etc.

- Ability to confront how a key contextual matter is woven through a single work.
- Ability to research the critical discussion of this matter and employ this research in a close-reading of the language of the literary work in question toward the formation of a critical interpretation that is introduced, discussed, and concluded in a literary analysis essay.

GRADUATE (500 LEVEL) STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- All of the above learning outcomes for the undergraduate.
- The ability to research, obtain and compile a working bibliography for a critical essay.
- Understanding the conventions and forms of the graduate level research paper based on the model of the publishable article in the discipline.
- The ability to understand how one’s thesis on a work in question enters into the broader discussion in the humanities surrounding the analysis of Western modernity.
- Understanding how the life and the work of an author in question feed into interpretation of a work.
- A working knowledge of a theoretical orientation that best suits the argument of the student’s thesis paper.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE (400 LEVEL): The two central evaluative tools for the undergraduate will be the essay examination (mid-term and final, in-class forms), and the formal critical essay. The essay involves research on the student’s topic, support drawn from the course’s background readings as well as secondary critical sources, and careful close-readings of subject text(s). Students will be expected to write in a clear, organized, and detailed manner on the examinations, and will expected to be able to implement the skills of organized, informed, and cogent essay writing for the paper. Final grades will be determined for undergraduates by the average of three unequally weighted grades (25% for mid-term, 45% paper, 30% for final)

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE (500 LEVEL): The graduate student in this class will be expected to synthesize his/her knowledge of the cultural and aesthetic contexts of Modernism with accurate and insightful close-readings of the individual texts discussed. To accomplish this, graduates will sit for the mid-term in-class examination, which will carry either 25% or 30% of the weight of final grades. Graduates will also be assigned several critical sources alongside the other background readings in the class and will be expected to synthesize the arguments of these pieces with their reading of the primary texts. Graduates will not sit for the final examination; rather, the most significant objective for the graduate student is the competent execution of the argumentative essay. Given this, students will produce by the end of the course a graduate level critical essay. Around 20 pages in length, this essay will be modeled on the type of article a practitioner in the field must publish to establish him/herself as a viable candidate for the profession. The essay demands a student develop an extended bibliography, a theoretical and critical framework for the thesis argument, make use of biographical, historical, and secondary research, and conduct an in-depth close reading of the subject text to prove the argument through convincing interpretation of the work(s) in question. This study will be the
central evaluative tool for the graduate, representing 70-75% of the student’s final grade.

**Statement Regarding Disability Access Services:**
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

**ATTENDANCE:** Students will be allowed one (1) unexcused absence. If more absences accrue by the end of the semester, I reserve the right to question the student and possibly count the absences against him/her in the tabulation of his/her final grade. Please limit excused absences as well: schedule all appointments or things such as rides home outside of class time. If you are ill please contact me before the class that you will miss. I begin my class at the specified time; please be prompt.

**PAPERS:** One paper is mandatory for undergraduates and graduates. All papers are to be formal critical essays: they should introduce and map the historical/biographical/critical framework for the subject text itself as well as for the theme to be pursued, and should then conduct a “close-reading” of the work in question so as to prove the thesis. The single, undergraduate paper will be due during the latter half of the course, and should be about a 10-12 page piece on a selected work. The final, graduate term-paper will be based on the model of the publishable article, and produce a theoretical framework, a critical and historical framework, and a thorough and careful close-reading of the work(s) in question (20 pages).

All papers are to be typed, doubled-spaced, and free of spelling, grammatical and typographical errors. Papers are to be formal essays, containing contextually relevant introductions, coherent and complex theses, sustained and detailed arguments, and thoughtful conclusions. Sentence structure must be clear and concise; paragraph unity and overall organization must be readily apparent. Each page of your paper must have your name and page number in the upper right hand corner. Either MLA or Chicago Manual of Style method of citation and documentation will be acceptable. Each paper must be given an original title. No cover page is necessary: please title the first page of the essay and paper clip all pages together. Five (5) background/critical sources will be mandatory for the undergraduate paper; ten (10) or more for the graduate term paper. The writer must cite the text and all secondary sources in each instance of quotation. More about papers as they become due.

**LATE PAPERS:** I accept no late papers. If a student does not submit the paper during the class meeting it is due he/she will receive an F for that assignment.

**EXAMINATIONS:** A mid-term examination will be given to the entire class; undergraduates only will sit for a non-cumulative final examination. The mid-term may be in the take-home format, if the class so decides. This option may change depending on the weekly setting of the course (MWF or TTH), because the fifty-minute class does not lend itself to the in-class essay form. The final in either case will be a two-hour, in-class exam.
CONFERENCES: There may or may not be mandatory conferences; however, I'm always available for help or to further our classroom discussion. Often students want to speak about a paper before it is due; I am available during my office hours or by appointment.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Be sure you realize exactly what qualifies as plagiarism and what does not; explicit procedures taken for the discovery of academic dishonesty can be found in the “Academic Regulations” section of the Schedule of Classes. I will pursue to the letter of the University’s stated policies any case of plagiarism I may discover. To learn more about the University’s expectations for student conduct please go to: http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm

LEARNING RESOURCES: Texts in the course are as follows (in each instance, please obtain the exact edition given here):

SYLLABUS

SEPTEMBER

Week of 24th: Modernity and Modernism: Contexts, Movements, Figures, and Fictions: Introductory Lectures. Read Kershner, Twentieth Century Novel, 1-79. Finish assignment by end week. Read as well “The Double Image” (readings-shelf, student lounge); Graduates also read hand-outs from Bradbury & McFarlan’s Modernism. Read for next week: see below.

OCTOBER

Week of 1st: Fin-de-Siècle Naturalism and Impressionism: Stephen Crane’s Cylinder of Vision: Introduction, vii-xv; read Crane’s late short stories (1895-98), 227-354. Discuss class. Read for next week: see below.

Week of 8th: Finish Crane. The Impressionist/Symbolist Story: Read introduction to Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness (1898/1902), ix-xix; read entire novella. Read also Watt, 349-
Achebe, 336-49; Firchow, 233-41; Hawkins, 365-75. OR Joyce’s Dubliners?

Week of 15th: Conrad continued. The Greatest French (impressionist) novel in English: Begin to read Ford Maddox Ford’s *The Good Soldier* (1916). **NOTE: No class on Friday, Oct. 18th.**

Week of 22nd: Ford’s *Good Soldier.*

Week of 29th: Finish Ford and Impressionistic novel: **NOTE: Mid-term examination this week.**

**NOVEMBER**


*Graduate Bibliography due this week.*


Week of 19th: Faulkner. **NOTE: No class Friday 23rd: Thanksgiving break.**

Week of 26th: Finish Faulkner and conclude course. **NOTE: Undergrad Term Papers Due this week.**

**NOTE: Final, Tuesday December 4 @ 6:00 PM in class. Graduate Essay due Wednesday, December 5th; please submit in my office, Moreland 240B.**