ENGL 5800: Postmodern Literature, F16

T 6:00 PM to 8:50 PM

AUD 201

Masood Raja, AUD 106

Video and Audio Clips

What is postmodernism?
Octavia Butler
Don Delilo
Kurt Vonnegut
Ishmael Reed
Lecture on Thomas Pynchon
Postmodern Architecture
Download Syllabus in PDF


Introduction:
This course will focus on the works of major American postmodernist authors and our interaction with these texts as informed by the latest theoretical explanations of the postmodern condition. Thus, we will attempt to understand both the literary texts as well as the theoretical debates about postmodernism itself and the role of postmodernist fiction in the world of high capitalism, globalization, and with reference to the resurgence of the state during the current global financial meltdown.

Required Texts


Handouts
Postmodernism: An Introduction.
Ihab Hassan--Toward a Concept of Postmodernism.
Terry Eagleton--The Contradictions of Postmodernism.
Regarding Postmodernism--A Conversation with Fredric Jameson.
J Habermas--Modernity: An Unfinished Project.

Suggested Texts
McHale, Brian. Postmodernist Fiction.
Lyotard--The Postmodern Condition.

Course Policies and Requirements:

You are expected to come prepared for class: This involves reading the assigned texts, listening carefully to your peers, and contributing your views in a collegiate and stimulating way. **Attendance is mandatory.**

**Distribution of Points:**

Presentation  200 Points
Mid-Term  200 Points
Journal responses  200 Points.
Participation  100 Points
Term Paper  300 Points

Total  1000 Points

**YOU MUST FINISH ALL MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS TO PASS THE COURSE**

Response Journals:
You will turn in a response journal to the assigned reading every week. Your response must at least be 500 words.

**Presentation:**
During the first week you will choose a particular novel for your presentation. Your presentation will then fall in the week in which your chosen novel is scheduled for class discussion. I expect a 30-40 minutes **FORMAL PRESENTATION** using the insights provided by the secondary readings. You must also turn in a 3-5 page written brief of your presentation with a detailed list of your scholarly sources. Following are some, but not all, questions you may consider:

- What does the text say about gender, race, ethnicity, class, nation, or power and what are your views about it?
- Did you agree or disagree with the text’s politics? why?
Mid-Term Exam:
The Mid-term will be an in-class essay exam administered in the 8th week.

Class Participation:
As this is a seminar based on a discussion format, your thoughtful participation is essential to the success of the class. I encourage collegiate, open, and thought-provoking class discussions. Remember, we are all here to learn, so let us share our ideas and knowledge to make this class into a dynamic learning experience.

Term Paper:
The final term paper will be due on the last day of class. The paper should be 15-20 pages, with a clearly defined thesis and a coherent argument. I would encourage you to choose your topic early and do extensive research. I will be available to assist during all stages of your research and composition process.

Attendance:
You are expected to attend the class regularly. You will be in the danger of failing the course if you miss more than ONE class sessions.

Cheating and Plagiarism: It is wrong to offer someone else's work as your own, intentionally or accidentally, so please follow the University Policy on it.
ADA
Please bring me the necessary documentation for any recorded disability and I will be happy to accommodate you.
UNT Policy on Academic Integrity.

SENATE BILL 11 (“CAMPUS CARRY”). Students must read UNT’s policy on concealed handguns on campus, which I’ve posted on Blackboard (or see http://campuscarry.unt.edu/untpolicy.) Here I note that 1) only licensed persons may legally carry handguns on campus, and 2) this right only authorizes the licensed carrying of “handgun[s], the presence of which is not openly noticeable to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person.” Per policy, if a gun is “partially or wholly visible, even if holstered,” it’s not legal on campus, whether or not it’s licensed. I report all illegal activities to the UNT police, regardless of their nature.

“ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATIONS.” All students should be aware of UNT’s guidelines for responding to “active shooter situations” (see http://emergency.unt.edu/get-prepared/Active-Shooter).
Weekly Schedule:
(Note this is a tentative schedule and the instructor retains the right to change it as and when necessary)

Week One
Introduction to the course
Presentation Assignments
Readings:
Hutcheon

Week Two
Class Discussion: Hutcheon
Readings: Hutcheon, Norton--Introduction
Norton--Burroughs (Crab Nebula) & Barthelme (Sentence)

Week Three
Class Discussion: Hutcheon, Norton--Introduction
Norton--Burroughs (Crab Nebula) & Barthelme (Sentence)
Readings:
Gass (In the heart of . . .) O'Brien, Anzaldua, Coover (A night at the Movies) and Morrison.

Week Four
Class Discussion: Gass (In the heart of . . .) O'Brien, Anzaldua, Coover (A night at the Movies) and Morrison.

Readings:
Norton: Barth (Dunyazadia)

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five*.

Week Five

Class Discussion: Norton: Barth (Dunyazadia)

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five*.

Reading:
Delilo--*Libra*

Week Six
Class Discussion: Delilo--Libra
Readings:
Delilo--Libra

**Week Seven**
Class Discussion: Delilo--Libra
Reading:
Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo.*

**Week Eight**
Class Discussion: Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo.*
Mid Term
Readings:
Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo.*

**Week Nine**
Class Discussion: Reed, *Mumbo Jumbo.*
Readings:
Butler, *Parable of the Talents.*

**Week Ten**
Class Discussion: Butler, *Parable of the Talents.*
Readings:
Butler, *Parable of the Talents.*

**Week Eleven**
Class Discussion: Butler, *Parable of the Talents.*
Readings:
Gibson, *Neuromancer.*

**Week Twelve**
Class Discussion: Gibson, William, *Neuromancer*
Readings:
Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow.*

**Week Thirteen and Fourteen**
Class Discussion: Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow.*

**Week Fifteen and Sixteen**
Term Paper Workshops.