

Bergen Community College
School of English/Department of Composition and Literature
Professor
Professor's email address
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LIT226: Introduction to the Novel

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the novel as a literary genre from its beginnings to the present. Authors to be studied may include, but are not limited to, Lady Murasaki, Cervantes, Richardson, Fielding, Voltaire, Austen, Melville, Dickens, Eliot, Flaubert, Dostoevsky, James, Joyce, Garcia Marquez, Achebe, Mahfouz, and Bolaño.

Prerequisite: *Successful completion of WRT101.*

Student Learning Objectives:

As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the basic characteristics of prose fiction, such as point-of-view, plot, and characterization.
2. Analyze the development of the novel as a literary form, from its beginnings with such types as the epistolary novel, through the Romantic period, on to Realism, Naturalism and Modernism, and finally the Post-Modern novel.
3. Employ theoretical approaches to the study of the novel including (but not limited to) Feminist, New Historicist, Psychoanalytic, and Marxist theory and criticism.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical, aesthetic, and literary aspects of the novel through both oral and written assignments.
5. Produce a properly formatted written evaluation of selected novels; and demonstrate competency in both research methodologies and literary analysis.

Course Texts:

Sample Required Texts:

Selected Paperbacks, such as Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji*, Richardson's *Pamela*, Austen's *Persuasion*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and Garcia-Marquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Sample Supplementary Reading:

Bloom, *Novelists and Novels*
Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*
Fish, *How to Write a Sentence*
Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*
James, *The Art of the Novel*
Moretti, *Modern Epic*
Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*
Wood, *How Fiction Works*

Course Content:

This course will trace the trajectory of the novel—from its progenitors like the epic (the *Odyssey* and so on) as well as ancient examples of satire—to Cervantes' iconic *Don Quixote*, and eventually to the postmodern landscapes of such writers as DeLillo and Bolaño. Students will consider form—from the 17th century epistolary novel to the 21st century nonlinear and graphic novel. Students will also consider genre—the Romantic, the Realistic, the Satirical. The course will look at theme—the *bildungsroman*, the picaresque, the postcolonial; and it will likewise consider setting and imagery, dialogue, point-of-view, and other *traditional* considerations. As the course proceeds, students will read novels in various forms.

Evaluation will be calculated as follows:

Critical Essays: 40%

Examinations: 25%

Journal entries and/or quizzes: 25%

Class participation: 10%

Written assignments must be formatted according to MLA standards. You will find citation guides on our library's website (www.bergen.edu/library). BCC's Writing Center is located in L125, and you are encouraged to work on your papers with our faculty and professional writing tutors. Please note that the center is indeed a tutoring center—you are not to drop off your paper for proofreading as this is not a function of the center.

Attendance Policy:

BCC Attendance Policy: "All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes."

ADA Policy:

Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can request support services from the Office of Specialized Services of Bergen Community College located in room L 115 of the Pitkin Learning Center.

<http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/Pages/5175.aspx>

A note on plagiarism: Please give credit where credit is due! Honesty is expected of you. It is expected that the work you hand in will always be your own, and that you will never copy sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or whole essays from any other person's work, for that is plagiarism. If you are ever unclear about how to cite another person or author's ideas, come see me or consult your manual. If you do plagiarize, you will receive an F for the assignment under review. If you plagiarize more than once, you will fail the course and may be reported to the college's judiciary committee.

Class Schedule:

(This is a model/example of how this course will proceed.)

Week 1: Introduction to the novel

This week we will discuss the history of the novel, which will begin with a brief discussion of Homer's *Odyssey* as a foundational model. We will also discuss the following literary elements and genres: epic, satire, bildungsroman, picaresque, epistolary, Romantic, Victorian, Modern, Postmodern, and Postcolonial; and context/setting, plot, characterization, symbolism, imagery, metaphor, allegory, and point-of-view.

Week 2: The Classic Bildungsroman as Satire

Voltaire *Candide*

Week 3: The Romantic

Mary Shelley *Frankenstein*

Critical Essay #1 Due—2-3 page essay in which you discuss *Candide* as both a satire and also as a classic bildungsroman. You will be expected to examine the various literary elements—metaphor, symbolism, etc.—that Voltaire used in the novel

Week 4: *Frankenstein*

Week 5: The Victorian Novel: A Portrait of Nineteenth Century Economics and Social Policy

Charles Dickens *Hard Times*

Week 6: *Hard Times*

Week 7: Modernity & Women

Gustav Flaubert *Madame Bovary*

Midterm Review—the midterm examination will be a series of short essays based upon both class discussion and our readings. The examination will be due during week nine.

Week 8: *Madame Bovary*

Week 9: *Madame Bovary*

Midterm Examination Due!

Week 10: Existentialism & Order in the Nineteenth Century

Fyodor Dostoevsky *Notes from Underground*

Critical Essay #2—2-3 pages in which you compare the persona of Madame Bovary to Dostoevsky's lone paradoxalist. How do both protagonists offer a dire picture of modernity?

Week 11: A Revolution in Form: Joyce's Stream of Consciousness & High Modernism

James Joyce *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

***Final Paper Proposals Due:** this week you will submit the author and title of the novel that you will use as the basis for your term paper along with a list of secondary sources. Please note that you may choose one of the novels from the approved list below, but you are not required to do so.

Week 12: *Portrait*

Week 13: Colonialism & its Discontents

Gabriel Garcia Marquez *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Critical Essay #3—2-3 pages in which you compare the *form* of *Notes from the Underground* to *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

Week 14: *Love in the Time of Cholera*

Week 15: The Graphic Novel

Marjane Satrapi *Persepolis*

***Final Papers Due.**