**E314J: Literature and Film (Spring 2013)**

Instructor: Cate Blouke E-mail: cate.blouke@utexas.edu

Spring 2013: T/Th 2:00-3:30, FAC 7 Office: PCL 5.531

Unique number: 34655 Office hours: Tuesday 3:30-5:30, and by

appointment

Course Website: https://sites.google.com/site/catebloukescourses/

Course Description:

From *Harry Potter* to the *Twilight* series to the *Hunger Games*, Hollywood continues to mine popular works of fiction for cinematic fodder. And this tradition dates back to the very beginnings of cinema - with D.W. Griffith’s adaptation of *The Clansmen* into the first feature-length film: *Birth of a Nation*. But what happens in this shift from written word to big screen? What do the additions and deletions of plot points, characters, and other “integral” aspects of a text mean for the stories that get told? How is the tone of a novel conveyed on the page and then effectively (and faithfully) translated into moving images?

The broad goals of this course will be to introduce students to the basic tools of literary analysis, familiarize them with some of the major theoretical trends in literary and film studies, and to develop students’ own critical writing. We will discuss the relationship between form and content, and students will learn to close read texts/films for both historic context and cultural significance. In addition, students will analyze the effects of cultural transpositions of texts, asking, for example, what it means to move *Hamlet* from Renaissance Denmark to corporate America (as in Ethan Hawke’s film adaptation). For most of the texts in the course (primarily short stories or excerpts from larger works), we will first analyze the literary text and then extend our inquiry through film viewings (outside of class).

No expertise in literary criticism or film theory will be presumed. The course will help students prepare for upper-division English classes (as well as a wide range of upper-division courses in other departments) by teaching students the necessary skills of close reading, critical writing, and research.

As this is a writing flag course, students will be expected to write and revise two substantial papers in addition to periodic reading responses. The essays/major writing assignments will build upon each other as students analyze an original text of their choosing (first two papers) and then a film adaptation of that text (final paper).

Some of the skills you will learn in this class include:

* how to read carefully and critically (i.e. close read)
* how to approach texts from formal, historical, and cultural standpoints
* how to navigate a variety of digital media platforms
* how to conduct library and web-based research and document your sources
* how to edit and proofread your own and others’ prose
* how to produce a clean, efficient academic writing style
* how to construct and organize effective arguments

Texts:

Required texts: *"They Say / I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing (Second Edition),* Gerald Graff & Cathy Birkenstein, Norton. *The Complete Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi, Pantheon. *The Virgin Suicides*, Geoffrey Eugenides, Picador.

Course Packet (available the second week of classes – from Jenn’s Copies)

Grade Breakdown:

Weekly discussion/blog posts 10%

Reading quizzes and classroom participation 10%

Presentations 10%

1-page response papers on readings, 5 times throughout course 15%

3-4-page report on an original text (read individually) 10%

4-6-page research paper on critical response to the original text 20%

6-8-page longer paper analyzing an adaptation of the original text 25%.

Grading Policy:

Given that this course is designed to fulfill a writing flag requirement, you will necessarily be expected to produce a significant amount of writing. As the Center for Core Curriculum’s website indicates, “The purpose of the Writing flag is to improve the quality of students’ writing across all disciplines at UT Austin and to help students continue to develop their writing skills throughout their undergraduate careers.”

Some of you may have already taken courses with substantial writing components, but for others this will be your first taste of college-level writing. Regardless of your level of experience, one of my primary pedagogical goals for the course is to teach you writing as a process. Pieces of writing are like sculptures, the blank page is a lump of clay that takes shape slowly, with time and effort. With that in mind, revision is a built-in component of some assignments, but I also maintain an open-ended revision policy.

Each substantial writing assignment may be revised and re-submitted until you are satisfied with your grade. Keep in mind, however, that “revision” does not mean merely correcting mistakes. To have effectively revised a paper is to have re-envisioned it: to reconsider structure (both global and local); to weed out extraneous claims and clauses; to improve the flow of ideas and sentences; to provide additional support for weaker arguments. I will only provide feedback (or a new grade) on resubmitted assignments that demonstrate substantial revision. Additionally, you will be required to meet with me during office hours or by appointment to discuss your plans for revision prior to resubmitting any assignment.

While I hope that personal fulfillment and improvement in your writing skills will be your main objective in this class, I understand that you’re also interested in passing the class. I will assign letter grades to your papers based on whether you *significantly exceed requirements/expectations* (A), whether you meet them well (B), whether you meet them competently (C), or whether you fail to meet them at all (D or F). I strongly encourage you to make use of my office hours to discuss the course and your work, particularly if you find yourself struggling early on. I WILL be grading on the plus/minus grading scale. All numeric grades for this class will fit within the following scale:

A: 94.0-100.0

A-: 90.0-93.9

B+: 87.0-89.9

B: 84.0-86.9

B-: 80.0-83.9

C+: 77.0-79.9

C: 74.0-76.9

C-: 70.0-73.9

D+: 67.0-69.9

D: 64.0-66.9

D-: 60.0-63.9

F: 0-59.9

Attendance:

Attendance is required, as is participation in discussion and arriving to class prepared (i.e. with the reading done and your texts in hand). Arriving to class without having read or without your book/text may result in your being counted absent – as you will be unable to adequately participate in the day's discussion/activities. Students are allowed 3 absences without incurring a grade penalty. The fourth and each subsequent absence will incur a 2% penalty on the final overall grade. Exceeding 6 absences will result in failure of the course.

Major Writing Assignments:

The writing assignments for this course are designed to build upon each other, offering a semester-long portfolio of writing based around the same artifact(s). Each student will select a novel from the list provided (see back page) to read on his or her own, and he will then spend the semester first analyzing that text in detail and ultimately exploring its film adaptation.

In paper one, you will write a short summary of your chosen text followed by a close reading of a particular passage or section of the novel. In the second long paper, you will engage your own analysis with the greater critical conversation surrounding the work, drawing on individually completed research as well as the literary theories discussed in class. For the final long paper, you will compare the novel with its adaptation, analyzing the major differences/significance of various directorial choices made in the film.

Assignment Submission:

Unless otherwise specified, your written work will be completed using Microsoft Word and submitted electronically via the course wiki, posted to your private student folder. To gain access to the wiki, you must first create an account with PBworks and then request access to the Literature and Film wiki page. Learning to navigate the wiki and successfully submit electronic documents are just a few of the many digital literacy skills you will gain from this course.

Late Work:

Assignments should be uploaded to the wiki by the start of class on the due date. Any work submitted beyond this deadline will be penalized by one full letter grade, and this penalty will stick with the assignment regardless of revisions. In addition to affecting your overall performance, habitually turning in work late will put you out of sync with the rest of the class. Also, keep in mind that late submission will result in assignments being returned late, which may set you back even further if the assignment needs revision.

Plagiarism and Collusion:

The writing you do in this course must be your own. Passing off the work of others as your own can be either plagiarism or collusion. Both are scholastic offenses that I will not tolerate. Be certain you understand what these terms mean. The Department of Rhetoric and Writing's Statement on Scholastic Responsibility offers detailed explanations of acceptable and unacceptable forms of quotation and paraphrasing. Plagiarism is a serious offense, and students caught plagiarizing risk failing the entire course, not simply a given assignment.

Presentations:

Each of you will be working in groups of two to three, to develop a presentation, roughly 20 minutes long, in which you will introduce a seminal work of literary theory. You will be expected to contextualize the selection you’ve read, to explain the central argument(s) to your classmates, to provide an outside example that illustrates the theory, to draw connections with the texts and ideas we are covering in class, and to generate a handout for your fellow students.

Discussion/Blogging:

For this class, you will each create individual blogs on Tumblr and follow the course blog as well as your classmates' blogs. Discussion topics will be posted for each reading, and you will be expected to respond to at least one of the prompts each week. The blogs are intended to generate discussion both in class and out, so I welcome you to respond to your classmates' posts and to use the blog as a conversational tool. These are relatively informal writing assignments, and are graded on a credit/no credit basis. While I encourage you to keep the posts conversational, keep in mind that you are writing on a public platform and be reasonably attentive to grammar, punctuation, and paragraphing/formatting.

Reading Quizzes:

It's important to stay on top of all the assigned reading for the course. Writing a post about Tuesday's discussion topic does not exempt you from reading the materials for Thursday. To ensure everyone is keeping up with the reading and prepared to participate in classroom discussion, I will periodically give in-class reading quizzes (between 7 and 10 over the semester)

E-mail:

E-mail is an official means of communication at UT-Austin, and I will frequently use this medium to communicate class information. You are therefore required to obtain a UT email account and to check it daily. All students may claim an email address at no cost by visiting the UTMail website. Now that the university has joined forces with google mail, the e-mail service is easily organized and you can keep your address after graduation. I encourage you to select an e-mail address that is professional and recognizable. While "sexylonghorn69" might have seemed like a good idea at the time, it might not be ideal for job applications (or e-mailing your professors). Please feel free to e-mail me with questions and concerns, but keep in mind that my response might not be immediate, particularly if your message is sent late at night. Also, if your question is a lengthy one (about writing, etc.), I may ask you to visit my office hours instead of responding via e-mail.

Computer Use and Availability:

As students in a Digital Writing and Research Lab classroom, you are also welcome to use the DWRL open lab in PAR 102 (M-TH 10:00am-6:00 pm; F 10:00-1:00).

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), at (512) 471-6259 [voice] or (866) 329-3986 [video phone].

Religious Holy Days:

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Undergraduate Writing Center:

I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222. The Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. Consultants work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Their services are not just for writing with "problems." Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant's advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

Schedule:

While I will rarely (if ever) disrupt your schedule by moving the due dates of major assignments, all readings and short homework assignments are subject to change. The class will evolve based on your interests and participation. As a result, occasional juggling of readings may occur from time to time, so check the schedule on the course website for up-to-date reading assignments.

The following reflects the skeleton of our reading plan. Please consult the website for exact pages and assignments.

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| **Date** | **Topic/Reading** | **Due** |
| T 1/15 | intro |   |
| TH 1/17 | Hamlet, Act I |   |
| T 1/22 | Hamlet, Acts II-3 |   |
| TH 1/24 | Hamlet, Act 4 | Close Reading - short paper 1 |
| T 1/28 | Hamlet, Act V |  |
| TH 1/30 | film/crit | Claim Practice - Short paper 2 |
| T 2/5 | Heart of Darkness, 1st half |   |
| TH 2/7 | Heart of Darkness, 2nd half | choose novel |
| T 2/12 | Phillip K. Dick | Make a claim - short paper 3 |
| TH 2/14 | Dick/film |   |
| T 2/19 | Dick/film | Museum Box Assn. |
| TH 2/21 | writing  |   |
| T 2/26 | peer review | Paper 1 draft - summary and close reading |
| TH 2/28 | research | Paper 1 final - summary and close reading |
| T 3/5 | No class - paper conferences |  Come prepared to discuss revisions |
| TH 3/7 | writing - quotation |   |
| T 3/12 | Spring Break |   |
| TH 3/14 | Spring Break |   |
| T 3/19 | Virgin Suicides | Paper 1 revisions |
| TH 3/21 | Virgin Suicides | Article summary - short paper 4 |
| T 3/26 | Virgin Suicides |   |
| TH 3/28 | VS film |   |
| T 4/2 | TS/IS |   |
| TH 4/4 | peer review | Paper 2 draft – analysis  |
| T 4/9 | Palhaniuk/close listening | Paper 2 final - analysis |
| TH 4/11 | adaptation/Fight Club |   |
| T 4/16 | Apolcalypse Now |   |
| TH 4/18 | Persepolis | Close reading film - short paper 5 |
| T 4/23 | Persepolis |   |
| TH 4/25 | Persepolis |   |
| T 4/30 | No class – paper conferences | Bring thesis |
| TH 5/2 | Persepolis film/final class |   |
| TH 5/9 |   | Final Papers Due by 12:00 (noon) |

List of Approved Novels Adapted into Film

For your major writing assignments in this class, you will be expected to select a novel from the list below to read and analyze. Each of these texts has been adapted into a film, some of them more than once. While it may be tempting to select a book whose adaptation you've already seen (say, you just loved Kiera Knightly in *Pride and Prejudice* and think this is as good a reason as any to read the book), I strongly recommend you select something new to work on. I can only assure you that in my relatively extensive experience, reading the book after seeing the film more often than not results in a *long and boring read*. Since you will be writing two long papers solely about the novel, getting bored with it early on will only make your life more difficult. Additionally, it will be difficult to separate out your image of the characters as portrayed in the film from the way(s) they are depicted in writing.

This list represents a wide array of periods and genres, and I encourage you to consult the Internet to get a sense of any texts that seem like they might appeal. If, however, you find yourself completely at a loss as to which text to work on, I'm more than happy to discuss them with you in office hours and help you pick a book that will be a good fit for your interests.

Atwood, Margaret - *The Handmaid's Tail*

Austen, Jane - *Pride & Prejudice*

*- Sense & Sensibility*

*- Mansfield Park*

Bradbury, Ray - *Fahrenheit 451*

Bronte, Charlotte - *Jane Eyre*

Bronte, Emily – *Wuthering Heights*

Burgess, Anthony – *A Clockwork Orange*

Burroughs, William S. - *Naked Lunch*

Capote, Truman - *In Cold Blood*

Dick, Phillip K. - *A Scanner Darkly*

*- Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Dickens, Charles *- Great Expectations*

*- A Tale of Two Cities*

Eliot, George *- Adam Bede*

Ellis, Brett Easton *- American Psycho*

Flaubert, Gustave - *Madame Bovary*

Foer, Jonathan Safran - *Everything is Illuminated*

*- Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*

Ford, Ford Madox - *The Good Soldier*

Forster, E.M. *- Howard's End*

*- A Room with a View*

*- Passage to India*

Fowles, John *– The French Lieutenant's Woman*

Golden, Arthur *- Memoirs of a Geisha*

Heller, Joseph *- Catch 22*

Hurston, Zora Neale *- Their Eyes Were Watching God*

James, P.D. *– The Children of Men*

Kesey, Ken - *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Koch, Christopher J. *- The Year of Living Dangerously*

Kundera, Milan – *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

LeHane, Dennis *- Shutter Island*

McCullers, Carson *- The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*

Morrison, Toni *- Beloved*

Nabokov, Vladimir *- Lolita*

O'Connor, Flannery *- Wise Blood*

Orwell, George *- 1984*

Puzo, Mario *- The Godfather*

Rys, Jean *- Wide Sargasso Sea* (must be familiar w/Jane Eyre)

Sinclair, Upton – *Oil!*

Susann, Jacqueline *- Valley of the Dolls*

Thompson, Hunter S. *- Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*

Updike, John *- The Witches of Eastwick*

Vonnegut, Kurt *- Slaughterhouse Five*

Waugh, Evelyn *- Brideshead Revisited*

Wharton, Edith *- Age of Innocence*

*- House of Mirth*

Wilde, Oscar - *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Woolf, Virginia *- Mrs. Dalloway*