COURSE OUTLINE FALL 2009

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<tr>
<th>ENG 239</th>
<th>Literature of War and Conflict</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course Number</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Hours: lecture/laboratory</td>
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Catalog description:
Surveys literary responses to war and conflict with particular focus on the psychological effects of warfare. Examines multiple genres, cultures, eras, and viewpoints, but primary focus may rest on a particular era or conflict. May include texts by: Homer, Sun Tzu, Stephen Ambrose, Oppenheimer, Hemingway, Tim O’Brien, and Elie Weisel. 3 lecture hours

Prerequisite: Grade of “C” or higher in ENG 102

Corequisites: None

Required texts/other materials:
NOTE: Text selection may vary from semester to semester.
In addition to handouts from the instructor, students may expect to read:


A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway, 1995 reprint. Scribner.


Course coordinator:
Holly-Katharine Mathews
Ext 3594
mathewsh@mccc.edu
Websites:
The following is a sampling of useful websites that relate directly to course material:

PBS Civil War Series Website: http://www.pbs.org/civilwar/
South African History Online: http://www.sahistory.org.za/
History of the Trojan War: http://www.stanford.edu/~plomio/history.html
Martin Luther King Jr.’s speeches: http://www.mlkonline.net/
BBC History of WWI: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone/
BBC History of WWII: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwtwo/
WWII Timeline: http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.htm
PBS The Vietnam War: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/
The Vietnam War: http://www.vietnamwar.com/
Yale Genocide Studies Program: http://www.yale.edu/gsp/rwanda/
The Museum of Jewish Heritage: http://www.mjhnyc.org/visit_.htm

Electronic Databases
The following databases are available to students at: www.mccc.edu/student_library_online.shtml

Academic Search Premier (Ebsco Host)
Academic Universe: Reference (Lexis Nexis)
Biographies Plus Illustrated (Wilson)
Dictionary of Art (Oxford)
Ebsco Host
Encyclopedia Britannica
Facts on File Online
Grove Art Online
Grove Music Online
Lexis Nexis
Literature Resource Center (Gale)
Military and Government Collection (Ebsco Host)

Books
Texts may include selections from the following:

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque, 1987 reissue. Ballantine Books.


Ethics for the New Millennium by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 2001 reissue. Riverhead Books.

A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway, 1995 reprint. Scribner.


For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway, 1995 reprint. Scribner.


**Videos/ DVD's**

Audiovisual content may include selections from the following:

1. After Mein Kampf
2. Amandla!
3. Apocalypse Now
4. Band of Brothers
5. Black Hawk Down
6. The Civil War series by Ken Burns
7. Full Metal Jacket
8. The Hunt for Red October
9. Les Miserables
10. M*A*S*H*
11. Over There
12. Patton
13. Platoon
14. Saving Private Ryan
15. Schindler's List
16. Triumph of the Will
17. The True Glory
18. War and Peace
19. The Why We Fight Series, documentaries by Frank Capra and John Houston
20. The Will of a People

**Other learning resources:**

Tutors are available through the Learning Center on the second floor of the Library on the West Windsor campus.

The Holocaust and Genocide Resource Center on the first floor of the Library on the West Windsor campus houses a wide variety of information useful to students in this course.

**Course goals:**

*The student will be able to:*

- Demonstrate familiarity with and nuanced understanding of a broad range of literature dealing with war and conflict, having read, written about, and carefully considered texts from a variety of eras and cultures.
• Identify common themes in literary responses to warfare such as: loss of innocence; psychological trauma; the struggle to rebuild; self-image and national image; coping with permanent bodily injury, illness, or scarring; loss of loved ones.

• Name and describe the prominent characteristics of the stages in the cycle of war and peace (including: perceptions of threat, distrust, hostility, projection, militant enthusiasm, battles, escalation, victories or defeats, desire for peace, negotiations, and treaty) and be able to pick out these stages as they appear in the literature read in the course.

• Engage in sustained debate on the topic of the virtues and detriments of war and why we go to war, using the texts covered to support positions taken.

• Show through discussion and in writing an awareness of and an interest in literature and its past and potential capacity to affect humankind, particularly in regards to warfare.

• Show an awareness of the universality of warfare and conflict and express personal, aesthetic, and intellectual reactions to the topic as seen in literature.

• Be prepared for life-long learning, ready to continue on to more in-depth study in the humanities.

Course-specific General Education goals and objectives

• Communication: Students will communicate effectively in writing

• Critical thinking, problem solving and information literacy: Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information gathered through different media and from a variety of sources.

• Ethical dimension: Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

• Social Science: Students will analyze and discuss societal issues using theories and concepts from social science.

• Humanities: Students will analyze works of the literary, visual and performing arts.

• Historical perspective: Students will analyze historical events and movements in western and non-western societies and assess their subsequent significance.

• Diversity and global perspective: Students will analyze the implications of commonalities and differences among culturally diverse peoples.

Units of study in detail:
Note: It is intended that the instructor will select eight or more of the units below to teach each semester, splitting larger units over multiple weeks as needed, but always covering the first two units in depth, followed by a spectrum of time periods thereafter, and meeting all learning goals as assessed through journal writing, class discussion, papers and exams.
Unit I: Intro to ENG 239 and Review of Literary Analysis Terms and Concepts

The students will be able to:
1. Identify expectations as presented in the course syllabus.
2. Use and apply terms of literary analysis that were introduced in ENG 101 and ENG 102 but reviewed in this week, including: mood, voice, tone, plot, setting, characterization and so on.
3. Implement and identify different strategies of analysis used to address poetry, prose and fiction as opposed to non-fiction.
4. Analyze several excerpts and poems in class in small groups and as part of a larger class discussion, while practicing applying strategies of literary analysis.
5. Chronicle their thinking by making initial entries in their course log books.

Unit II: Theories of Aggression and Warfare through the Lens of Literature

The students will be able to:
1. Identify and describe several schools of thought regarding the origins and nature of human tendency for group violence, after having examined excerpts from Allan Guggenbuhl’s *The Incredible Fascination of Violence*, Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson’s *Raising Cain*, and Anthony Stevens’s *The Roots of War and Terror*.
2. Respond in their logs and in class discussion to questions regarding the difference between individual aggression and group violence, and the question of whether humans are, essentially, violent by nature.
3. Identify key concepts in selections from *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu and selected poems by C.P. Cavafy and begin to put the sociological and psychological theories into literary context in their discussions.
4. Correctly track common themes and arguments both for and against war.
5. Discuss the masculine nature of war and war literature, and respond to the notion of protecting “women and children” from going to war, and other gender issues relating to warfare.

Unit III: Ancient Conflicts in Literature

The students will be able to:
1. Gain a visual understanding of information from the archaeological and artistic record of warfare from various parts of the world, from the ancient Mayan civilizations to the ancient Minoans, having viewed PowerPoint slides on these topics.
2. Analyze text from Thucydides describing the Peloponnesian war (431-404BCE), and accounts of the Punic Wars including information on Hannibal, Scipio, and the siege of Carthage (264-146BCE), comparing and contrasting these texts with the cycle of warfare as described in *The Roots of War and Terror* by Anthony Stephens.
3. Pinpoint how different means of warfare may change literary responses. For example, will naval warfare be treated differently in literature from hand-to-hand combat? How might the evolution of arms and armaments alter physical and emotional reactions to warfare? As we begin by looking at ancient, low-tech warfare, do we anticipate that this type will be more or less gruesome than modern warfare? Why? Why not?
4. Consider selections from *The Iliad* by Homer in literary terms, and discuss the mythic status of warfare.
5. Discuss the moral and ethical issues of warfare and the viability of laws regarding how warfare should be carried out, a theme that will be returned to throughout the semester.
**Unit IV: Wars of Independence and Revolution**

**The students will be able to:**
1. Track key themes and use literary analysis concepts to tackle excerpts from *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo.
2. Develop strategies for overcoming fear of reading long novels and lengthy literary pieces.
3. Grasp the basic aesthetic and thematic impacts the French Revolution had on literature and art, particularly how it colored the nature of the Romantic period.
5. Analyze similarities and differences between the revolutionary literature of France and that of the U.S., demonstrated by writing in their log books.
6. Identify passages from diverse works that deal with patriotism and honor and compare them across the texts.
7. Consider and describe the tone of revolutionary literature, asking specifically: is it more optimistic than other types of warfare literature examined so far? Should it be? Why? Why not?

**Unit V: Civil Warfare: Brother vs. Brother**

**The students will be able to:**
2. Evaluate poetry of the Spanish Civil War including poems by Pablo Neruda, Federico Garcia Lorca, and Rafael Alberti and compare these texts with visual images by Picasso, Miro, and Dali.
3. Correlate information from Ken Burns’s *Civil War* series with the literary themes and texts covered.
4. Compare and contrast American Civil War literature with Spanish Civil War literature, looking for overlaps and dichotomies.
5. Begin work on first paper topics having reviewed principles for constructing a well supported, critical and analytic thesis. Students will be able to use MLA citation and grasp expectations for paper writing as described by the instructor.

**Unit VI: Literary Responses to World War I - Modernism**

**The students will be able to:**
1. Discuss thematic and literary elements of *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemmingway, and compare the longer text to short selections from *The Poetry Of Shell Shock: Wartime Trauma And Healing In Wilfred Owen, Ivor Gurney And Siegfried Sassoon*.
2. Define the “Lost Generation” and identify its key voices. Be able to correctly identify places in the texts that express Modernism’s response to both the Victorian era and the disillusionment of World War I.
3. Analyze key features of Hemmingway’s style, considering it in literary and historical contexts.
4. Identify themes and explore the nuances of poems by Owen, Gurney and Sassoon and relate them to Hemmingway’s text.
5. Submit their first papers for a grade, and submit their logs for review and comments. They will also review all material covered thus far, both in small groups and with the instructor so that they will be able to pass the in-class mid-term exam, consisting of 25 multiple choice questions on the readings and key concepts, 5 short answer essay questions, and 1 long answer essay asking students to analyze a short excerpt of poem they have not seen before in terms of the material and concepts they have covered up to this point.
**Unit VIII: Literary Responses to World War II**

The students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast thematic and stylistic similarities and differences between *Night* by Elie Weisel, *Maus* by Art Speigleman, and excerpts from *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler.
2. Appreciate the quandary of the Holocaust having listened to tapes of interviews with WWII survivors taken in the months directly following the war, before the Holocaust had a name.
3. Prepare for field trip to the Holocaust Museum (or alternative online museum assignment) by working together to compile a list of questions they want to address, objects they want to be on the look out for (such as examples of propaganda etc.)
4. Note: Week ten of the semester will involve a trip to the Holocaust Museum in New York.

**Unit IX: Genocide and Extermination**

The students will be able to:

1. Discuss excerpts from *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* by Luong Ung, and contrast the Laotian experience with the Rwandan experience as expressed in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* by Immaculee Ilibagiza.
2. Catalogue and describe multiple factors that have driven mass exterminations, from megalomania to paranoia to extreme xenophobia and religious intolerance, and discuss these in terms of their experience visiting the Holocaust Museum or its alternative assignment.
3. Consider in log entries and in group discussions the stylistic differences and thematic similarities of writings about genocide.
4. Define and apply such terms as “survivor’s guilt.”

**Unit X: Warfare and Social, Economic, and Technological Change**

The students will be able to:

2. Weigh the benefits and costs of warfare, analyzing how wars, for all their depravity, have often brought about the invention of technologies and advancement of social changes that have benefited mankind in the long run, from the trebuchet to the VW Beetle, the Saturn 5 rocket, to the women’s movement.
3. Bring this new literary information into conversation with material covered to this point, considering the new selections not only in literary terms but also in terms of moral dilemmas, and psychological and biological determinants for war.
4. Begin work on second papers, staking out a preliminary thesis that they can defend using the literature and materials covered. They will be able to exchange ideas and rough drafts with peers for feedback, and these will be attached to final drafts when they are submitted.

**Unit XI: Guerilla Warfare and Modern Media: Vietnam in Literature**

The students will be able to:

1. Discuss excerpts from *The Vietnam Reader* by Stuart O’Nan, particularly focusing on the evolution of public sentiment regarding the Vietnam war contrasted with the experience of men on the ground. Exceptions from Michael Herr’s “Dispatches,” and selections from Tim O’Brien will be covered, among others.
2. Appreciate in more depth the themes discussed in their Reader through listening to “The Ballad of the Green Berets” by Sgt. Barry Sadler and “Fortunate Son” by Credence Clearwater Revival.
They will be able to analyze the lyrics using the same techniques they would use to evaluate poetry or other literature.

3. Gain a visual appreciation of the Vietnam conflict through viewing of newsreel excerpts from the Vietnam era and discussing the role of media and how it relates to warfare and to literary responses to warfare.

4. Describe in log entries their own response to the current War on Terror and Iraq War, and consider specifically, how it is presented by modern media. Students will be able to evaluate issues that may or may not correspond between the two conflicts, including: exit strategies, troop morale, public sentiment, patriotism, and My Lai vs. Abu Ghraib.

**Unit XII: Beyond Warfare: Forgiveness and Transformation**

**The students will be able to:**

1. Discuss and incorporate into their thinking “Pilgrimage to Non-violence” by Martin Luther King Jr., excerpts from *No Future Without Forgiveness* by Desmond Tutu, and excerpts from *Ethics for the New Millennium* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

2. Evaluate the capacity for human forgiveness after viewing parts of the film *Amandla!* and comparing ideas covered in the film --such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission-- with the texts read.

3. Discuss and analyze theories for reducing warfare as described in literature they have already covered in Guggenbuhl, Stevens, and Kindlon and Thompson. They will compare these theories with the new texts, analyzing the viability of each of these options.

4. Submit their second papers for a grade, submit their logs for comments, and review all material covered in the class in preparation for the final exam.

**Evaluation of student learning:**

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<th>% of points</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 – 92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87- 89</td>
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<td>83-86</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
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**Academic Integrity Statement:**

Cheating of any kind is not tolerated. This includes copying papers or website information or presenting another person's work as one's own, looking at a student's paper during a test, looking at notes during an exam, obtaining information about an exam or any other information that other students do not have and the instructor does not intend them to have, and talking during an exam or quiz. Other academic integrity violations include giving answers to or writing papers for another student, submitting a paper which includes words or the creative work of
another without acknowledging the source, presenting another individual’s work as your own, and falsifying data or bibliographic entries. Any observed instance of cheating is punishable by confiscation of the work and being assigned a grade of zero on the assignment and/or in the class. All violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee. For more information, consult the Student Handbook.

**Classroom Conduct**

The college welcomes students into an environment that creates a sense of community pride and respect.

**Attendance and Assignments**

It is a student’s responsibility to attend all of his/her classes. If a class meeting is missed for any reason, the student is responsible for all content covered, for announcements made in his/her absence, and for acquiring any materials that may have been distributed in class. The instructor may not repeat announcements or distribute handouts more than once. More than two missed lectures may result in the student being withdrawn from the course or a lower grade for the course. Students must turn in all assignments; any student who fails to hand in work will receive a failing grade in the class.

**Lateness**

It is expected that students will be on time for all classes. If a student walks into a class after it has begun, he/she will not disrupt other students. Frequent tardiness will affect the student’s final grade.

**Behavior**

Politeness and self respect are expected in the classroom. It is a sign of disrespect to come to class unprepared, to speak unkindly to others, or to distract others from their studies. No matter what one’s skill level in the subject matter, every student can and will maintain a fundamental level of human decency in the classroom.

For more information, consult the course syllabus or class website at: www.mccc.edu/~mathewsh