Course Description

In this class we will analyze literary texts that think about nature, the environment, and constructions of race, class, and gender. We will study the ways the short stories and short novels we read attempt to understand human and non-human relationships, as well as expose and contest exploitative, extractive, and unequal power relations. We will focus especially on American literature. We will read the American nature tradition as particularly relevant to historical and contemporary ideas of wilderness, stewardship, and the legacies of genocide, slavery, and capitalism. These are heavy terms, issues, ideas. But one thing our class will explore is how works of literature attempt to render these concepts simply and powerfully through beautiful (and fun) fiction.

In addition to discussing “nature” and other concepts as both fictional and non-fictional, this course provides the basic tools to understand and dissect a literary text. We will explore not simply what a text says but how it creates meaning. Over the course of the term, you will learn key literary concepts that allow you to interpret a text’s themes through its structural, symbolic, and stylistic choices. A primary skill you will take from this class is the ability to closely read a text, making analytical claims about short passages by examining word choice, form, and symbolism. You will practice these skills throughout the term in the form of short essays, quizzes, informal writing assignments, and a midterm exam. By the term’s end, you will apply what you have learned in an original piece of literary analysis.

NOTE: This course is designed for freshmen and sophomores and meets the Arts and Letters group requirement. This course is not recommended for English majors, who are encouraged to enroll in the English Department’s comprehensive Introduction to the English Major sequence, English 220-222.

Course Outcomes

1. Read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. Draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. Perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. Write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. Employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. Employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay’s thesis.
Required Texts

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*

* Additional readings will be available on Canvas. You are responsible for bringing a **hard copy** of each reading to class on the days we discuss them.

Policies:

**Course Content:** Many of the texts we will read together this term deal with difficult issues and have troubling and disturbing content. Religion, sexuality, and politics will be in our reading and conversation; cruelty and violence are often present in stories concerning U.S. culture and history. We will be thoughtful in taking up issues that can and should disturb us, as they raise special ethical, intellectual, and emotional challenges and questions.

**Late Work:** There is no late work in this course. All work is due at the beginning of class. In case of an absence, you must turn in your work prior to the missed class. I will assess the possibility of extensions on a case-to-case basis, but communicating with me is the first step.

**Absences:** Since this course relies so heavily on your active participation, I will take attendance at all class meetings. You are allowed to miss one week’s worth of class (2 days) without penalty. After that, your grade will decrease by one-half letter grade per absence. Timeliness is also mandatory. Three instances of tardiness will count as one absence.

**Academic Honesty:** All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented in MLA format. Please consult *The Purdue Owl* for information on MLA documentation. Refer to the *Student Conduct Code* on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website for a concise definition of plagiarism. You may also contact me with any questions.

**Access:** If you have a disability that you think may affect your class performance, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make arrangements to ensure your full access.

**Accessing Readings:** I prefer that you use the provided or specified version of each text, so that everyone is using the same version. You are required to bring hard copies of each reading to class with you the day we are scheduled to discuss it. Failure to do so will adversely impact your participation grade.
Technology in the Classroom: This class is a time to disconnect from social media for an hour and twenty minutes twice a week. If I see you on your phone (under the desk, during small group work, while another classmate is talking), I will mark you absent without alerting you. Laptops are also not allowed unless I ask you to bring them for an activity or you have approval to use it for note-taking.

Canvas and Email: I will use Canvas regularly to make announcements, distribute documents, and post readings. Make sure your settings are adjusted so that you receive important announcements. You will also need to check your Webmail account regularly, as this is the primary way I communicate with students. NOTE: While the Canvas gradebook should give you a relatively accurate view of your “running total” score in the class, you should not rely on it as a concrete reflection of your grade. See me if you have questions.

Outside Research and Secondary Sources: We will read a limited amount of literary criticism to enrich our understanding of the shared texts. These will also model rigorous literary analysis. You are not required to use secondary sources in your work, however. In this class, your analysis is the priority. As such, you will need pre-approval from me to use secondary sources beyond the ones assigned.

Top Triptych of Photos by Gregory Blair; photo below of Amazon deforestation by International Business Times
Assignment Info

In Class Participation (20%):

Tuesday Reading Journals (10%): For eight of Tuesdays that we meet, you will be asked to turn in a hard copy of your reading journal. Each journal entry will be a typed or handwritten response to five questions from those listed in your Eng 104: Writing Packet (pg. 2 under “How do I begin? (A.k.a. Questions for Reading Journal”). Please keep your journal in such a way as you can turn in one entry at a time (rather than a whole notebook). I have folders that you may use for this purpose.

Thursday Quizzes (10%): There will be 5 quizzes over the course of the term. Each quiz will be over the reading for the entire week that they occur in, and may include reading comprehension, lecture review, and elements of the discussion that arose in Tuesday’s session.

Formal Writing Assignments (55%): For more information, consult the ENG 104: Writing Packet

Consider this prompt to focus each of your three formal writing assignments:

What does this work of literature have to say about environmental justice, environmental politics, and/or environmental racism? What literary tools are used in the specific portion of the text you are focusing on to communicate the overall message of the work? Make reference to literary terms we’re discussing in class (found in syllabus). Definitions can be found using M.H. Abrams Glossary of Literary Terms, here: http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/ref../abrams_mh.pdf

Close Reading #1 (15%): 2-3 page close reading that engages one of the texts we have already read. Select one particular passage from the reading that you think exemplifies something that the story as a whole has to say in relation to the above prompt. Email Word doc. titled with your last name.

Close Reading #2 (15%): 3-4 page close reading that engages one of the texts we have already read. Select one particular passage from that reading that you think exemplifies something that the story as a whole has to say in relation to the above prompt. Email Word doc. titled with your last name.

Final Essay (25%): revise, elaborate, and refine your Close Reading #2 into a formal, 5-6 page literary analysis. You may include more than the particular passage used in the close reading, but must move beyond mere summary of the text. Hard copy due by December 9th at 8am.

We will go through a few stages to help you write your final formal essay:

Step #1: Use feedback on your Close Reading #1 to write Close Reading #2.
Step #2: Bring a completed draft of Close Reading #2 to class on Thursday, November 17th for our Close Reading Workshop. We will workshop ideas and writing.
Step #3: Based on classmate’s workshop feedback, edit your Close Reading #2.
Step #4: Turn in the final version of Close Reading #2 on November 22nd.
Step #5: You will receive Instructor feedback on the final Close Reading #2. Incorporate all feedback into an expanded and deepened version for your Final Essay. For the Final Essay, you may consult, and include up to two direct quotes (total) from, any of the authorized secondary sources (See Writing Packet for source list).
Step #6: Turn in a hard copy of your Final Essay at the designated Finals meeting time.

Exams (25%):

Midterm Exam (15%): Comprehensive exam over material from the first half of the term.
Final “Exam” (10%): In place of a formal exam, you will turn in a hard copy of your final essay, a typed version of your course notes, and view the film adaptation to Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep called Bladerunner.
## Tentative Schedule of Events
(Subject to minor changes throughout the term)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Writing Due</th>
<th>Important Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tues, Sept. 27</td>
<td>Early romantic &quot;nature&quot; packet, courtesy of William Cronon</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Wilderness, Nature</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Sept. 29</td>
<td>[Early romantic &quot;nature&quot; packet, courtesy of William Cronon]</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Wilderness, Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tues, Oct. 4</td>
<td>Orwell, &quot;Shooting an Elephant&quot;; Orne Jewett, &quot;White Heron&quot;</td>
<td>Journal #1</td>
<td>Allusion, Allegory, Symbolism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Oct. 6</td>
<td>Metcalf, &quot;Against the Country&quot;; Assigned Secondary Article</td>
<td>(Quiz)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Tues, Oct. 11</td>
<td>Anzaldua, &quot;People Should Not...&quot;; Silko, &quot;Lullaby&quot;</td>
<td>Journal #2</td>
<td>Realism, POV, Vernacular</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Oct. 13</td>
<td>Chestnutt, &quot;Goophered Grapevine&quot;; Walker, &quot;Am I Blue?&quot;</td>
<td>(Quiz)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Tues, Oct. 18</td>
<td>Le Guin, &quot;The Ones Who Walk...&quot;; Hawthorne, &quot;Earth's Holocaust&quot;</td>
<td>Journal #3</td>
<td>Parable, Foil, Irony</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Oct. 20</td>
<td>Melville, &quot;Bartleby The Scrivener&quot;</td>
<td>Close Reading #1</td>
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<td>via email</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tues, Oct. 25</td>
<td>Kafka, &quot;The Hunger Artist&quot;</td>
<td>Journal #4</td>
<td>Satire, Imagery</td>
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<td>Thurs, Oct. 27</td>
<td>[MIDTERM]</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tues, Nov. 1</td>
<td>Yamashita, <em>Topic of Orange</em>, Ch.1-10</td>
<td>Journal #5</td>
<td>Speculative Fiction, Magical</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Nov. 3</td>
<td>Yamashita, <em>Topic of Orange</em>, Ch.11-21</td>
<td>(Quiz)</td>
<td>Reality</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Tues, Nov. 8</td>
<td>Yamashita, <em>Topic of Orange</em>, Ch.22-35</td>
<td>Journal #6</td>
<td>Trope, Juxtaposition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Nov. 10</td>
<td>Yamashita, <em>Topic of Orange</em>, to end</td>
<td>(Quiz)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Tues, Nov. 15</td>
<td>Vonnegut, &quot;Harrison Bergeron&quot;</td>
<td>Journal #7</td>
<td>Science Fiction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thurs, Nov. 17</td>
<td>[may want to begin Androids]</td>
<td>Close Reading #2</td>
<td>hard copy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(complete draft for in-class workshop)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Tues, Nov. 22</td>
<td>Dick, <em>Do Androids Dream</em>, Ch.1-7</td>
<td>Close Reading #2</td>
<td>Final, via email</td>
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<td>Thurs, Nov. 24</td>
<td><em><strong><strong>No Class, Thanksgiving Break</strong></strong></em></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Tues, Nov. 29</td>
<td>Dick, <em>Do Androids Dream</em>, Ch.8-16</td>
<td>Journal #8</td>
<td>(Synthesis)</td>
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<td>Thurs, Dec. 1</td>
<td>Dick, <em>Do Androids Dream</em>, Ch.17-end</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Finals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Friday December 9th 8 am</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hard copies of:</strong></td>
<td>Final Essay, Final Course Notes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Watch</td>
<td><em>Bladerunner</em></td>
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Additional Tools for Your Success

John Cage’s Ten Rules for Students and Teachers

RULE ONE: Find a place you trust, and then try trusting it for awhile.
RULE TWO: General duties of a student: pull everything out of your teacher; pull everything out of your fellow students.
RULE THREE: General duties of a teacher: pull everything out of your students.
RULE FOUR: Consider everything an experiment.
RULE FIVE: Be self-disciplined: this means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.
RULE SIX: Nothing is a mistake. There's no win and no fail, there's only make.
RULE SEVEN: The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It's the people who do all of the work all of the time who eventually catch on to things.
RULE EIGHT: Don’t try to create and analyze at the same time. They're different processes.
RULE NINE: Be happy whenever you can manage it. It's lighter than you think.
RULE TEN: We're breaking all the rules. Even our own rules. And how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for X quantities.

HINTS: Always be around. Come or go to everything. Always go to classes. Read anything you can get your hands on. Look at movies carefully, often. Save everything it might come in handy later.

E-mail your classmates: In the space below, write down the e-mail contact information for at least two of your classmates. When you have a quick question about something we did in class, something on the syllabus, or an unclear assignment, it is always a good idea to check with a classmate or two first.

1. Name: _______________________________ E-mail: _______________________________

2. Name: _______________________________ E-mail: _______________________________

By remaining in this course you verify that you have read, understood, and agreed to abide by all information disclosed in this syllabus.