English 2100 Close Readings

Course Description: A close reading of two books with related themes or authors, and/or a close viewing of four films with related themes or makers. For this particular class, I will focus on Cormac McCarthy.

Pre-requisites: English 1301

Texts: All the Pretty Horses, Cormac McCarthy (any version) and Blood Meridian, Cormac McCarthy (any version)

Instructor: Jim Sanderson Office hours: 2-3, M-F or by appointment.

Important Dates: Final: Last Day to drop a class and receive a Q: Last Day to drop class:

Absences: Student risk failing the class if they do not attend or participate. However, two absences will lower students’ grades by 10 points. Tardiness will count as an absence.

Make-up work: If students know that they will miss an assignment, they should make arrangements with the instructor. If students miss an in-class assignment, the instructor will give a harder out-of-class written assignment.

Student with Disabilities: It is the policy of Lamar University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law, and the University’s commitment to equal education opportunities. Should you need to do so, you should contact the office for disability services to request accommodation. You may also contact the office at http://dept.lamar.edu/sfswd or by phone at (409)-880-8347.

Academic Honesty: Students are specifically warned against all forms of cheating and plagiarism. The Lamar University Student Handbook states: “Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Punishable offences include, but are not limited to, cheating on an examination or academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.” One aspect of the handbook’s definition of cheating is, “purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm.” Plagiarism is defined as, “the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or ideas into one’s own offered for credit.” Students seeking to avoid plagiarism should consult with the Instructional Assistant” or recent handbooks such as the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition). Faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences investigate all cases of suspected plagiarism.

Plagiarism: Instructors can spot plagiarism. We also have several means to check for plagiarism. If a whole essay is plagiarized, the instructor will the student for the entire course. If just part of the essay is plagiarized, the instructor will fail the essay.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES SOPHOMORE LITERATURE COURSES

Communication:
1. **Writing:** Students will apply the writing skills in English 1301 and 1302 (clear introductions, main body paragraphs, conventional use of grammar and style) to writing about literature.
   a. Using their reading and/or research, students will compose critical/analytical essays with a clear thesis and introduction.
   b. Using their reading and/or research, students will compose critical/analytical essays with organized supporting paragraphs.
   c. Students will use the standard conventions of English grammar and punctuation and write clear and efficient sentences.
   d. Students will maintain a style and persona appropriate for a particular purpose and audience

2. **Oral or visual communication:** Students will present clear, salient, and supported oral/visual speeches/demonstrations. And/or students will discuss group or class topics.

**Critical Thinking** (Note: We equate Critical thinking with literary analysis)
Through essays, students will analyze literary works.

**Social Responsibility** (Note: Since most of what we teach reflects the interplay and the individual within his society, “the one and the many,” and since we do not have field tests or laboratories in our disciplines, we see social and personal responsible as a dynamic rather than two distinct activities.)

**Outcome:** In written responses (preferably complete essays), presentations, discussions (online or face to face) students will illustrate an understanding of social, cultural, historical, scientific or technological forces that stimulated literature in one or more literary movements or periods.

**Personal Responsibility** (Note: Since most of what we teach reflects the interplay and the individual within his society, “the one and the many,” and since we do not have field tests or laboratories in our disciplines, we see social and personal responsible as a dynamic rather than two distinct activities.)

**Outcome:** In written responses (preferably complete essays), presentations, discussions (online or face to face), and potentially in the same response used to measure “social responsibility,” students will illustrate an understanding of the complexities of personal choice or the role of the individual within his or her social and cultural environment—as evidenced in at least one literary work.

**Assignments:**
1) bi-weekly posts on discussion boards or direct mailings to instructor in reaction to reading, viewing, and class discussion. Instructor will simply give check, check pluses, or check minus. Overall grade will count 20%.
2) Two essays to be developed from the assignments above: 30% each.
3) Two tests: a midterm and a final: 10% each.

**Nature of class:** Students will meet weekly to discuss portions or all of a book or film. They will respond to the discussion and their readings with discussion board postings or in e-mails
sent directly to the instructor. The instructor will respond with quick comments, and a check, check pluses, or check minus. Students should then turn these discussions into a portfolio. In turn students will turn these portfolios into two 1000-1500 word critical essays. Students may use research, but it is not required. Thus, to receive a satisfactory grade, student must come to class and participate. The instructor reserves the right to use student comments and essays as examples for other students. The class meetings will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Weekly syllabus (the instructor has the right to change or reschedule the weekly meetings based on class needs or circumstances.

Week 1: Intro to course
Week 2: Opening chapters. General theme, characters, setting, and style of All the Pretty Horses. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week 3: Next chapters. Complexities of plot and development of theme.
Week 4: Closing chapters. Climax of book, emotional impact. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week 5: Overview of characters, setting, and style
Week 6 overview of theme. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week 7 discussion or review of writing. Turning posts or e-mails or portfolio into and essay.
Week 8: writing the essay
Week 9: Essay due, mid term
Week: 10 Intro to Blood Meridian
Week11: Opening chapters. General theme, characters, setting, and style of All the Pretty Horses. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week 12: Next chapters. Complexities of plot and development of theme.
Week13: Closing chapters. Climax of book, emotional impact. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week14: Overview of characters, setting, and style
Week 15: overview of theme. Students should respond to class with posted discussions or comments e-mail to instructor
Week 16: second essay due, Final