

College Document # COAS161
UCC Document # 250
Date Received _____



CATALOG YEAR 2009-2010
(Please use separate form for each add/change)

COLLEGE: _____ COAS _____

Current Catalog Page(s) Affected _____

Course: Add: Delete: _____ Change _____:
(check all that apply) Number _____ Title _____ SCH _____ Description Prerequisite _____

If new, provide Course Prefix, Number, Title, SCH Value, Description, prerequisite, and lecture/lab hours if applicable. If in current catalog, provide change and attach page with changes in red and provide a brief justification.

Program: Add: _____ Change: _____ Attach new/changed Program of Study description and 4-year plan. If in current catalog, provide change and attach page with changes in red.

Minor: Add: _____ Delete: _____ Change: _____ Attach new/changed minor. If in current catalog, provide change and attach page with changes in red.

Faculty: Add: _____ Delete: _____ Change: _____ Attach new/changed faculty entry. If in current catalog, provide change and attach page with changes in red.

College Introductory Pages: Add information: _____ Change information: _____ Attach new/changed information. If in current catalog, provide change and attach page with changes in red.

Justification:

This course allows for the in-depth study of one or more major writers in English and the context in which his/her writing came to be. This new course fills in an important gap in the current catalog.

Approvals: Signature Date

Chair _____
Department Curriculum Committee

Chair _____
Department

Chair _____
College Curriculum Committee

Dean _____

ENGL 5310 Major Writers and their Milieu
Three semester hours

An in-depth study of one or more writers in English in the historical and cultural contexts in which they write. May be repeated for credit when the topic changes. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students:

- Will have an understanding not just of a major writer and of that individual's most significant works; but of the times in which the writer lived, and of the social, cultural, and political forces that both served as the writer's inspirations—and forces against which that artist rebelled.
- Will be able to apply different literary tools to the analysis of the texts assigned, in order to identify major themes and motifs in those texts.
- Will be able to articulate, both orally and in writing, their interpretation of the texts and their relevance in the writer's canon as well as in literary history.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

English 5318, Sec. 101: Major Writers and Their Milieu
Thomas Hardy
Fall: Mondays, 6:00 – 8:30, in Bullock 209

Instructor: Paul J. Niemeyer, Assistant Professor of English
Office Hours: MW 11:00-12:00, TR 1:30-3:00, and by appointment, in Pellegrino 314-B.
Contacts: During *regular office hours only* I can be reached at 326-2645. Otherwise, e-mail me directly or through ANGEL at pniemeyer@tamiu.edu (I check e-mail several times a day).

Course Description: This particular section of the course could just as well be titled “Major Writers and Their Milieus,” for we will be studying Thomas Hardy both as a Victorian novelist and as an early Modernist poet. Hardy thrived in each of these milieus: the prose writer felt stifled by the conventions of Victorian novel-writing and by the hypocrisy he saw all around him, and he turned his fiction works into eloquent protests against nineteenth-century conventions; while the poet Hardy helped establish a milieu in which the greatest poetic minds of the twentieth century found their voices. In this class we will study several of Hardy’s major novels—and one that most critics, including Hardy himself, considered minor—to consider how they respond to Victorian conventions; and we will examine dozens of Hardy’s poems in light of the trail they blazed.

Outcomes: By the end of this course, students:

- Will have an understanding not just of Thomas Hardy and of his most significant works; but of the times in which the Hardy lived, and of the social, cultural, and political forces that both served as the writer’s inspirations—and forces against which that artist rebelled.
- Will be able to apply different literary tools to the analysis of the texts assigned, in order to identify major themes and motifs in those texts.
- Will be able to articulate, both orally and in writing, their interpretation of the texts and their relevance in the writer’s canon as well as in literary history.

Course Readings (all by Hardy):

The Collected Poems of Thomas Hardy, ed. James Gibson. Macmillan, 2002.
Far from the Madding Crowd. Penguin, 2003.
The Hand of Ethelberta. Penguin, 2004.
Jude the Obscure. Penguin, 2005.
The Mayor of Casterbridge. Penguin, 2006.
The Return of the Native. Penguin, 2007.
Tess of the d’Urbervilles. Penguin, 2008.
Under the Greenwood Tree. Penguin, 2009.

Required Coursework:

Major Essay (60%). This is the most important project you will do in this course. Your essay must be on the topic of something in or about contemporary British literature, must have a

definable critical and/or theoretical perspective, must make use of relevant sources (see *Annotated Bibliography*, below), and be at least 20 pages long and in MLA format.

Annotated Bibliography (20%). This may be considered a warm-up to your Major Essay or simply a personal examination of what is available in the realm of research; whichever, your A. B. is to contain at least ten citations. Try to limit your sources to no earlier than 1985 so that you may focus on recent literary movements and historical trends.

Final Exam (15%). You will be called upon to display your knowledge of all works studied in this course, both through answering short questions and writing an in-class essay.

Discussion Prompt (5%). This is a very informal part of the course—really, all you have to do to earn an “A” on the assignment is to do it and put some clear effort into it—but it is important to the class itself, and in your current or possible future career as a teacher or lecturer. Essentially, I am going to leave up to you what we discuss (though there will always be things I want to talk about and that I think you should know). On class days, at least one person will have volunteered to get the discussion started. You will present on the materials we are to cover on that day (or on a portion of the text), with the idea of getting the class to analyze and criticize the readings. An ideal Discussion Prompt will offer an interpretation of the day’s reading, illuminate problems and difficulties in the narrative, provide critical and theoretical grounding of the interpretation, and, *especially*, give the class pointed questions to be answered and debated. The worst kind of Prompt—and about the only way to fail the assignment—is to flip through the book, pointing out passages and occasionally asking, “So, um, what did you all think?”

Important Dates:

Last Day Courses Can Be Dropped without Record: Tuesday, September 7

Last Day to Drop a Course or to Withdraw from the College: Friday, November 5

Mid-point of the Semester: Friday, October 15

Last Class Day: Tuesday, December 2

Final Exam: TBA

University and College Rules (all via cut-and-paste):

Copyright Restrictions: The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement, and civil and criminal penalties may be assessed, including civil penalties for damages up to \$100.00; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment.

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Incompletes: The College policy for “Incompletes” discourages them. They are appropriate, however, when the following requirements are met:

- ▶ The student cannot complete the class because of a severe illness to self or immediate family member at the very end of the semester (after the date for withdrawal from class) or because of a traumatic event in the student's life (e.g., death of or serious injury or illness to an immediate family member) at the end of the semester, AND

- ▶ The student is passing the class at the time he or she can not complete the semester, AND

- ▶ The student has completed either 85-90% of the course requirements or is missing only major assignments due after the final date for withdrawal from class and after the onset of the illness or traumatic event (e.g., assignments such as the final exam for the course or a research paper), AND, finally,

- ▶ The faculty member must have the approval of the department chair before giving an Incomplete.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course: It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course.

Grade Changes & Appeals: Faculty is authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and the Faculty Handbook.

CLASS CALENDAR

(If changes need to be made, you will be informed ahead of time.)

08/23 Introduction to the course: the state of Britain and her literature today.

08/30 *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

09/06 *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

09/13 *FFMC*, concluded; *The Hand of Ethelberta*.

09/20 *The Hand of Ethelberta*, concluded.

09/27 *The Return of the Native*.

10/04 *The Return of the Native*.

10/11 *Tess*. **Annotated Bibliography due.**

10/18 *Tess*.

10/25 *Tess*, concluded; *Jude*.

11/01 *Jude*.

11/08 *Jude*.

11/15 *Collected Poems*.

11/22 *Collected Poems*. **Major Essay due.**

11/29 *Collected Poems*.

TBA **Final Exam**