Course Theme: Welcoming Strangers and Friends: The Ethics of Hospitality

Description of the Course: This course takes a thematic approach in surveying 19th - 21st century literature. We will include a full sampling of genres (poetry, film, plays, and novels) to explore the theme of hospitality, working toward a synthetic analysis of both its roots, its development, and its current expression in British literature. Students will be asked to actively participate in class discussions and group work, to generate three short studies of our assigned texts, and ultimately connect our theme to a research project of their choice that illumines both the literary treatment of hospitality and the exercise of hospitality in our community.

Importance of the Topic: The theme of hospitality is as old as Western literature itself. The Iliad provides numerous scenes of feasting, wherein warriors are rewarded and booty divided. The Odyssey depicts travelers who continually overcome obstacles to reaching “home.” Beowulf emphasizes “open-handedness” as a means of establishing bonds of loyalty. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight illustrates the relation between host and guest. And certainly the Old and New Testaments provide numerous examples of welcoming, feasting, and serving the prophet, pilgrim, or stranger who may be a messenger of God. Examining the theme of hospitality within this tradition provides an important insight into how contemporary British culture has both affirmed and rejected the ethics of hospitality, thereby validating, or alternately, re-defining, the social and spiritual responsibilities of the self “at home” to the self who is “homeless.”

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the salient characteristics of British literary movements from the 19th-21st-centuries: Romantic, Victorian, Modernist, and Postmodernist;
- Analyze the cultural forces that contributed to literature of this period, more specifically, the social/economic/moral/political practices within a society or historical period that give rise to hospitable actions;
- Apply this understanding in written responses to multiple literary texts;
- Evaluate literature during this period in a researched critical essay, using primary and secondary sources and documenting and citing these sources in correct MLA style.
Required Texts:

Poetry:
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge: “Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner”
- John Keats: “On the Eve of St. Agnes”
- Christina Rossetti: “Goblin Market”
- W. B. Yeats: “Dialogue of Self and Soul”
- Seamus Heaney: Seeing Things

Drama:
- John Synge: Playboy of the Western World

Prose:
- Jane Austen: Pride and Prejudice
- Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol
- James Joyce: “The Dead”
- Virginia Woolf: Mrs. Dalloway
- Isak Dinesen: “Babette’s Feast”
- John Gardner: In the Suicide Mountains
- Alexander McCall Smith: Tears of the Giraffe

Evaluation and Grading:
Class work and discussion: 35% of your final grade
Short Studies (3): 15% each or 45% of your final grade
Research project: 20% of your final grade (includes class presentation and paper)

Class work and discussion: While written work is critical to completion of the course, classes will be discussions rather than lectures. Your active participation in each class is essential so that we all can benefit from each others’ ideas and insights. Class work will consist of small group work, in-class essays, and oral presentations throughout the semester. Your work will be scored on a scale of 0-4 points, with your total daily points assigned a letter grade at the end of the semester. The point scale:
- 0 points - you weren't here and we missed you.
- 1 point - you were in class but unprepared.
- 2 points - you wrote or spoke in a way that demonstrated you had read the material.
- 3 points - you wrote or spoke in a way that demonstrated you had read and thought about the material.
- 4 points - you wrote or spoke in a profound way about the material.

Please note: daily work allows me to first keep a record of your attendance in class, and second keep a record of how you contribute to the learning that goes on in class. If you have three absences, I will ask you to meet with me about your engagement with the course. Daily work cannot be made up, so you pay a penalty with each absence.

Short Studies: Students will generate three short studies of 5-6 pages. These papers will analyze our assigned texts in light of our theme. I will be looking for detailed insight
Research Project: This paper (6-8 pages) will connect the principles of hospitality (as explored in our course readings) with how hospitality operates in our society. Students can select their topics from the list below, or suggest one of their own.

- Southern hospitality
- Political asylum
- Neighborhood Coalitions
- Hospices
- Immigration quotas
- Homeless shelters
- Women’s shelters
- Homecoming for war veterans
- Foster care
- Biblical themes and applications

While this topic requires detailed and lengthy textual treatment, I would encourage you to be creative with your sources you incorporate (television, newspaper articles, internet sources, etc.) and in how you package your final project (papers with visuals). You will orally present your findings to the class and produce a visual/textual study, due on the day and time of the final exam. See details of the assignment at the end of this syllabus.

Policies:
- You are allowed three unexcused absences, free and clear. After that, you will be asked to conference in my office about your status and goals in the course. I will not accept late assignments unless you have made previous arrangements. (Note: being absent on the day a paper is due doesn't get you off the hook!) No work done in class can be made up.

- The most wicked act in the academic universe is plagiarism, or “the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.” See the Code of Student Conduct and University Catalog for a detailed definition. If you plagiarize in this course the minimum consequence will be an “F” on the assignment with a letter sent to the Dean of Students to be recorded in your student file. In particularly serious cases, students can face expulsion from the class, particularly if he/she has been caught plagiarizing in another course. Note that plagiarism is only one form of academic dishonesty, which also includes falsification (the intentional alteration of information), fabrication (the intentional invention of information), multiple submission (using the same material for two separate assignments or courses without permission from the instructors), and abuse of academic materials (the intentional destruction of resource materials). Inadequately or incorrectly documented material is an example of plagiarism.

- If you use web sources in any of your presentations, research, or writing, be sure that your source is reliable and that you know the current MLA standards for documenting e-sources.

Important information for students:
- The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisors will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
• The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

• Grade Appeal Process
   As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Reminder to English Majors:** As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

**Class Schedule:**

**Week #1** (January 11-13)
- Thursday: Introduction to the course. The motifs of hospitality: excerpts from The Iliad and The Odyssey, Beowulf and Sir Gawain;
- Introduction to Romantics

**Week #2** (January 16-20)
- Tuesday: William Wordsworth
- Thursday: Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**Week #3** (January 23-27)
- Tuesday: John Keats.
- Thursday: Austen – pp. 1-50

**Week #4** (Jan 30-February 3)
Tuesday: Austen – pp. 50-150
Thursday: Austen – pp. 150-200

Week #5 (February 6-10)
Tuesday: Austen – pp. 200-end
Thursday: Introduction to Victorians. Charles Dickens (Staves I & II)

Week #6 (February 13-17)
Tuesday: Charles Dickens (Staves IV, V, VI)
Thursday: Christina Rossetti

Week #7 (February 20-24)
Tuesday: Introduction to Modernism. Reading: John Synge, Act I
Paper #1 due
Thursday: John Synge (Acts II and III)

Week #8 (February 27-March 2)
Tuesday: Virginia Woolf pp. 3-64
Thursday: Woolf pp. 64-133

Week #9 (March 5-9)
Tuesday: Woolf pp. 133-194
Thursday: W. B. Yeats – “Dialogue of Self and Soul”

Week #10 (March 12-16)
Spring break

Week #11 (March 19-23)
Tuesday: Isak Dinesen - “Babette's Feast”
Thursday: James Joyce - “The Dead”

Week #12 (March 26-30)
Tuesday: Heaney pp. 1-52. Introduction to Postmodernism.
Thursday: Heaney pp. 55-end
Paper #2 due

Week #13 (April 2-6)
Tuesday: Smith pp. 1-118
Thursday: Smith pp. 119 - end

Week #14 (April 9-13)
Tuesday: John Gardner (pp. 1-78)
Thursday: John Gardner (pp. 79-end)

Week #15 (April 16-20)
Tuesday: Presentations
Thursday: Presentations  
Paper #3 due

Week #16 (April 23-27)  
Tuesday: Presentations  
Thursday: Presentations

Week #17 (April 30-May 1)  
Tuesday: Presentations

Finals Week: during our scheduled final exam, we will hand in our research projects and view *Chocolat* together (please bring feastings!).
Research Project Assignment - English 3345, J. Haswell

This assignment invites you to take our literary texts and major patterns of hospitality that we have discussed during the semester, and apply them to present-day, real-life social situations. The following areas are only suggestions—there may be other topics of importance that you want to work on.

- Southern hospitality
- Political asylum
- Neighborhood Coalitions
- Hospices
- Immigration quotas
- Homeless shelters
- Women’s shelters
- Homecoming for war veterans
- Foster care
- Biblical themes and applications

In addition to a final “paper” (using visuals), you will be responsible for presenting your findings to the class in a 10-minute presentation at the end of the semester. I will ask you to sign up for the date you would like later on. Keep in mind the following elements to your presentation:

- Clarity of your subject and your research findings
- Links to the notion of hospitality
- Instructional aids (hand outs, visuals, etc).
- Delivery

You can get up to four points in each of these categories, so a total of 16 points for your presentation. Obviously, if you go first, your project will be less finished than if you go last. That will not affect your grade adversely.

To encourage early preparation (not last minute research--this doesn't make for a good presentation or a good paper!) I'm requiring the following steps and deadlines:

- Tuesday, February 7th (Week #5): a short statement about the topic your have selected and the basis of your interest. This doesn't lock you in, only makes you think about the project in advance.

- Thursday, March 22nd (Week #11): an annotated bibliography of you research in correct MLA style. By "annotation" I mean a short summary paragraph about the content of each site your have looked at.

In addition to literary sources you might use, I would expect at least five citations from research materials, which may include internet sources, films, newspapers or magazines, personal interviews, and other print materials. Note: You might want to refer to some of our literary sources in order to explore the concept of “hospitality.” But unless it makes sense in terms of your research project, you don’t have to include literature at all.