TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY--CORPUS CHRISTI

English 4313: Pastoralism and Contemporary British Literature
Fall 2011: TR 11:00-12:15

Instructor: Dr. Jan Haswell
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Office Hours: MWF 9:00-11:00AM, TR 4:00-5:30PM
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“Tell me the landscape in which you live
and I will tell you who you are.”
Jose Ortega y Gasset

Themes of the Course: The focus of this course is place and identity. We will develop this focus on three separate levels:
• in terms of theme, by looking at how British writers in this century interweave personal identity with a sense of “home”;
• in terms of genre, by analyzing how these writers employ or reject sub-genres of the past as they relate to their landscape;
• in terms of culture, by connecting these readings to issues of place and space.

We will read, discuss together, and write about place and landscape, drawing on our knowledge of the 20th century (both formal and personal), background from other courses, and areas of personal interests, such as art and cinema.

Objectives of the Course: Students will be asked to:
• Analyze the conventions / themes / structure of literary texts
• Interpret texts in a way that synthesizes the themes of the course (in writing and in class discussion)
• Evaluate texts within the framework of literary / artistic genres
• Create your own collection of pastoral poetry (including illustrations and analyses)

Required Texts
Novels:
  Graham Swift: Waterland
  Paul Scott: Staying On
  Yann Martel, Life of Pi
  Arundhati Roy: The God of Small Things

Short Stories:
  D. H. Lawrence: “The Horse Dealer’s Daughter”
  Kenneth Grahame: “The Piper at the Gates of Dawn”

Movies:
Merchant Ivory: *A Room With a View* (1986 adaptation of a novel by E. M. Forster)

**Evaluation and Grading:**
Daily work: 30% of the final grade
Short papers: 3 x 15% = 45% of your final grade
Oral presentations (2): 5% of your final grade
Poetry journal: 20% of the final grade

1. **Daily work:** (30% of your final grade). As a course designed around discussions, your attendance and preparation will play a crucial role in the quality of our class work and in the success of the course. Be prepared to participate in a variety of ways: in-class writing, small group work, taking charge of a portion of discussion, etc. You will be awarded points for your work that, at the end of the semester, will be totaled and then curved into a letter grade. 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

2. **Oral Presentations:** (up to eight points each exercise for 5% of your final grade). There will be a two of such assignments. 1) You will select and research one of the authors in the course to produce an oral presentation for the class on the first day the reading is scheduled (10 minute presentation). Your presentation will include significant events and experiences in the author’s life, titles of his/her other literary works, and fundamentals of his/her aesthetic theory (the purpose of art, major themes, etc.). 2) You will be asked to analyze a short poem or text (assigned for all to read but for you to analyze) in order to help the class understand particular genres. An important aspect of your presentations will be handouts (like a chronology of events, list of publications, perhaps even a picture of the author for Project #1, definition of terms and literary examples for Project #2) for students to consult later on. Depending on the number of students in the class, you will (most probably) be working with one of two others to divide up the work.

3. **Short Studies:** (three, each 15% of your final grade for a total of 45%). These short essays (4-6 pages) will address the mini-theme of the section (home, nature, and landscape). Our readings will provide the "rhetorical occasion" for the paper, but you are not limited to drawing on literature alone. Your grade will reflect
   - demonstrated mastery of revision and editing skills (few if any surface errors).
   - a thesis or position that informs the entire paper and helps shape other features like organization, kinds of support/evidence, etc.
   - critical and reflective capabilities in analysis and commentary.
   - audience awareness and rhetorical strategies (what does your reader know?)
What kind of persuasive tactics would be most appropriate?)

- a logical flow to ideas, unified paragraphs, and effective transitions between paragraphs.
- effective incorporation of research materials.
- correct documentation and adequate citation.

In addition to these considerations, I expect interpretive papers, a thesis that goes well beyond description, even beyond argument, and succeeds in articulating an explicit, insightful, and sophisticated interpretation of the work. Such an interpretation requires a deeper than average understanding, integrative skills (bringing various pieces together like structure and theme), and personal engagement with the text.

4. Poetry Journal: (20% of your final grade). Most of you have experience in keeping a reading journal for other English classes. For this class, I am asking you to regard your journal as a companion (like a diary) and a collection point for both visual images and poetry that connect with the umbrella theme of place and our subtopics (home, nature, and landscape). In this way, your journal will complete our syllabus insofar as I have assigned prose writers but no poets. At a minimum, you will have 5 entries for each subtopic (or a minimal total of 15 entries). A full entry will include the text of a poem (identified by author and date of publication), a visual image or reference to another art form (like a play or movie), and reflections on how your poem and image deepen your understanding of the subtopic. Note that your selections do not have to imitate the model I provide. As you move through your journal, you may discover (or consciously form) a thread that you find valuable. "Threads" might include issues like segregation, environmental problems, travel writing, the politics of mapping/drawing boundaries, the importance of living space, pilgrimage, immigration or refugees--phenomena that result when people and places interface.

Policies:

Absences
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.

Late Assignments
I will not accept late writing assignments unless you have made previous arrangements because of serious, non-preventable reasons ("previous" means before the due date).

Academic Advising
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.
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment will result in 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.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Friday, November 4th is the last day to drop a class.

Classroom/professional behavior
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Grade Appeals
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.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Disabilities Accommodations**
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.

**Class Schedule:**

**Week #1:** (August 24-26)
- Thursday: Introduction to the course: Identity and Home
  - Forrest Gump, The Wizard of Oz and “Fat Girls from Des Moines”

**Week #2:** (August 29 - Sept 2)
- Tuesday: Scott, Staying On, Ch 1-6
- Thursday: Scott: Staying On, Ch 7-9

**Week #3:** (Sept 5-9)
- Tuesday: Scott: Staying On, Ch 10-12
- Thursday: Scott: Staying On, Ch 13-16

**Week #4:** (Sept 12-16)
- Tuesday: The Pastoral, City vs. Country, and Country House poetry
  - Reading due: Virgil, Jonson, Lanyer, Marvel (presentations for these)
- Thursday: Gosford Park, Part I

**Week #5:** (Sept 19-23)
- Tuesday: Gosford Park, Part II
  - **Writing due: first short study: Home**
- Thursday: Nature and Soft Primitivism
  - Reading Due: Grahame and Lawrence (handouts)

**Week #6 (Sept 26-30)**
- Tuesday: Waterland
Readings due: Swift Ch 1 - 9
Thursday: Waterland
Reading due: Swift Ch 10-13

Week #7 (October 3-7)
Tuesday: Waterland
Reading due: Swift Ch 14-29
Thursday: Waterland
Reading due: Swift Ch 30-38

Week #8: (Oct 10-14)
Tuesday: Swift Ch 39-end
Thursday: Life of Pi
Reading due: Martel Ch 1-17

Week #9: (Oct 17-21)
Tuesday: Life of Pi
Reading due: Martel Ch 18-50
Thursday: Life of Pi
Reading due: Martel Ch 51-71

Week #10: (Oct 24-28)
Tuesday: Life of Pi
Reading due: Martel Ch 72-92
Thursday: Life of Pi
Landscape painting/photography and the ideology of mapping
Reading due: Martel Ch 93-end

Week #11: (Oct 31-Nov 4)
Tuesday: A Room with a View
Writing due: Second short study: Nature
Thursday: Complete A Room with a View and The English Patient
Reading due: Ondaatje, pp 1-52 (up to “Darkness between Hana and Caravaggio”)

Week #12: (Nov 7-11)
Tuesday: The English Patient
Reading Due: Ondaatje, pp. 53 – 123 (up to “There are two levels of long, narrow garden”)
Thursday: The English Patient
Reading Due: Ondaatje, pp. 124 – 190 (up to “He is with Hana in the night tent”)

Week #13: (Nov 16-18)
Tuesday: The English Patient
Reading due: Ondaatje, pp. 190-252 (up to “The rectangle of light”)
Thursday: **The English Patient**  
Reading due: Ondaatje, pp. 252-end

Week #14: (Nov 21-23)  
**Tuesday: The God of Small Things**  
Reading due: Roy Ch 1-2  
**Thursday: Holiday**

Week #15: (Nov 28-Dec 2)  
**Tuesday: The God of Small Things**  
Reading due: Roy Ch 3-10  
**Thursday: The God of Small Things**  
Reading due: Roy Ch 11-13

Week #16: (Dec 5-6)  
**Tuesday: The God of Small Things**  
Reading due: Roy Ch 14-end  
**Writing due: Third short study: Landscape**

Poetry journal is due during final examination period. You will present your journal to the class at that time.