

Contemporary Literature: Holocaust and Apocalypse

Online

ENGL 5953 Spring 2023 Syllabus

Dr. Jennifer Dawes

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Email is the best way to reach me.

OFFICE HOURS

MW, 10-11:30 a.m.; TR, 10-11 a.m.; and by appointment

I am available to meet in person or over Zoom.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Maus 1: A Survivor's Tale* by Art Spiegelman; Pantheon Books (ISBN: 9780394747231)
- *The Reader* by Bernhard Schlink; Penguin Random House (ISBN: 9780375707971)
- *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia E. Butler; Hachette Book Group (ISBN: 9781538732182)
- *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy; Penguin Random House (ISBN: 9780307387899)
- Critical articles as assigned on D2L

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Contemporary Literature focuses on the literature of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In our class, we will be exploring the theme of Holocaust and Apocalypse. We will consider how the horrors of the past shape our present understanding of the world and how narrative helps us to devise a framework within which historical experiences can be comprehended as well as projections of future fears can be interrogated. The texts we will read are disturbing as they either reflect the historical reality of a dark part of our collective past or a grim projection of a possible future. However, at the root of each is the hope that the best parts of humanity can persevere.

COURSE GOALS

In this course, students will learn to:

- Read literature closely, considering the rhetorical and historical context within which the text was produced. Draw upon historical texts and videos to consider the role of narrative in shaping our understanding of history.
- Read critical articles to understand the larger critical conversation about each text.
- Discuss texts in writing informally in Discussion Board posts and formally in papers.
- Develop a research question based upon our course material and formally propose a research project to answer the question.
- Research a text using the library databases and incorporate this research into an annotated bibliography and formal research paper.
- Present the findings of research to classmates.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

→ **Analysis paper** – 15 percent

The 1500-word analysis paper will include reference to research on the topic and discuss the text within the context of assigned articles.

→ **Research Project: proposal, paper, and annotated bibliography** – 40 percent

Students will devise a research question about course text(s) and themes and write a 300-word proposal for their research project. The resulting 3000-word research paper will draw on a minimum of 8 sources and will include original ideas about the chosen topic. Students will submit an annotated bibliography of sources.

→ **Presentation** – 20 percent

Students will present their research project to their classmates in a conference-length presentation of 15 to 20 minutes.

→ **Discussion Board posts** – 15 percent

→ **Peer Review** – 10 percent

POLICIES

Attendance:

Attendance is different in an online class. Instead of showing up each class day, you should be logging into our D2L course several times per week and completing assignments on time. If you fail to log into our course for over two weeks or miss two online deadlines for assignments, I may drop you from the course. If you have a situation where you will be away from your computer for more than a day or two, please plan to have work completed ahead of time.

Late Work:

Late work will receive a one-letter grade penalty for each day it is late unless you have spoken to me ahead of time to explain the circumstances that require an extension. Extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis and should not be expected.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing in "Works Cited")—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. Penalties for plagiarism in this course can include failure of an assignment, failure of the course, and/or a formal university report of plagiarism.

Students with Disabilities:

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 contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

Safe Zone Statement:

The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Contacting Your Instructor:

Email is generally a faster way to reach me. Please understand that I will respond on the next business day if you contact me on weekends or after hours. I am available to meet with you either in person in my office or over Zoom.

Syllabus revised: J. Dawes, 1/23/2023

ENGLISH 5953 Class Schedule

Week One – Introduction to course

UNIT ONE–Remembering the Past: Holocaust Narratives

Week Two – Maus (read Chapters 1-3)

Week Three – Maus (read Chapters 4-6); read critical article on D2L

Week Four – The Reader (read Part 1); Short Paper due (assignment will be in D2L Unit One Maus Folder)

Week Five – The Reader (read Part 2)

Week Six – The Reader (read Part 3); read critical article on D2L

UNIT TWO–Projecting the Future: Apocalyptic Endings and New Beginnings

Page #s for Unit Two TBA

Week Seven – Parable of the Sower

Week Eight – Parable of the Sower

Week Nine – Spring Break

Week Ten – Parable of the Sower

Week Eleven – Parable of the Sower; read critical article on D2L
Week Twelve – The Road; Holiday Break 4/6-4/9

Week Thirteen – The Road; submit research proposal
Week Fourteen – The Road; read critical article on D2L

UNIT THREE–Work on Research Paper

Week Fifteen – Work on Research Paper and Annotated Bibliography

Week Sixteen – Peer Review and Revision; Research Paper and Annotated Bibliography due 5/5

Finals Week – Presentations due 5/9