

Huron Brief Course Outlines

Fall/Winter 2023-2024

Course Title: Forms of Adaptation: A Critical Making Course

Course Number and Section

ENGLISH

3333E - 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

In this team-taught “event-based” course, students combine traditional reading and researching in literary and cultural studies with a community-based research and “critical making” component. The core theme of the course is ADAPTATION, and its centrality in literary history and modern culture. Exploring different forms of adaptation in a variety of literary, theoretical and other texts, students will engage in traditional and community-based research and a number of possible critical making activities. Our study of forms of textual adaptation will revolve around T.S. Eliot’s classic modernist poem, *The Waste Land*. As Eliot was an American living in Europe, course texts will span both America and Eurasia. We will look at classic works of European and Asian literature that the poem cites or is otherwise influenced by, including Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, the poems of Edmund Spenser and John Donne, and classic texts of Buddhist and Vedic sacred writing. We will look at the works of Eliot’s European-based contemporaries, such as Virginia Woolf and Djuna Barnes. But we will also return Eliot to America and read his poetry in relation to his Black contemporaries, writers of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes, Bruce Nugent, Jean Toomer, and Zora Neale Hurston. Students will approach Eliot’s poem and the works surrounding it from a variety of perspectives, aesthetic, cultural and book-historical. Beginning with some traditional archival research and research essay writing assignments, students will work toward a culminating project that digitally adapts modernism to the aesthetic and cultural concerns of their own twenty-first century present.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a critical understanding of T.S. Eliot’s poetry, focused on *The Waste Land*: its cultural significance, its place in literary history, its reception in literary criticism, its adapted sources and poetic techniques
- Develop a critical understanding of the scope and significance of practices of textual and media adaptation in general, in cultures of the past and our own
- Apply this understanding of adaptation in making and performing adaptations of their own
- Develop a critical understanding of the place of the humanities within the digital realm and the place of the digital within the humanities
- Apply knowledge gained from critique of digital products to construct a digital archive on a literary work, figure or movement

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Barnes, Djuna. Ladies Almanack. (electronic resource)
 Donne, John. Selected poems. (electronic resource)
 Eliot, T.S. "The Wasteland" and other poems. (electronic resource)
 -. "Tradition and the Individual Talent." (pdf provided)
 Hughes, Langston. The Weary Blues. (electronic resource)
 Hurston, Zora Neale. "The Bone of Contention." (pdf provided)
 Morrison, Toni. Jazz.
 Ovid. Metamorphoses.
 Nugent, Bruce. Selected poems. (electronic resource)
 Spenser, Edmund. The Shepherdes Calendar. (electronic resource)
 Toomer, Jean. Cane.
 Woolf, Virginia Orlando.
 Selected documentaries on T.S. Eliot, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston.

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Primary Doc Assignment	10/25/2023	20
Research essay	01/17/2024	20
Group Assignment -3 parts	03/27/2024 etc.	40
Participation	Ongoing	20

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Luṅaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.