Beth Flynn
HL310, The American Novel
Fisher 125
T, Th 9:35-10:50
Fall, 1999
Office: Walker 303
Office phone: 487-3227
E-mail: efhnn@mtu.edu
Office Hours: T, Th 11-12:30 and by appointment

Texts:
Chavez, Denise The Last of the Menu Girls
Cisneros, Sandra The House on Mango Street
Eysturoy, Annie O Daughters of Self-Creation The Contemporary Chicana Novel
Kesey, Ken One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
Kosinski, Jerzy Being There
Lupack, Barbara Take Two Adapting the Contemporary American Novel to Film
Vonnegut, Kurt Slaughterhouse-Five

Supplies:
Please purchase a file folder to hold journal entries, drafts, and critique sheets. I will be collecting in-class journal entries at the end of each class period and out-of-class entries on Thursdays. I will collect drafts and critique sheets on the day formal essays are due. You'll need the file folder by Thursday of week one.

Purpose:
The course is described in the catalog as follows:

Examination of the novel in America with special attention to the historical, sociological, and personal contexts within which the author is writing.

Writing Assignments:
Journal:
For each class session in which there are assigned readings, you will be asked to write one or more in-class journal entries. The entries will provide you an opportunity to reflect on the material you have read and to record your reactions in a focused way. These entries are not formal and need not be polished or well organized. The act of writing should stimulate you to make connections you might not previously have made.

Once a week you should make an "observation" out-of-class entry. This will involve making connections between course material and something you observed during the week. Observations can include something you saw, read, or heard.

E-Mail Message:
Once during the term you should put one of your observation journal entries on e-mail. The list will be set up so that it can go to the entire list if you send it to flynn310@mtu.edu or to me if you send it to efhnn@mtu.edu. Please note that "I" is the twelfth letter of the alphabet rather than the number one. The message should be at least a screen long.
Formal Writing:

Two formal papers will be required.

In the first, provide background material that will help illuminate one of the novels we have discussed in class. You might want to focus on biographical information, other works by one of the authors, sociological or political context, or the relationship between the novel and the film based on it. Be sure to use at least two sources in addition to assigned material (Internet sources are acceptable). Include a list of works cited using MLA format.

The second is a five-page (approximately 1,250 words) comparison between one or more of the assigned novels. Focus especially on similarities or differences between the two. If they have both been made into films, feel free to discuss the films based on them as well. Be sure to make use of material in the Lupack or the Eysturoy collections, but use it critically. Indicate, for instance, if you agree with the analyses presented there and indicate why.

Presentations:

You will have an opportunity to present essays #1 and 2 in five-minute presentations. The presentation should be based on the paper you have submitted but should be tailored for oral delivery. Please use at least one overhead that provides an outline of your paper and a thesis statement. Please include a paper copy of the outline and thesis statement with your paper.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Much of the course involves conversation about course readings. If you miss those conversations, you will have missed a good deal of the course content. More than three unexcused absences will affect your grade.

Late Papers:

Since the course emphasizes the revision process and since it is important that presentations be based on finished essays, drafts and final essays must be submitted on time. Late papers will affect your grade.

Grades:

Your grade will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal, e-mail, and critiques</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation #1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation #2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal essay #1</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal essay #2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria for Evaluation:

A Papers:

The author makes an original contribution so that the reader becomes involved and learns from the piece. The central point is clear, and the parts of the essay have been connected effectively. Support for the point is appropriate for the intended audience and convincing.
The reader's needs have been taken into consideration. There are few if any errors.

B Papers:

The writing is clear, but the contribution does not seem especially original or new. The central point is clear, but the parts of the essay could be connected more effectively. Support for the point is adequate for the intended audience and fairly convincing. The reader's needs have been taken into consideration to an extent. There are some errors.

C Papers:

Takes some effort on the part of the reader to get through the essay. The paper does not have a strong focus, and it is not always clear how the parts of the essay support the thesis. Support for the point is not especially appropriate for the intended audience and not especially convincing. The reader's needs have not always been taken into consideration. There are a number of errors.

D Papers:

The reader cannot figure out what point the writer is trying to make. The central point is not at all clear, and the parts of the essay do not support it. Support for the point is inappropriate for the intended audience and not convincing. The reader's needs have not been taken into consideration. There are many errors.

F Papers:

The paper does not respond to the assignment at all or has not been handed in.

Other:

When papers are returned, most papers will have a letter grade on them. If you receive a grade lower than A, you may revise the essay and submit it no later than two weeks after it is returned. A few papers, though, will have an “R” on them. This means that the paper must be revised within two weeks of the time the paper was returned, and only the revision will be graded. I will usually suggest that individuals who receive Rs see me before revising. Please include the original paper with the revision!

Remember that formal essays should have titles. Please leave at least an inch margin on the sides and top and bottom of the paper and remember to number the pages on papers. Label all work. Include your name, my name, the course number and time, the date, and the course assignment. Be sure to indicate if the paper is a draft, a formal paper, or a revision.

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (3310).

It may be necessary to alter the syllabus as the quarter proceeds in order to better meet the instructional needs of the class.

Course Schedule:
Week 1 (September 7-9)
T: Introduction.
Th: Being There, pp. 3-66, Lupack, pp. 1-16.

Week 2 (September 14-16)
T: Being There, pp. 69-118, Lupack, pp. 60-76.
Th: Slaughterhouse-Five, pp. 1-90.

Week 3 (September 21-23)
T: Slaughterhouse-Five, pp. 91-195

Week 4 (September 28-30)
T: Cuckoo’s Nest, pp. 1-72
Th: Cuckoo’s Nest, pp. 73-138.

Week 5 (October 5-7)
T: Draft of essay # 1 due Cuckoo’s Nest, pp. 141-245.
Th: Cuckoo’s Nest, pp. 249-311, Lupack, pp. 36-50.

Week 6 (October 12-14)
T: Essay # 1 due. Presentations.
Th: Presentations.

Week 7 (October 19-21)
T: Mango Street, pp. 3-55, Eysturoy, pp. 3-28.
Th: Mango Street, pp. 56-110, Eysturoy, pp. 89-112.

Week 8 (October 26-28)
T: Draft of essay # 2 due Menu Girls, pp. 13-76.

Week 9 (November 2-4)
T: Menu Girls, pp. 139-190, Eysturoy, pp. 113-131.
Th: Essay # 2 due. Presentations.

Week 10 (November 9-11)
T: Presentations.
Th: Conclusion.