Texts:


Supplies:

You’ll need a file folder to hold your portfolio of responses, drafts, critique sheets, and graded papers. I’ll bring in some used ones if you’d prefer not to buy a new one. I will be collecting response statements on the days they are due. I will collect drafts and critique sheets on the day formal essays are due and graded essays shortly after they are returned. Please have 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. Film versions of selected novels may also be studied.

Writing Assignments:

Response Journal:

For selected readings indicated on the syllabus, you should submit in-class or out-of-class response statements of at least 125 words. Responses are informal reactions to the novels. They needn’t be polished or fully-developed ideas.

Portfolio Analysis

Please prepare a portfolio analysis (at least a page long) that provides a commentary on responses, research reports, the draft of your formal essay, the critique of your formal essay, and your final paper. What are some strengths of your performance on these assignments? What are some limitations?

Research Reports:

Prepare a report of about 400 words (two typescript pages) on each of the five novels. For each report, focus on the biography of the author, criticism or reviews of the novel, or sociological or historical contexts of the novel. Use only scholarly, reputable sources. Encyclopedias and sites such as, Wikipedia, SparkNotes, CliffNotes, eNotes, sCheat, BookRags, megaessays, Wow Essays, GradeSaver, termpapers etc. can be
useful in pointing toward scholarly sources but are not themselves to be used as sources. Be sure to include a list of works cited, and include appropriate information within your text such as page numbers when you are quoting or referring to specific passages from your sources.

**Formal Essay:**

One formal paper at least 4 pages in length (at least 1000 words) will be required. It should make use of material from a research report or several reports but should be an argument and should include an original interpretation of one or more novels read during the term. The audience for the paper should be class members as well as individuals outside of class who might be interested in your topic.

You will need to submit proposals for your research reports and for your final essay. Proposals for the research reports should include the tentative source(s) you intend to use and an indication of the question or questions you are addressing in the report. The proposal for the final essay is a brief, tentative description of what you intend to write about in the essay. One paragraph is sufficient, though it could be longer. You are free to change your topic after you have submitted the proposal. The draft should be your best effort rather than a first draft. The feedback you receive on it from classmates will be more valuable if you think the essay is close to being ready to submit.

**Presentations:**

You will have an opportunity to present your research reports in two-minute presentations. The final presentation should be about four minutes long. The final 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. Make sure to put a complete heading on the outline including your name, my name, the date, the course number, and the assignment number.

**Research Reports:**

When indicated on the syllabus, submit a two-page summary of research you have done on each of the five novels. Be sure to include a list of works cited. Everyone will make a brief presentation summarizing what he or she has found out on the day the report is due. Some possible topics include information about the author’s life, criticism of the novel or reviews of it, or information about sociological or historical contexts. We’ll have to coordinate reports so as to avoid too much overlap.

**Group Work:**

You’ll have an opportunity to work in a group to brainstorm about possible research topics and to receive feedback on reports and the draft of your final essay.

**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:
Portfolio (responses, proposals, critiques, drafts, presentation outlines, final papers) 20%
Research reports 25%
Research presentation 5%
Formal essay 30%
Formal presentation 10%
Group work 10%

Criteria for Evaluation:

A Papers and Presentations:

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

B Papers and Presentations:

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

C Papers and Presentations:

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

D Papers and Presentations:

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

F Papers and Presentations:

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

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 your formal essay should have a title. 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 including presentation outlines. 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 final paper, or a revision. Please do NOT submit drafts and formal essays electronically.

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, Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

MTU strives to offer equal opportunity to all of its employees, students, applicants for employment, and applicants for admission without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, height, weight, marital status, disabled veteran status, veteran status, arrest record, or disability. See http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/boc/policy/ch3p7.htm. The Affirmative Programs Office (commonly called the Affirmative Action Office, or AA) facilitates Michigan Tech's development of an environment that is free from prejudicial discrimination or harassment and that is conducive to learning and individual growth for all campus members and visitors. Contact the Affirmative Programs Office, Room 207, Administration Building, Phone: 906-487-3310, Fax: 906-487-2842; e-mail Sherry Kauppi, Director, for more information.

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

Plagiarism—using the ideas or words of others without acknowledging the source—is unethical and a violation of University policy. Plagiarism cases will be handled by the Dean of Students. Some consequences of plagiarism could be failure of a paper or course. The University has subscribed to an anti-plagiarism service that can detect plagiarized material. If you have questions about the proper way to cite the ideas of someone else, please see me.

Academic Integrity: http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/udicial/policies/academic_integrity.html
Affirmative Action: http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aoa/
Disability Services: http://www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html#disability

Please turn off all cell phones and laptops before class begins.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (August 31-Sept. 2)
R

Week 2 (Sept. 7-9)
T Alexie, pp. 67-117. Proposal for research report # 1 due.

Week 3 (Sept. 14-16)
T Alexie, pp. 179-230. Research report # 1 due. Research presentations. Try to attend the Alexie talk at 7:00 p.m. in the Rozsa.
R Vonnegut, chaps 1-2, pp. 1-51. In-class response # 3.
Week 4 (Sept. 21-23)
T Vonnegut, chaps. 3-5, pp. 52-135. Proposal for research report # 2 due.
R Vonnegut, chaps. 6-8, pp. 136-181. In-class response # 4.

Week 5 (Sept. 28-30)
R Walker, pp. 1-52. In-class response # 5.

Week 6 (Oct. 5-7)
T Walker, pp. 63-120. Proposal for research report # 3 due.

Week 7 (Oct. 12-14)
T Walker, pp. 185-244. Out-of-class response # 7 due.

Week 8 (Oct. 19-21)
R Cisneros, pp. 33-64. Proposal for research report # 4 due.

Week 9 (Oct. 26-28)
R Robinson, pp. 3-50. In-class response # 9.

Week 10 (Nov. 2-4)
T Robinson, pp. 51-100. Proposal for research report # 5 due.
R Robinson, pp. 101-149. In-class response # 10.

Week 11 (Nov. 9-11)

Week 12 (Nov. 16-18)
T Annie O. Eysturoy, “The House on Mango Street: A Space of Her Own.” (pdf)
R Jerone Klinkowitz, “Slaughterhouse-Five: Fiction Into Film.” (pdf)

Week 13 (Nov. 30-Dec. 2)

Week 14 (Dec. 7-9)
T Formal essay due. Presentations.