**English 1011**

**Seminar in Writing through Literature: A World of Conflict**

**Spring 2013**

Instructor: Melanie Zamorski Room: 209

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Tutoring: Mondays after school

**Novels Used:**

Othello, Shakespeare, William

Girl, Interrupted, Kaysen, Susanna

Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Souls of Young Girls, Piper, Mary (selections from)

Fahrenheit 451, Bradbury, Ray

Into the Wild, Krakauer, Jon

Heart of Darkness, Conrad, Joseph

Walden, Thoreau, Henry David (selections from)

Remix, Latterell, Catherine G. (various selections)

**Short Stories:**

“A Rose for Emily” Faulkner, William

“Desiree’s Baby” Chopin, Kate

“Hill Like White Elephants” Hemmingway, Earnest

**Films**:

“O”

“Inherit the Wind”

“Avatar”

**Course Overview:**

 Throughout this course you will be asked to take a look at many conflicts that plague mankind. We will examine literature dealing with man’s struggles to conform to society, interactions with others and even man’s relationship with nature. Although this course comprises of literary analysis, you will be expected to use the concepts in the literature to spark your own questions and answers regarding the conflict man encounters on a daily basis. The purpose is for you to begin to explore where the literature takes you, not just what the author may have intended.

This course is a four-credit, semester-long writing seminar designed to develop your writing and revision processes. To accomplish this, we will encounter, discuss and write critically about fiction and non-fiction literature related to the theme man’s conflict with himself, others, nature and society. The bulk of this course hinges on your ability to reflect, interpret and argue literature through your writing. With that said, you will be expected to critically examine all the pieces of writing that are assigned throughout this course. This means that you will read and reread novels and articles several times in order to gain insight, clarity and partake their discourse.

This course will allow you to refine your writing skills, but it is also designed to assist you in becoming more adept at questioning, argumentation and reflecting on the significance of academic literature. You will be working with several different genres of literature throughout this course; including but not limited to fiction, nonfiction, essays, historical documents and film. Throughout this course you will explore concepts such regarding man’s interaction with himself, others, nature and society. Students will be expected to explore the text in order to draw their own conclusions and inferences. Students should question what they are reading and explore ideas that the reading sparks for them. This course designed to allow students to become independent thinkers.

 Another key component of this course is revision. We will work together (with the instructor, peers and small groups) in order to refine your formal essays. Throughout this course you will be instructed to bring in several copies of your drafts so that we, as a class, may critique, question and explore your ideas and your writing style.

**Course Expectations:**

 Students are expected to come prepared to every class and bring with them any pertinent texts relevant to that day’s work.

 Students are to read all assignments by the due date and have reviewed them thoroughly (annotating, questioning and commenting about the text).

 Students will write all responses and essays by assigned date.

 Students will participate in small groups, class discussions and peer revisions.

 Students will attend the final exam in which you will synthesize the various themes and concepts explored in course readings, writing assignments and class discussions via your research essay speech.

 Students will use MLA format when citing sources.

**Attendance and Participation:**

 Attendance is essential to your success in this course. Because this course is offered to you for college credit, you therefore must be in class regardless of SMSA’s policies on attendance. The seminar portion of this course is centered on student discussion, argumentation and participation with the readings. If you are absent you will miss not only the opportunity to explore your own ideas with the class, but also lose the ability to gain insight on the thoughts others and their examination of your thoughts.

 Tardiness will also negatively affect your participation in class. Time is limited, so class must begin immediately.

 Most importantly, in order for you to grow as a writer you must allow yourself to be subjected to criticism, questioning and arguments on your views. You must also be willing to share with your peers. Unless you are willing to speak and explore your ideas and writing in class you will not be successful. You are expected to become more powerful and self aware readers, writers and thinkers by the end of this course.

 Students have the ability to reach me regarding any questions, concerns or special circumstances that arise thorough the semester. I can be reach by phone or email and request that I am notified should you be absent for any legitimate reason.

**Formal Essays:**

 Students will write four formal essays throughout this course. All essays are to be handed in with a rough draft demonstrating your ability to revise and create a polished piece of writing. Formal essays will reflect the units covered in this course. These essays will account of the bulk of your grade in this class. As the semester progresses, students should be able to demonstrate growth in their writing.

 Late essays will NOT be accepted.

 All essays should conform to MLA standard formatting when applicable.

 Any essay requiring additional research should use worthy sources as evidence. Google and Wikipedia do not fall under this category.

**Research Essay (final):** Basic research skills are essential to your success as a college student. To help you refine those skills, you will be required to write a 10 page research paper exploring a controversial issue pertaining to something that interested you throughout this course. You will create a question that you will need to find an answer or solution to. Students will conduct research and will need to evaluate sources and select information that will support their conclusions. Students will also be required to give a speech on their research paper.

**Student Response Essay:** Student response essays will occur throughout the semester and will cover a variety of subjects. These essays will usually be written in class and will reflect class and group discussions, as well as your own inferences and interpretations of the text covered. They are informal and will be graded solely on your expression of the subject.

**Plagiarism:**

 Both SMSA and the University of Connecticut have a strict policy regarding plagiarism. Below is the link to UCONN’s Statement on Plagiarism. Please be aware that incorrectly citing any other person’s ideas or not acknowledging them at all is considered plagiarism, and doing so will result in an F on the assignment. The student will also risk failing the course completely. Please review UCONN’s plagiarism statement for any clarification.

<http://freshmanenglish.uconn.edu/documents/PlagiarismStatement082808.doc>

**Grading Policy:**

 *UCONN GRADE* *SMSA MP1* *SMSA MP2*

Four Essays (6-8 pgs): 40% 40% 40%

Research Essay(final 10-15): 20% 0% 20%

Revision/Peer/Group Work: 15% 20% 15%

Participation: 10% 15% 10%

Student Response Essays: 15% 25% 15%

\*Note SMSA final grade will be calculated using 50% of MP1 and 50% of MP2. UCONN final grade will be as listed above.

**Explanation of Grading:**

 An “A” paper will have a clear, concise and focused thesis that is well supported throughout. Students will show unique and thought provoking ideas derived from the literature they read or research they have done. Students will reflect upon his or her understanding and interpretation of a topic and use materials from both class and outside sources to prove their position. An “A” paper should be free of most grammatical, mechanical and spelling errors. Students should also demonstrate a command of varied sentence structure and vocabulary. Students will aptly demonstrate original thought an alternative ways of examining a subject.

 A “B” paper has a clear and focused thesis but may lack some of the coherent and strong support of an “A”. Students will show some unique and thought provoking ideas derived from the literature they read or research they have done. Students will reflect upon his or her understanding and interpretation of the topic and will use material from class and outside sources in support of their thesis. A “B” paper is mostly free of grammatical, mechanical and spelling errors. Students use varied sentence structure and vocabulary. Students will demonstrate original thought an alternative ways of examining a subject.

 A “C” paper has a focused thesis but is lacking the strong, relevant support of that of an “A” or “B”. . Students will show some interesting and thoughtful ideas derived from the literature they read or research they have done. Students are still able to reflect upon his or her or her understanding and interpretation of the topic, but it may be missing the fluency and connection of ideas. “C” papers will have support of their reasoning from class text and outside sources. A “C” essay may have some mechanical, grammatical and spelling errors. The use of varied sentence structure and vocabulary is not as evident as those used in an “A” or “B” essay. Students will show beginnings original thought an alternative ways of examining a subject.

A “D” and “F” essay should be able to be avoided in this course. Students will have ample time to workshop their essays in class. Students will have the opportunity to have their essays peer edited and discussed during class workshops. By taking this process seriously, you should have no trouble revising your essay to a “C” or higher prior to handing it in for a final score by the instructor. The instructor will also be available for one on one conferencing both in class and after school.