

ENGL 486R: SPECIAL TOPICS IN LITERATURE KAFKA AND POSTSTRUCTURALISM

Please visit the following website for complete class information that includes all **required texts, assignments, and a detailed semester reading schedule**:

<http://research.uvu.edu/Albrecht-crane/486RKafka/main.html>

COURSE INFO

Instructor: Christa Albrecht-Crane, Ph.D.
Class Info: Spring 2011, MW 2:30-3:45, LA 203
Office: LA 126f
Office Hours: MW 1-2:15, and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course, an elective 4000-level course, focuses on the topic of Kafka and poststructuralism. This is a demanding, reading-intensive class that will require a high level of time commitment and strong academic skills. In addition, since the course focuses in part on a particular writer, Franz Kafka, students should have a genuine interest in this writer. The course also takes a poststructuralist approach to the study of Kafka, which means that students should be familiar and comfortable with reading and understanding critical theory, particularly poststructuralism and deconstruction. The official prerequisite for ENGL 486R is just ENGL 2010 or 2020, but as the instructor of the course I will require that students have taken ENGL 3890 and ENGL 3090. I will be available to answer questions and clarify difficult course material but at the same time I will assume an advanced level of preparedness and knowledge on the subject matter.

This course includes four interrelated concerns: (1) to expose us to select books and short stories from Kafka's oeuvre, (2) to help us learn more about Kafka as a writer in the context of early 20th Century Europe, (3) to study the poststructuralist argument that language is non-representational, and (4) to understand how "reality" is made up of a complex web of textuality. Aside from reading Kafka's texts, we will also read a Kafka biography, contemporary fiction, essays, and scholarly articles, and a number of theoretical, poststructuralist texts. Overall, we are going to argue that poststructuralism, generally speaking, outlines a set of issues that are relevant in Kafka's fiction; this relevance can be observed in two ways--first, Kafka's stories deal with issues, characters, literary devices, and plots that one might call "poststructural;" secondly, his own texts, as texts with a particular publication and reception history, illustrate the poststructuralist view that discourse and textuality shape the way we see the world.

GRADING

Your grade in this course is based on the following components:

participation/attendance	200
DEJs	250
two regular papers	250
final paper	300
semester total	1000 points

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to come to class regularly and on time, and to be engaged in the intellectual project of this class. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to catch up. Please talk to a classmate or two and get their notes. Do not ask me to summarize the day's discussion. I expect attentive and active participation to the extent that you demonstrate excellent engagement with the readings and class discussion.

Excessive absences (more than two) will lower your class grade--I will reduce your participation/attendance grade by 20 points for each class period you miss beyond the first two. Missing more than five classes will result in your failure of the class. Attendance will be taken at the start of every class period, and late arrivals and early departures will count against you.

MISSED WORK, LATE WORK, AND EXTRA CREDIT

I do not accept late work, make-up work and I give no extra credit. DEJs are due at the beginning of a class period in class (as a rule I do not accept assignments that have been emailed). The only exception to my policy is this: if you miss class, I will accept a DEJ or paper the next class period but will deduct 25% worth of points for that assignment.

CLASS ETIQUETTE

Cell phones are to be turned off before you come to class. Refrain from using your cell phone for text messaging at all times while you're in class. In addition, please do not use laptop computers at any time during class. Class members should treat each other with respect and a productive attitude.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have any disability that may impair your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the UVU Accessibility Services Department (WB 146, www.uvu.edu/asd/; 863-8747). Academic accommodations are granted for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the Accessibility Services Department.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

The Statement from UVU's "Students' Rights and Responsibilities Code" reads: "Each student is expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms, including but not limited to, cheating and plagiarism, and fabrication as defined hereafter."

With respect to this particular class plagiarism refers to knowingly copying another person's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation. This covers copying sections or entire papers from printed or electronic sources as well as handing in papers written by students for other classes or purchasing academic papers. Plagiarism and cheating are not only dishonest but they cheat you out of learning. You must submit your own work in this course.

The consequences for academic dishonesty are grave. The penalty for a first offense is an F for the assignment; a second offense means that you fail the course and will be reported to the Department Chair and to Student Advising. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please talk to me.