Honors 4920: Mountaineering and Exploration Literature
CRN: 23226
Weber State University
Fall 2019

Facebook: Facebook.com/WSUartsandhumanities.com
Twitter: @WeberStateArts
YouTube: Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities

Professor: Dr. Mikel Vause
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Catalog Course Description: ENGL 3750 HU - Topics and Ideas in Literature

This variable topics course focuses on the various social, philosophical, and political themes emerging in literary texts. Students will learn the critical skills necessary to identify the intellectual currents in the texts under consideration, to engage in focused discussion, and to probe the various intentions of any act of writing. Prerequisite: ENGL 2010 (Links to an external site.) or equivalent. It may be repeated 3 times with different designations.

General Education Statements:

The general education program is dedicated to helping students master the following Humanities (HU) Learning Outcomes:

1) Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse philosophical, communicative, linguistic, or literary traditions, as well as of key themes, concepts, issues, terminology, and ethical standards in humanities disciplines.

2) Students will analyze cultural artifacts within a given discipline, and, when appropriate, across disciplines, time periods, and cultures.

3) Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate their understanding of humanities materials in written, oral, or graphic forms.

Policies:

Attendance: Online

Academic Dishonesty: As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

***Read through entire syllabus before beginning coursework***
Core Beliefs: According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student’s core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student’s request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student’s beliefs.”

Disability Accommodation: PPM 3-34 notes: “When students seek accommodation in a regularly scheduled course, they have the responsibility to make such requests at the Center for Students with Disabilities before the beginning of the quarter [semester] in which the accommodation is being requested. When a student fails to make such arrangements, interim accommodations can be made by the instructor, pending the determination of the request for a permanent accommodation.”

Emergency Campus Closure: In the event of an extended campus closure, check your WSU Wildcat email account for further instructions about how to keep up with class. It will be your responsibility to check in frequently with your WSU email account in order to complete the class.

Workload Expectations: As specified in PPM 4.1, you should expect to do 2 hours of work outside of class for each regularly scheduled hour of class.

Course Summary:

If adventure [exploration] has a final and all-embracing motive, it is surely this: we go out because it is our nature to go out, to climb mountains, and to paddle rivers, to fly to the planets and plunge into the depths of the oceans. . . . When man ceases to do these things, he is no longer man.

-- Wilfrid Noyce

According the great American psychologist, William James, humans are born with an innate desire to seek adventure. For much of human history this desire has been satiated by war and if not by war, by exploration with express purpose of increasing national boundaries and land holdings, not to mention national treasuries. It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that humans came to exploration for aesthetic reasons. Modern mountaineering is a clear cut example of exploration for its own sake--its own reward. We will read and discuss a number of essays that deal with exploration as an aesthetic activity, yet we will also look at many adventures that were wholly nationalistic in nature and yet out of these comes some of the most touching and well written accounts of human endurance, sacrifice, and survival. It is the purpose of literature to stir the soul. Such will be the case with the readings that follow.
It is required of each student to submit to the unit assessments (found in "Quizzes" section) a detailed critical response to each assigned reading. The submissions will be graded on creativity, completeness, and depth of critical analysis.

Through online assignment submissions (Quizzes), students will keep an online reading/writing portfolio in which they will critically respond to each assigned reading. The grade for this class is based on the point totals for the weekly Unit Assessments. On each critical response, I will assign the following ratings: Excellent - "A", Very Good - "B", Good - "C", or Unacceptable. These ratings, announced through the Canvas assessment tool will determine your final grade as follows: (1) GOOD (2 pts) work on all of the assignments equals an average grade in the "C" to "C-" range. (2) VERY GOOD (3 pts) work represents grades in the "B" to "B-" range. (3) EXCELLENT work represents grades in the range of "A" to "A-".

If you do not complete all assignments with at least GOOD or LATE ratings, you will receive a failing grade. You must complete all study guide questions and you must redo any assignment rated UNACCEPTABLE or you will fail the course.

*Re-submissions may be made through the Canvas assessment tool. However, you will not be able to edit your previous submission, but instead you must make a new submission. You may not resubmit assignments that received GOOD or LATE ratings. Five or more LATE ratings will result in the final grade lowered one letter.

*Assignments that come in after the deadlines but are still acceptable will be rated LATE and will not receive the extensive editing and/or comments that I will attach to work that comes in under the deadlines.

Course Policies:

Please use my office e-mail mvause@weber.edu to communicate with me on all class matters or you may call me at my office phone: 801 626 6659.

Testing:
There are no tests for this course.

Other Policies:
- The professor’s educational philosophy does not allow extra-credit work.
- Any cheating, including plagiarizing assignments or collaborating with other students, will result in an automatic failing grade.

Warning:
It is essential that as you do your work in this course, it is your own work. Any plagiarism will result in automatic failure for the course. Please resist any temptation to plagiarize. Work that duplicates someone else’s work is not acceptable. In addition, lesson assignments
are designed to help you master the material. Although you should freely obtain information from the textbook and other sources in completing the lesson assignments, the actual wording of the assignments should be your own. Simply copying word-for-word will not provide the kind of learning experience necessary to obtain a high grade in the course and to master the subject.

Grading Criteria Used for Papers

A:

An essay or paper in this category:

- is well developed and well organized
- clearly illustrates and develops key ideas
- displays a high degree of inventiveness & originality
- displays a sophisticated and superior use of language
- demonstrates syntactic variety
- is virtually free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

B:

An essay or paper in this category:

- is well organized and developed, though it may have small flaws in organization or paragraphing
- illustrates and develops some key ideas
- displays good control of language and a consistent tone
- demonstrates some syntactic variety
- is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

C:

An essay or paper in this category:

- is adequately well developed and organized
- illustrates and develops one or two key ideas
- displays capable and accurate use of language
- may display occasional errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction, but not a consistent pattern of such errors
D:
An essay or paper in this category may also **have positive qualities** while exhibiting one or more of the following:

- displays weakness in development or organization
- reveals a number of errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, or diction in an otherwise adequate paper
- suggests a lack of understanding of the assignment, a marked lack of understanding of the texts under discussion in the paper, or a superficial rendering of argument. With the exception of the summary essay assignment, papers that merely summarize fall in this category.

**3750 Mountaineering and Exploration Literature Readings:**

**Unit One**

**In Spite of the Difficulty: The Alps**

**Reading Assignment**

Edward Whymper, "Descent of the Matterhorn"

Heinrich Harrer, "The Tragedy of Tony Kurz"

Giusto Gervasutti, "Conclusion"

**Unit Summary**

These essays represent the works of some of the pioneers in mountain exploration.

**Unit Two**

**The Alps in Modern Times**

**Reading Assignments**

Sir Chris Bonington, "The Central Pillar of Freny"

Joe Brown, "Hard Day in the Alps"

Dougal Haston, "Eiger Direct"

Steve Roper, "Dresden"

**Unit Three**

**Back of Beyond: Mountain Exploration**

**Reading Assignments**
Maurice Herzog, "The Retreat"
Sir John Hunt, "From the Twenty-ninth to the Thirtieth"
Eric Shipton, "Mountains of the Moon"

**Unit Four**

**Mountain Exploration II**

**Reading Assignments**

Woodrow Wilson Sayer, "Why Men Climb"
Jim Curran, "The Great Beast 666"
Greg Child, "Baltoro"

**Unit Five**

**Mountain Exploration III**

**Reading Assignments**

Arlene Blum, "The Memorial"
Jeff Long, "Cannibals"
Simon Yeates, "At Home Abroad"
Mikel Vause, "Mountaineering: The Heroic Expression of Our Time"

**Unit Six**

**Nothing Ventured I**

**Assignment**

"Half Dome Clean" -- Doug Robinson
"Grabbing Friendship by the Ankle" -- Jeff Lowe
"A Glencoe Massacre" -- Andrew Greig

**Unit Seven**

**Nothing Ventured II**

**Assignment**

Hamish Brown, "Agag's Groove"
Terry Gifford, Bonfire in Borrowdale/Bonfire above Benidorm"
Paul Pritchard, "The Games One Climber Played"
Ian Mitchell (fiction), "Dead Man's Ice Axe"
Unit Eight

Nothing Ventured III

Reading Assignments

Hamish MacInnes, "Man o' Hoy"
Pat Ament, "To Become as a Child"
Jeff McCarthy, "Summits"

Unit Nine

The Philosophy of Mountaineering

Reading Assignments

Winthrop Young, "The Effects of Mountains Upon the Development of Human Intelligence"

Unit Summary

This essay makes a scholarly examination on how mountains have impressed themselves on the human mind.

Unit Ten

Philosophy II

Reading Assignments

Phil Bartlett, "Return to the Primitive"
Galen Rowell, "Storming a Myth"
Doug Scott, "On the Profundity Trail"

Unit Summary

These essays continue to explore the influence of mountains on the wild nature of the human intellect as well as on the human spirit.

Unit Eleven

Philosophy III

Reading Assignments

David Roberts, "Moments of Doubt"
George Spenceley, "The New Generation"
Sir Leslie Stephen, "The Regrets of a Mountaineer"

Unit Summary
These essays continue with the examination of the affect mountains have had on human development.

Unit Twelve
Philosophy IV
Reading Assignments
Mikel Vause, "Nights of Nothingness"
Margaret Body, "Recollections of an Editor"
Unit Summary
These two essays discuss why humans climb and why they choose to write about it.

Unit Thirteen
Mountaineering in Film
Assignment
To complete this assignment, you must view a film from the following list:

- Touching the Void
- The Climb
- The Mountain
- The White Tower
- The Eiger Sanction
- Five Days One Summer
- Third Man on the Mountain

Unit Summary
These films represent some of the best treatment of mountaineering that have come to the big screen.