

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF LETTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Syllabus

**Title of the Course: IED 490 Postmodern Novel**

**Instructor: Prof. Dr. Serpil OPPERMANN**

**Year and Term: Spring 2012**

**Class Hours and Rooms: Friday 10:00-112:45 B2 201**

**Aim and Content:** This course will introduce “postmodern novel” pairing major theoretical statements and critical explorations with works that illustrate them. Beginning with discussions on several precursors to the novel, the course will center on the selected postmodern fictions. The focus will be mainly on the concepts relating to postmodern novels, such as the use of self-reflexivity and self-consciousness, intertextuality, parody and pastiche, irony, play, process, textuality and fictionality. The aim of the course is to introduce the major characteristics of “metafiction” and “historiographic metafiction” within postmodernism, and familiarize the students with postmodern approaches to representation and history, the paradoxes of fictive versus real, and the challenge of metanarratives in novelistic conventions. The primary reading of the course consists of 4 prescribed postmodern fictions. Students need not begin the class with any background in postmodernism or the contemporary novel. However, they are expected to read course texts carefully, participate actively in class discussion, and work through postmodern ideas in writing.

**Course Outline:**

**Week I - II:** Introduction to the Realist conventions and their postmodern subversion in the novel genre. First, selected passages from Diderot’s *Jacques the Fatalist*, and Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* will be discussed. Then, there will be a major introduction postmodern fiction.

**Reading Material:** “Introduction” (pp.1-17) and chapter 3 “Postmodernism and the Literary Arts” (pp.49-68) in Tim Woods. *Beginning Postmodernism*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999.

**Week III:** Metafiction and the use of postmodern parody, irony, and intertextuality  
Discussion of Paul Auster’s “City of Glass” in *The New York Trilogy*. New York: Penguin, 1985.

**Reading Material:**

1. Chapter 3 “Surfiction: A Postmodern Position” (pp. 35-47) in Raymond Federman. *Critifiction: Postmodern Essays*. Albany: State U. of New York P, 1993.

2. Chapter 1 “What is Metafiction” and chapter 2 “Literary Self-consciousness” (pp.1-61) in Patricia Waugh. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. New York: Methuen, 1984.

3. Roland Barthes. “The Death of the Author.” *Falling into Theory: Conflicting Views on Reading Literature*. Ed. David H. Richter. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994. (pp. 222-226).

**Week IV-V :** Historiographic Metafiction . Discussion of Raymond Federman’s *To Whom It May Concern*. Boulder: Fiction Collective Two, 1990.

**Reading Material:**

1. Chapter 7 “Historiographic Metafiction” (pp.105-123) in Linda Hutcheon. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*. 1988. New York: Routledge,1990.
2. Chapter 3 “Re-presenting the past” in Linda Hutcheon.*The Politics of Postmodernism*. 1989. New York: Routledge,1991.

**Week VI-VII: Discussion of** Peter Ackroyd’s *Plato Papers*. (Playfulness, postmodern irony, pastiche)

**Week VIII:** Midterm 1 (April 25, 2012)

**Week IX-X:** Discussion of Steven Hall’s *Raw Shark Texts*.

**Week XI:** Midterm 2 (May 16, 2012)

**Week XII-XIV:** Rounding up of discussions on previous 4 texts and student presentations.

**Method of Instruction:** Interactive: Lectures and student discussions with 10 minute presentations on specific topics from the novels.

**Course Requirements:** Attendance is obligatory. More than 11 hours of absence will result in F1. Students are responsible for the assigned texts.

**Assessment:** There will be TWO Midterm exams (50%) and a Final Exam (50%). Those who present short papers will get a bonus of 10% in their final grade.

**The passing grade in the Final is 50.**

In grading the exam papers 25% of the total mark will be taken off for grammatical mistakes and writing errors.