

Challenges of Modern Culture: *Revolutions*

Instructor: Ruby A. Montana, MA
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I. Course Description

Recommended Prerequisites: Humanities 3301 or 3302

For thousands of years now, humans have used philosophy, literature, history, etc. to understand and record our world and our experiences within it. These subjects all fit under the greater Humanities umbrella. Awareness and study of the past and present human experience gives us the opportunity to feel a sense of connection to those who have come before us, as well as a deeper meaning to our present day occurrences. This semester, we will focus on intellectually and culturally relevant issues associated with European and North American cultures between 1792 and the present. Texts for this course were selected because they reveal issues and concepts that reveal “revolutions” vital to the shaping of Western cultural beliefs, institutions, and practices. At first glance, our reading list may appear intimidating, but each class session will include the essential dialog to help you succeed in this course. However, I cannot stress enough the importance of setting aside the allotted time necessary to dedicate yourself to the assigned texts. Wikipedia or other such internet conveniences will NOT be reliable substitution for actual reading. The goal of this course is to expose you to some of the influential ideas and works which essentially helped shape not only Western culture as we know it, but very likely some of your own perspectives as well. By thoroughly examining and seeking to understand these texts in their original context, you should begin to see their significance in our modern day world. My goal is that you will leave this semester with a greater understanding of where many commonly held views have stemmed from, while holding a fresh perspective on your surroundings and worldview.

II. Required texts:

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

Mark Twain, *Letters from the Earth*

Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

III. Course Requirements

Students in this course will be expected to complete readings before class and participate in class discussions and activities. Grades for the course will be earned by accumulating points in the following manner:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. 1 Essay | 200 points | (200 points total) |
| 2. 10 Pop Quizzes | 20 points each | (200 points total) |
| 3. Assignments | point variation | (200 points total) |
| 4. 3 Exams | 100 points each | (300 points total) |
| 5. 1 Final Presentation | | (100 points total) |

TOTAL POINTS = 1000 divided by 10 = grade

Points will be added together at the end of the semester to receive the following letter grades: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; under 60=F. Cheating will result in an automatic F.

IV. Policies and Procedures

Regular attendance is imperative to your success in the class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to keep up with assigned readings. Late homework assignments and late essays will only be accepted if prior arrangements have been made before the day of your absence. Similarly, exams can only be made up if prior notice was given to instructor. No exceptions. Otherwise, I do not need to be notified of absences. Quizzes cannot be made up. However, there will be extra credit opportunities to make up lost points.

Of significant importance is an understanding that courtesy in the classroom is a requirement. I encourage active discussions and feedback in class, but it should always be done in a respectful manner. Disrespect toward the instructor or other students will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Cell phone and laptop use during lecture is not allowed.

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, not doing one's own work, plagiarism, and unacceptable collusion. Not doing one's own work may involve copying from or providing information to another student, or possessing unauthorized materials during a test. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person as one's own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts.

ADA statement

As per Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call [915-747-5148](tel:915-747-5148) for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and The Disabled Student Services Office at The University of Texas at El Paso

V. Calendar

Subject to change at the instructor's discretion:

August

27 - Course Introduction

29 - *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*: Dedication, Introduction, and Chapters 1 and 2

September

3- No class

5- Chapters 3-4, 6-9

10- Chapter 13, Sections 2-6

12- *Brave New World*, Chapters 1-3

17- Chpts. 4-8

19- Chpts. 9-13

24- Chpts. 14-end

26- No class

October

1- Philosophy Focus: Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, Epicurus' *Problem of Evil*

3- *Letters from the Earth*, pgs. 3-37

8- pgs. 37-57

10- **Exam I**

15- *Slaughterhouse-Five*: One - Three

17- Three - Six

22- Six - Nine

24- Nine - end

29- *Beloved*, pgs. 3-51

31- 1- pgs. 51-124

November

5- pgs. 124-187

7- pgs. 187-235

12- “It made them furious. They swallowed baking soda, the morning after, to calm the stomach violence caused by the bounty, the reckless generosity on display at 124....” to pg. 225

14- pg. 225 “...and get to the no-time waiting for her.” to End of book

19- Exam II

21- *Between the World and Me*: pgs. 1-39 “Perhaps we should return to Mecca.”

26- “Perhaps we should return to Mecca.” - pg. 99 “It must be, if only to preserve the sanctity of your mind.”

28- “It must be, if only to preserve the sanctity of your mind.” to End of book

December

3- **Final Presentations**

5- **Final Presentations**

14 - **Final Exam, Essay due** - 10 am - 12:45 pm

***Nov. 2nd- Drop Date**