

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY 2010
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
PS3515FA POLITICAL THOUGHT AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
POLITICS AND THE NOVEL: UTOPIA OR DYSTOPIA?
TUESDAY –THURSDAY 10-11:30AM – ATAC 2021

Instructor: Dr. D. West
Office: RB 2033
Office Hours: By Appointment
Telephone: 343-8304

This course focuses on the use of the novel in Western-European culture as a commentary on contemporary political experiences “utopia”. For example, the novels that will be covered in this course aim to convey to the reader the power of the political will, ideological bias, gender politics, religion and civic engagement, among other political themes. Throughout the course we will read these books as they speak to their time and to our own, encouraging an historical perspective on the development of Western – European political ideas.

Grading:

Attendance * 10%
Book Review ** 20%
Review Essay *** 40%
Final Take-Home Examination **** 30%

*Attendance will be taken each class.

** Each student must submit one 5-7 page book review **DUE ON NOVEMBER 2nd IN CLASS**. Each student is required to give an overview of their understanding of a specific novel **OTHER THAN THE NOVEL FOR WHICH THEY ARE WRITING THEIR REVIEW ESSAY**. Late penalties will be 1 MARK/20 deduction for every day late. Reasonable extensions may be negotiated.

***The review essay will be approximately 10-12 pages in length (APA style) and will consist of an analysis of one of the novels discussed in the course. Late penalties will be 1 MARK/40 deduction for every day late. Reasonable extensions may be negotiated. The review essay is **in the last class in DECEMBER IN CLASS**.

**** The final take-home examination will be handed out in the last class and must be returned by the following Monday by 4:30pm. Late penalties will be 5% reduction for every day late. There will be no extensions granted.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Utopia, Thomas More
Darkness at Noon, Arthur Koestler
1984, George Orwell
Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe
Linden Hills, Gloria Naylor
The Rez Sisters, Thomson Highway
Secondary source articles will be placed on WebCT for each author.

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 14– Organization – Outlines

September 16-23 – Utopia

September 28- October 7 - Darkness at Noon

October 12-21 - 1984

October 26 – November 4 – Things Fall Apart

November 9-18 – Linden Hills

November 23- December 2 – Rez Sisters

GUIDELINES FOR BOOK REVIEW

1-Length is 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced. (12 point font)

2-The following elements must be addressed:

- The Author’s main thesis
- Your commentary on Author’s style of presentation
- A discussion of the setting(s) of Novel
- A description and purpose of main and subsidiary characters
- A short discussion of the political significance of Novel – in its time and in our time.

3-No outside sources may be used for this exercise.

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW ESSAY

1-Length is 10-12 pages typed, double-spaced (12 point font)

2-The following elements must be addressed:

- The Author’s political and social background
- 5 (or more) important political and social themes that the Author addresses in the Novel
- An analysis of the significance of the Novel’s themes for contemporary politics
- An appreciation of the secondary literature written about the Author and the Novel

3-At least 10 outside sources should be consulted. Internet sources must be verified and authoritative.

GUIDELINES FOR CLASSROOM MEETINGS

The first part of every class will consist of lecture material and thematic analysis of the work under consideration. The last portion of the class will be devoted to general discussion. Students are encouraged to bring questions that can be shared with the rest of the class.