

Studies in the Novel

A sustained consideration of the novel as an artistic medium, with attention to several key concepts and problems, including realism, historicism, and postmodernism. In the first ten weeks of the term, we will study two significant works of fiction, Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* (1816) and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981). Scott's novel includes elements of three different forms of the novel in the early nineteenth century: realistic, historical, and gothic. Rushdie's novel is likewise directly engaged with the question of how narrative literature represents history, but its playful rejection of the conventions of realism alludes to gothic tales and romances, while at the same time contributing to the development of what will come to be seen as literary postmodernism. While reading these texts, we will consult major critical statements on the novel as a genre, focusing on the issues most relevant to these two texts.

The purpose of this course is to guide and support you as you develop an independent statement of your own on a major work of fiction, reading the novel both within the history of the development of its genre and within the history of its time and place. The first eight weeks of the term are designed to immerse you in one of contemporary literary history's most vigorous and fascinating disputes, i.e. the ongoing argument about why the novel emerged as a distinctive genre in the eighteenth century, why it attained such dominance in the nineteenth, and why it changed so much in the twentieth. Our critical and theoretical readings all ask versions of these questions, trying to understand the way that literary genres experience and register historical change. The focus of the class will shift gradually from common readings to individualized study, as each student brings these questions to bear in the reading of a particular novel.

Course Texts (required in the edition listed)

Scott *The Antiquary* (Oxford World's Classics, ed. Nicola Watson)
Rushdie *Midnight's Children* (Random House, 25th Anniversary Edition)
Other readings on reserve or in handouts.

If you do not own a copy of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, you should buy one immediately:

http://www.amazon.com/MLA-Handbook-Writers-Research-Papers/dp/1603290249/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1251297449&sr=1-1

Course Requirements

Preparation: Both the novels and the critical readings assigned for this course will require careful and deliberate preparation for class. Texts should be read and (at least partially) re-read before each seminar meeting. Mark your texts vigorously, take notes, and record your responses and questions. While I have assigned occasional responses and short papers, successful preparation for class requires that you distill your ideas about each reading into particular questions and observations.

Seminar Participation is mandatory, and you should regard it as your responsibility to contribute actively to each class discussion.

Presentations are required at several points during the term. Most importantly, the semester will culminate with the formal presentation of your research, in two extended class sessions at the end of the term. I will provide specific guidelines for these assignments. Check your schedule now and make certain that you will be able to participate in final presentations.

Workshop Participation will insure that everyone in the course receives detailed feedback on drafts and proposals from peers in the course. You will be assigned to a workshop group based on the subject of your research project, and you will be expected to provide careful responses to the members of your peer group.

Writing for the course must be original, must be prepared solely for this course, and must conform to all of the standards of academic honesty embraced by the Rhodes Honor Code. All writing must be submitted in hard copy; no email attachments unless prior permission is obtained. **Late Papers** will drop one third of a grade per day late. (I.e. a B paper turned in one day late becomes a B-, two days late a C+, etc.) No late make-ups will be permitted for pre-scheduled oral presentations unless excused by permission at least 24 hours in advanced.

Absences and Late Arrivals: You may miss up to three classes without excuse or penalty. More than four absences, for any reason, will lower your grade significantly and may be grounds for failing the course. If you are repeatedly late or unprepared for class, you will be counted as absent.

Grades

Paper 1 (5 pages) on Scott and the rise of the novel	10%
Paper 2 (5 pages) on Rushdie and the novel in the late twentieth century	10%
Paper 3 (20-25 pages) Independent Project	50%
Informal Writing, proposals, seminar participation	15%
Final Oral Presentation of Independent Research	15%

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

(Expect some alterations and additions as we proceed. If you are absent for a class, you are responsible both for the material covered that day as well as for any schedule changes set while you were absent.)

8/31 Lukacs, from *Theory of the Novel* (Response Paper)
9/2 Scott, "Advertisement" and chapters I through IX

9/7 *Labor Day—No Class*
9/9 Watt, McKeon

9/14 Lukacs, from *Historical Novel*
9/16 Scott, chapters X - XXII (Response)

9/21 Trampener, Brenkman
9/23 Scott, XXXIII - IIIV

9/28 Finish Scott
9/30 Weinstein

Friday, October 2: Paper 1 Due by noon at Palmer 316

10/5 Rushdie, 1-133
Writing Assignment: Initial Proposals on a Novel to Research.
10/7 Lukacs, "Realism in the Balance"

10/12 Rushdie, 134-237
10/14 Adorno, Brecht (Response)

10/19 *Fall Break – No Class*
10/21 Sangari

10/26 Research Day
10/28 Finish Rushdie

Friday, Oct. 30: Paper 2 due by noon at Palmer 316

11/2 Joint session with Newstok on Auerbach, "Philology and Weltliteratur"
11/4 Proposal Presentations
Final Research Proposal Due in class, 1000 Words, including your suggestion for assigned reading

Monday 11/9 through Monday 11/23 – Discussion of Student-Assigned Readings, Preliminary Workshops

11/25 Thanksgiving – No Class
11/30 Complete drafts due in class. Final Conferences.
12/2 Final Presentations (class will run until 5pm)
12/7 Final Presentations (class will run until 5pm)
12/9 Workshop groups discuss Drafts

Final Papers due during Exam Week