



Modernity and Its Discontents

COURSE SYLLABUS Spring 2017

Instructor: James Pasto
Office: Yawkey 335; Mugar 406
Contact: jpasto@bu.edu

Welcome to the KHC Studio:

Your first year in the Kilachand Honors College introduces you to the modern university and to the intellectual life of metropolitan Boston, emphasizing the creative and multifaceted intellectual community of Boston University and its surrounding environment. The Studio complements the other elements of the KHC curriculum by providing you with a structured, curricular setting in which you can develop your abilities in writing and communication and your understanding of research methods and ethics. The Studio is a one-year integrated course, with a curriculum designed as an arc that begins by introducing you to some foundational texts and writing skills; it then moves you towards the development of research and advanced writing skills, and finally to the completion of a research paper, the capstone paper of the two-semester Studio. The final research paper is your opportunity to carry out a detailed examination and contextualization of a topic on the subject of the Studio: “Modernity and Its Discontents.”

Course Description:

The Fall and Spring Studio, “Modernity and Its Discontents,” will explore a series of ethical, aesthetic, and social questions through reading and viewing important “modernist” works. Modernism was a radical shift in thought that emerged in the late-19th and early-20th centuries against the backdrop of democratic politics, industrial capitalism, and imperial expansion. Modernist artists and intellectuals responded to profound socioeconomic, political, and technological changes and rebelled against traditional styles, values, and conventions. Although the modernist texts that we will consider in this course may seem distant, they raise fundamental questions about what is good, true, beautiful, and normal – questions that shape contemporary intellectual discourse. Furthermore, these texts provide us with the opportunity to examine our own values, assumptions, and conflicts.

Spring Texts

- Chodorow, Stanley. *Writing a Successful Research Paper*. Hackett, 2011
- Kafka, Franz. “In the Penal Colony” (“In der Strafkolonie”). 1919. Trans. Ian Johnston. 2003 (E-Resource)
- Orwell, George. *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Mariner Books, (1937) 1972
- Renoir, Jean. *La Grande Illusion*, 1937 (Screened Film)

Other required readings are available at the Blackboard site. Go to <https://learn.bu.edu> and follow instructions to log in. There you will find posted a copy of the syllabus and other information. The Blackboard site also contains an area for you to upload assignments if you are instructed to do so.

Reserve material for this course can be found at <http://www.bu.edu/library/services/reserves/> Search under course title, ST112 (for all sections). You can also find the list by entering “ST112” in the main search page. Most of this material is here as potential sources for a final research paper. You are not required to use them.

We also have a Course Guide page at: <http://library.bu.edu/khcstudio> This site will be helpful to you when we begin our research paper.

Studio Goals (Fall)

- To read and write analytically; to summarize and use textual evidence appropriately and effectively;
- To generate, and write from, problems and questions rather than “topics”;
- To work productively from a position of not knowing; to appreciate learning more than being right; to use moments of ambiguity and complexity as opportunities for exploration in class and on the page;
- To understand that accomplished essays have a shape or structure, and to write essays with well-reasoned, well-structured arguments;
- To revise rigorously, even courageously; to recognize that a draft sometimes gets worse before it gets better;
- To use one text to illuminate another (or several others);
- To set your own learning goals, and work toward those goals independently.

Studio Goals (Spring)

- To acquire familiarity with academic research strategies and library resources;
- To gain an advanced understanding of literacy and information literacy;
- To develop your abilities to evaluate the authority and reliability of sources and then to make critical choices among the materials at your disposal;
- To learn techniques to search for materials using contemporary online search tools and databases;
- To acquire familiarity with physical sites of BU libraries, as well as electronic resources such as Primo, Databases, Research Guides, and others;
- To learn advanced citation and bibliographic techniques, and the use of electronic bibliographic databases.

Studio Requirements

- Research Paper: 40%
- Research Project: 20%
- Exercises: 15%
- Class Participation: 15%
- Tutorials: 10%

AssignmentsExercises

Exercises are due in class on the day scheduled. They are built around the course goals and the assigned texts for the week they are due. Exercises will help you to prepare for discussions of the readings and to develop skills that will help you on your research paper.

Research Project

This is a multi-stage assignment designed to guide you through all the stages of research, including planning, finding sources, visiting a library, and writing a research prospectus. It will also constitute your research and preparation for the research paper.

Research Paper

The Research Paper is the capstone paper of the First-Year Studio. Here you will have the opportunity to pursue detailed research on a topic or text of the course, from either semester, so as to understand the context, discussion, and argument involved. You will receive detailed comments on a preliminary draft of the essay, and then a grade and additional comments on a revision. The progression of the essay will ask you to conceptualize, draft, and revise with increasing independence. The essay will be graded on the standard A-F scale.

Tutorials

Students are required to schedule 3-4 one-on-one tutorial sessions over the Spring semester, as needed. It's expected that these will occur primarily in the second half of the semester, when you're fully immersed in work on your Research Paper. As you know from the Fall term, tutorials allow you and your professor to tailor Studio instruction to your individual needs and interests. These sessions offer you the opportunity to go into greater depth in exploring aspects of the readings that interest you, to discuss and build on analyses and questions generated by readings and shorter assignments, and to receive detailed feedback on your formal argumentative writing. Sign up through the poll that will be posted each week on Blackboard (Tutorials will begin the second week of classes). Treat your scheduled tutorial commitments the way you would a class. Come

prepared with relevant readings and writing assignments. Attendance is mandatory, and under normal circumstances, meetings cannot be rescheduled. Missing tutorial meetings will affect your overall grade for the course.

Course Policies

Attendance: Class attendance is required. If you miss more than one meeting, your course grade may be lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade per missed class. If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g., varsity athletics, religious observances) please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. Missed tutorial appointments will be counted as absences.

Participation: This means arriving on time, being prepared, and bringing assigned texts to class. It also means responding to fellow students' contributions, offering candid participation in peer review sessions, and fulfilling ancillary obligations such as the completion of exercises, attendance at library orientations, and so on. Please note that you must bring assigned texts to class in hard copy. Computers and other devices are not permitted, except on special occasions.

Tardiness: Regularly arriving late to class will be cause for a private conversation with the instructor, followed by grade penalties if appropriate. If the problem persists, the student may also be required to meet with Charles Dellheim, director of the KHC.

Late and Incomplete Assignments: Assignments may not be submitted late without my prior permission. There is a penalty of 1/3 of a letter grade per 24 hours past the first missed deadline.

Office Hours & Contacting Me: Unless otherwise announced, I will hold office hours in my office. I prefer that you contact me via email: jpasto@bu.edu. Put the course name and section in the subject line of the email.

Cellphones, Devices, and Laptop Usage

Friendly and fruitful classroom exchange is disrupted by the use of cell phones for any purpose in the classroom. So there is *no use of cell phones, or other devices*. I may occasionally allow the use of laptops and/or tablets in class on days when their use will facilitate the day's lesson; you will receive ample advance notice of those days on which laptops and/or tablets will be allowed.

Academic Conduct:

You are expected to abide by the Kilachand Honor Code at all times including time spent in the Studio classroom. In addition to this code, you are also expected to follow Boston University's Academic Conduct Code regarding "academic misconduct," which is "conduct by which a student misrepresents his or her academic accomplishments, or impedes other students' opportunities of being judged fairly for their academic work. Knowingly allowing others to represent your work as their own is as serious an offense as submitting another's work as your own." Examples include cheating on exams, falsifying data, theft of examinations, and plagiarism. Please review this code here: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>

Spring Schedule

- Week 1 (Wed. 1/25)
Course Introduction
- Week 2 (Wed. 2/1)
Franz Kafka – "In the Penal Colony" (E-source)
Due: Exercise 1, Kafka
- Week 3 (Wed. 2/8) – Be Sure to View Film before Class on Wednesday
Jean Renoir – *La Grande Illusion*
Due: Exercise 2, Samuels
- Week 4 (Wed. 2/15)
George Orwell, *Wigan Pier*, Part I
Begin Exercise 3 in class
- Week 5 (Wed. 2/22)
George Orwell, *Wigan Pier*, Part II
Due: Exercise 3, Orwell & Terms
- Week 6 (Wed. 3/1) – No Class Feb 20; Feb 21 Substitute for Monday

La Grande Illusion:

You must watch the film before your class meets. There will be scheduled screenings as follows:

CAS 533B:

Fri Jan 27: 3:00pm - 6:00pm
Mon Jan 30: 6:00pm - 9:00pm

KHC Lounge

Sun Jan 29: 6:00 – 9:00 (Pizza served)

The film is also available to watch at the Geddes Language Lab (CAS 3rd floor East). You must watch it in the lab. You may reserve the film here:

Degenerate Art

Exercise 4, Group Research Organization

Week 7 (Wed. 3/8) – Spring Recess

Week 8 (Wed. 3/15)

The assignments due listed below are tentative; they may be adjusted as needed.

Degenerate Art

Exercise 4, Group Research Presentations

Week 9 (Wed. 3/22)

Due: Library Visit Report

Due: Phase One, Preliminary Research Topic and Question

Week 10 (Wed. 3/29)

Due: Phase Two, Prospectus and Outline

Week 11 (Wed. 4/5) – Presentations I

Due: Phase Three, Annotated Bibliography and Abstract

Week 12 (Wed. 4/12) Presentations II

Due: Presentations

Week 13 (Wed. 4/19) April 17,

No class due to Monday schedule of classes on Wednesday

Week 14 (Wed. 4/26)

Due: Draft of the Research Paper

Week 15 (Wed. 5/3)

Due: Final Research Paper

Academic Calendar

Spring 2017	
January 16	MLK Jr. Day Holiday
January 19	Classes Begin
February 20	Presidents' Day Holiday, Classes Suspended
February 21	Substitute Monday Schedule of Classes
March 4 – 12	Spring Recess
March 13	Classes Resume
April 17	Patriots' Day Holiday, Classes Suspended
April 19	Substitute Monday Schedule of Classes
May 3	Last Day of Classes
May 4 – 7	Study Period
May 8	Final Exams Begin
May 12	Final Exams End
May 19 – 21	Commencement Weekend