Course Description

LIT 402 Literature in Place surveys a range of literature significantly responsive to place—literary texts in which place serves less as backdrop or setting than as co-equal character or shaping context. Our inquiry will be informed by relevant theoretical frames drawn from Tim Cresswell, Yi-Fu Tuan, Molly Westling, Keith Basso, David Abram, Barry Lopez, Scott Russell Sanders, Wendell Berry, and others.

Course Goals

Students in LIT 402 will demonstrate through class discussion and written analysis

- an understanding of relevant theories of place drawn from philosophy, geography, and literary criticism
- the ability to read and critically interpret a range of literary texts through these theoretical frames
- an understanding of the rhetorical strategies used by the authors under consideration
- the analytical skills required to be good readers of literature
- the essential connection between effective thinking and writing about literature

LIT 402 Requirements

- Regular class attendance and participation, steady preparation
- “Where you coming from?” assignment
- Four Critical Essays
- Oral and written Colloquium Presentation
- A portfolio of your written work

Graduate Students

Graduate students will be invited to read beyond the syllabus and to develop, in consultation with Gilcrest, written inquiries appropriate to graduate studies.
Grading

“Where you coming from? Assignment 5%
4 Essays (20% each) 80%
Oral and written Colloquium Presentation 15%

Course Policies and Procedures, and Unsolicited Advice

• Students who fail to attend the first two classes of the term will be dropped.
• Attendance and Participation: Because I believe you can learn the material covered in this course only by being here, your attendance and ACTIVE participation are required. Your final grade will be dropped one full letter grade after six unexcused absences; a failing grade will be assigned after seven unexcused absences. (An excused absence requires a pre-arranged scholastic or athletic commitment or a bona fide and substantiated medical emergency.)
• If you miss a class, please make arrangements with a colleague to get notes. Also, please check with me to see if you missed any handouts or special instructions. (All handouts will be posted to Moodle, eventually.)
• Laptops and tablets may be used for note taking; laptops and tablets (and cellphones) used for other purposes will be confiscated and given to wayward children.
• Texts: The texts under consideration are central to our work in this class, especially during class time. You MUST purchase the texts for this class and you MUST bring the relevant texts to class. No exceptions, no excuses.
• Deadlines: All work is due in class on the assigned date. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.
• Presentation: Essays must be printed. Black ink. 10 or 12 pt. font. Either Cambria or Times New Roman, e.g., is sufficient. Please, no funky fonts. I would like you to follow the MLA citation and documentation guidelines in this class. Make sure you include on your work your name, the title and draft number, this class and section number, my name, and the date.
• Revision: Because true revision is an essential part of serious writing, you are invited to revise your first two essays, as necessary. A final grade will only be recorded after I receive, and evaluate, your revision. Please follow the Guidelines for Revision that I will give you.
• Please make hard copies of all your work and keep them in a safe place.
• I do not accept work in electronic form. Recycled paper saves trees. Printing on two sides is usually fine.
• The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as needed.
Scholarship

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrase) must be properly documented. Students who plagiarize face serious consequences that may range from receiving a failing grade on a given assignment to failing the course. Students who plagiarize also face additional University sanctions.

Accommodations

If you have a disability (physical or learning) that you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can discuss whatever accommodations may be necessary.

Required Texts

A River Runs Through It and Other Stories, Norman Maclean
Perma Red, Debra Magpie Earling
The Yaak, Rick Bass
A Yellow Raft in Blue Water, Michael Dorris
Red Rover, Dee McNamer
Another Attempt at Rescue, M. L. Smoker
Place: An Introduction (2nd ed.), Tim Cresswell
Additional texts (including poems by Hugo) available via Moodle

Also, a two-pocket folder for your portfolio

Syllabus

(M) = text available via Moodle

| M  | 1/23 | Introduction: Literature and/or in Place |
| W  | 1/25 | “Where you coming from?” assignment DUE |
| F  | 1/27 | Maclean, “USFS 1919: The Ranger, the Cook, and a Hole in the Sky” |
| M  | 1/30 | Lopez, “The American Geographies” (M) |
| W  | 2/1 | Westling, “Lost Innocence” (M) |
| F  | 2/3 | Cresswell, “Introduction: Defining Place” |
| M  | 2/6 | Abram, “Edmund Husserl and Phenomenology” (M) |
| W  | 2/8 | A River Runs Through It (1-51) |
| F  | 2/10 | A River Runs Through It (51-104) |
| M  | 2/13 | Tuan, “Space, Place, and the Child” (M) |
| W  | 2/15 | Perma Red (3-78) |
F 2/17 Perma Red (79-151)
M 2/20 Presidents' Day Holiday
W 2/22 Perma Red (152-218)
F 2/24 Perma Red (219-296)
M 2/27 Debra Earling visit Essay #1 DUE
W 3/1 Snyder, “The Place, the Region, The Commons” (M)
F 3/3 Sanders, “Settling Down” (M)
M 3/6 The Yaak (1-44)
W 3/8 The Yaak (45-86)
F 3/10 The Yaak (87-139)
M 3/13 The Yaak (140-188)
W 3/15 Casey, “Going Wild in the Land” (M)
F 3/17 Cresswell, “Place in a Mobile World” Essay #2 DUE

Spring Break

M 3/27 Basso, “Wisdom Sits in Places” (M)
W 3/29 Yellow Raft in Blue Water (3-82)
F 3/31 Yellow Raft in Blue Water (83-137)
M 4/3 Yellow Raft in Blue Water (141-216)
W 4/5 Yellow Raft in Blue Water (217-293)
F 4/7 Yellow Raft in Blue Water (297-372)
M 4/10 Cresswell, “Working with Place—Anachorism”
W 4/12 Red Rover (Part 1)
F 4/14 Red Rover (Part 2)
M 4/17 Red Rover (Parts 3 & 4)
W 4/19 Red Rover (Part 5) Dee McNama visit
F 4/21 Hugo (poems TBA)
M 4/24 Hugo (poems TBA) Essay #3 DUE
W 4/26 Smoker, (13-39)
F 4/28 Smoker, (43-64) Mandy Smoker Broaddus visit
M 5/1 Literature in Place Colloquium
W 5/3 Literature in Place Colloquium
F 5/5 Literature in Place Colloquium

W 5/10 Completed Portfolios, including Essay #4, DUE by 5pm