**I. Course Description.**

This hybrid philosophy-literature course emphasizes the roots of postmodernism in continental thought. Theorists have been selected both for their canonical stature and for the decisive ways they formulate key problematics of postmodernism: Nietzsche on nihilism, the death of God, and perspectivism; Derrida on poststructuralism and deconstruction; Barth on the “exhaustion” of literature; Rorty on contingency and “vocabulary selection”; Barthes and Foucault on authorial agency; Vattimo on “transparent” societies and “nonreligious” Christianity; Spivak on feminism and post-colonialism; Lyotard on postmodern representation, the sublime, and the avant-garde; Jameson on consumer culture, pastiche, and nostalgia. Literary texts have been chosen both for their historical importance in the modernist-postmodernist trajectory and their aesthetic responsiveness, formal and thematic, to defining issues of postmodernism. Authors include Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, André Breton, Jorge Luis Borges, Chu T’ien-wen, Marguerite Duras, Gabriel García-Márquez, Jean Rhys, and André Breton.

**II. Required Texts.**


All other readings will be distributed electronically in PDF format.

**III. Grading.**

2 in-class presentations of 30 minutes. (15% each.) 30%.
Weekly response papers of 1-2 pages each. 30%
1 Research Paper (10-12 pages). 30%
Participation: attendance, discussion. 10%

IV. Attendance and Late Work. Unexcused absences lower your participation grade. If you do miss class, it is your responsibility both to turn your work in on time and to learn the material you’ve missed – including class discussion – before the next class. Late assignments are reduced one full letter grade per day. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.
V. Schedule.


10.02. Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse (Parts II and III).

10.09. Friedrich Nietzsche, Will to Power (excerpts).
        Fredric Jameson “Postmodernism and Consumer Culture.”

        Excerpts from The Surrealist Manifestoes.

        Richard Rorty. “Solidarity or Objectivity?”

        “This Strange Institution Called Literature.”
        “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences.”

11.06. Jorge Luis Borges. Ficciones.
        John Barth. “Literature of Exhaustion” & "Literature of Replenishment."


        Michel Foucault. “What is an Author?”


        Gianni Vattimo “The Transparent Society.”

12.18. Jean-François Lyotard “Representation, Presentation, Unpresentable.”
   “Answering the Question: ‘What is Postmodernism?’”


1.08. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism.”
   Conclusion.

1.11. Final Research papers due.

NB: This syllabus is subject to revision.