Philosophy and Fiction

Spring 2012

Professor: Edward Fotheringill

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Office: Bunting 417 (Fridays, 11:45 am – 12:45pm)

Course Objective: This course will examine the relationship between philosophy and fiction with the intention of pondering and determining whether or not philosophical insights are more effectively presented in the narrative of novels. More specifically, we will familiarize ourselves with the fundamental themes and concepts of Existential Philosophy and Buddhism, and then read and discuss novels in which these philosophical themes and concepts are elucidated.

Course Requirements: Two short papers (about 4-6 pages each); One art project; Assigned readings must be read prior to class; Class participation is strongly encouraged; Attendance is mandatory.

Course Determinants: Each paper: 35% (a total of 70%); The art project: 10%; Attendance and class participation: 20%.

Required Texts:

Walter Kaufmann, *The Portable Nietzsche*

Joan Didion, *Play It As It Lays*

Graham Greene, *A Burnt Out Case*

Eknath Easwaran, *The Dhammapada*

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*

Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums*
Class Schedule

Jan 20 – Introductory remarks: Philosophy and Fiction/Existentialism/Nietzsche

Jan 27 – Friedrich Nietzsche: “Letter to his sister” (p29); “Preparatory Man” (p97); “One Thing is Needful” (p 98); “The Madman” (p95); “Maxims and Arrows” (p466)

Feb 3 – Jose Ortega Y Gassett: “Man Has No Nature” (Essay is on Moodle)

Feb 10 – Philosophy and Fiction

Feb 17 – Joan Didion: Play It As It Lays

Feb 24 - A Conversation with Harold Bloom (DVD)

Mar 2 - Graham Greene: A Burnt Out Case

Mar 9 -- Introduction to Buddhism (1st paper due)

Mar 16 – Spring Break

Mar 23 – The Dhammapada (Chapters 1,6,7,14-18,25,26)

Mar 30 – Hermann Hesse: Siddhartha

Apr 6 -- Introduction to Zen Buddhism

Apr 13 -- Jack Kerouac: The Dharma Bums

Apr 20 -- Art Presentations

Apr 27 -- Art Presentations

May 4 -- Last Class (Final paper due)

ADA Compliance: In MICA’s efforts to provide the highest possible quality education for every student, MICA maintains compliance with the requirements of the ADA and Section 504. Any student who feels he or she may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Learning Resource Center at 410-225-2416, in Bunting 458, to establish eligibility and coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to http://www.mica.edu/LRC.
Health and Safety Compliance: The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) works to provide EHS support for all members of the MICA community. The primary goal of the office is to be proactive in establishing a culture of safety in which each member of the community shares ownership responsibility that allows each person to be involved in maintaining a healthy work and studying environment. EHS uses several methods to achieve this objective: First, the EHS office looks at the totality of the EHS requirements by combining campus needs with state and federal requirements and clearly communicating the shared policies and procedures. Second, EHS identifies training needs and develops guidelines for the use of equipment, material, and procedures. Third, we ensure compliance with policies through evaluations, inspections, and committees.

It is the responsibility of faculty and students to understand health and safety policies relevant to their individual activities and to review MICA’s Emergency Action Plan, as well as to participate in training, drills, etc. It is also each faculty member’s responsibility to coordinate with the EHS Office to ensure that all risks associated with their class activities are identified and to assure that their respective classroom procedures mirror the EHS and Academic Department guidelines. Each of the Academic Departments also publish EHS procedures and policies such as a dress code, the use of personal protective equipment, fire safety, training, and how to properly dispose of chemical waste. Each of these policies and procedures must be followed by all students and faculty. Most importantly, it is the responsibility of the faculty to review, test, and assess each student’s awareness of basic safety procedures, such as evacuation routes, use of chemicals, fire prevention, and all other guidelines posted by the EHS Office (e.g., smoking policy, independent studio policies, pet policy, disposing of hazardous and chemical waste, etc).

To become a member of the Faculty EHS Committee or for any questions relating to EHS, please contact Denelle Bowser, EHS Manager, at dbowser@mica.edu or by calling 410-462-7593. You can also visit the department online at www.mica.edu/ehs.

H1N1 Pandemic Information: What to do if I get sick? If you are sick, consider the following: Limit contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to class; Seek medical attention at Mount Royal Medical Association (410-225-8855 – please call in advance); Self-isolate for at least 24 hours after any fever is gone; Make sure to get plenty of rest and drink clear fluids to keep from being dehydrated; Avoid normal activities including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings. Reporting Procedures: Contact the Office of Student Affairs at 410-225-2422 who will assist with plans for self-isolation, arranging for meals, and any other necessary support. Contact any faculty whose class you anticipate missing and inform them of your illness. Work with them to make arrangements for catching up on any missed work. If you have difficulty reaching your faculty or if your illness lingers to the point where you will miss two or more of any one class contact the Office of Student Affairs.