**Assessment Guidelines**

ENG2307 Late 20th-Century Literature in English

Spring 2019

**Examination (Portfolio)**

The exam is a portfolio that consists of two parts:

1. A 2-hour written exam at the end of the term.
2. A term paper. You are required to write ca. 7 pages (+/- 10%).

Regulations:

* A pass mark is required on both parts of the exam in order to pass the course.
* Both exam parts have to be taken in the same semester.
* The exams will be graded separately with a combined final mark. The 2-hour exam counts as 40% and the term paper counts as 60% of the grade.
* The term paper must follow further guidelines to be distributed in class.

**2-Hour Written Exam**

Part I (Identification and Close Reading) primarily assesses the student’s ability to reveal knowledge of the course texts through close reading, informed by class lectures, discussions, and independent thinking. Incorrect identification of the text and author constitutes a failed response, but an incorrect title with the correct author, or vice versa, does not constitute failure on its own. Responses should address how the selection relates to the rest of the text, how it is written, and how it relates to historical and cultural contexts. There are no specific percentages allocated for any one aspect, but the elements listed for each selection below should be addressed adequately in the most successful responses. Weaknesses or lack of attention to some of these elements, however, may be compensated by particular skill in addressing others. Independence of thought and evidence of analytical ability will be rewarded. Language, spelling, and grammar errors can result in lower grades. Students should have used approximately 25 minutes for each response, **choosing two out of three selections** to respond to in this Part I. Length should be appropriate for 50 minutes on two responses.

A. J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*

* from the character of Elizabeth Costello, giving a lecture, part of a fictional story, cf. story presented by Coetzee when himself invited to give a lecture at Princeton, including therefore layers of writing and narrative self-awareness: postmodern meta-fiction, cf. footnote
* imagining oneself into the lives of animals, from the ape in Kafka’s story to later examples from Rilke vs. Hughes
* conflict and alienation among characters, including the results of proselytizing a vegan perspective
* historical connections explicit with comparison to Holocaust, and offense taken in text

B. Don LePan, *Animals*

* character Naomi focalized here, reflected in language and word choices, vs. other characters focalized elsewhere: here it is the adoptive family for disabled child Sam
* dystopian future world where disabled people (particularly with intellectual disabilities) are not considered human, unless they are diagnosed as deaf; otherwise they are called mongrels
* mongrels are treated as animals in this world, either as pets or as food (literally)
* Sam ends up like many other disabled people in factory farms, where they are bred and raised for food; cf. nonhuman animals today, and the sympathy many animal activists have for them (as opposed to the text advocating as strongly for disability rights?)

C. Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Word for World is Forest*

* from the perspective of Davidson, a military commander, with text alternating narrative perspectives, focalized into different characters
* fictional future SF world with distant planets, colonized for timber and other resources, indigenous species exploited and enslaved
* creechies are a humanoid species who are animalized by characters like Davidson; enslaved in labor camps, oppressed, raped, decimated...
* primary historical comparison with U.S. military involvement in Vietnam (written in protest of Vietnam War), linked atrocities from U.S. military, cf. Nazi Holocaust with reference to “final solution”

Part II (Essay) assesses the student’s ability to think critically about the selection (**one out of two choices**). Incorrect identification of the text and author constitutes a failed response, but an incorrect title with the correct author, or vice versa, does not constitute failure on its own. Students must explain how the selection relates to critiques the text makes, as discussed in class lectures and discussions. Students must also argue how the selection and/or text can be critiqued from the perspective of other forms of cultural and/or animality studies. There are no specific percentages allocated for any one aspect, but the elements listed for each selection below should be addressed adequately in the most successful responses. Weaknesses or lack of attention to some of these elements, however, may be compensated by particular skill in addressing others. Independence of thought and evidence of analytical ability will be rewarded. Language, spelling, and grammar errors can result in lower grades. Students should have used approximately 50 minutes for working on this essay.

A. Ruth L. Ozeki, *My Year of Meats*

* narrator as documentarian, filming U.S. families for Japanese market, BEEF exporter, but resisting with alt. race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender families
* novel leading toward muckraking form (cf. U. Sinclair) at end, DES in factory-farmed cattle, Rose’s premature puberty
* key element: lists of “Splendid Things” etc. is ref. to Sei Shōnagon’s *The Pillow Book* (c. 1000 C.E.); cf. dynastic Japanese history and female author’s narrative resistance
* critiquing gender/racial/sexual norms, and factory farming
* loses other critiques in end to focus on cattle? yet more at human health (and gender norms?) than animal advocacy?
* other critiques of the text are possible...

B. Paul Auster, *Timbuktu*

* primary relationship of text between human and dog, interweaving perspectives, incl. after human dies, but without clear distinctions between human, dog, and narrator; postmodern fictional elements
* plot includes scent trials referenced in selection, seeking to find optimal ways of exciting dog’s superior sense of smell
* suggesting dogs are more complex than often thought, including thoughts and emotions
* critique of suburban bourgeois lifestyle as stifling and boring; health care access?
* vs. can be critiqued at gender/race/species privilege for “the open road”
* too unrealistic at dogs? undercut even in this passage?
* other critiques of the text are possible...

**Term Paper Guidelines (distributed to students in advance)**

Assignment

Choose one of the texts we have studied in this course. Why should the way that it constructs animals and/or animality be seen as mostly problematic, on the one hand, or mostly productive, on the other hand, in terms of resisting discourses of speciesism, racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, or other oppressive frameworks? How is the text related to relevant historical and cultural contexts? Who might disagree with your argument about the text and why? How will you attempt to persuade them to think differently about the text? The assignment for your term paper is to develop and support a critical argument in response to these questions. Be sure to think about and respond to the best arguments against your global claim and/or sub-claims. Remember that you are trying to be persuasive to an audience that might otherwise disagree with you; your destabilizing condition(s) and costs need to be relevant and significant for that particular audience. Make sure you:

* ***Begin with a clear and logical problem statement***. Remember that your global claim needs to be debatable, supportable, and significant for your intended audience. Each element of the problem statement should be given in the first paragraph of the paper.
* ***Engage primarily with course readings***. Be sure to ***re-read and re-view the texts*** that you will use for your paper, and make sure you understand them in relation to how they have been discussed in class lectures and discussions.
* ***Cite evidence and examples*** including direct quotations from your sources.
* ***Begin with a brief title*** that suggests something that might catch the attention of your intended audience, while also indicating what the paper addresses.

Requirements

* **Papers Due: 22 May 2019, by 11:00 (submitted via Inspera)**
* Papers should be 7 pages (+/- 10%), not counting the Works Cited page;
* Follow MLA guidelines for in-text citations, style, format, and Works Cited, as well as how to avoid various kinds of plagiarism, which is strictly forbidden;
* Papers should be typed, 1.5 line spacing, with 2.5 cm margins, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with no extra spaces between paragraphs;
* Proofread (very carefully) to avoid grammar and spelling errors.

Suggestions

* Engage with optional independent research: peer-reviewed journal articles and/or books published by university or academic presses that discuss your text or issues relevant to it.
* You have the option of submitting a draft of a problem statement in order to receive individual feedback: due Friday, 26 April, emailed to Michael.Lundblad@ilos.uio.no. This is not part of the required assignment.
* Choose texts and topics that really grab your attention. Find ways to engage with critical discussions that you think are important and interesting. Join a critical community by taking up a debate that matters for you and your audience!

**Term Paper Assessment**

Essays will be marked holistically, with no specific percentage of marks for any one aspect. The marker will thus be making an overall judgement of the quality of the piece of work as a whole. Weaknesses in one area of the criteria may be compensated for by particular skill in another, and vice versa. Independence of thought and evidence of analytical ability will be rewarded.

Good:

1. Work at the highest levels will present a problem statement which is argumentative, specific and substantiated (there is evidence to support it).

2. The problem statement assumes the form of an argument which can consist of several linked questions. There is a link between problem statement and title, and between problem statement and discussion.

3. The essay has a clear structure. The student considers the flow of the argument from paragraph to paragraph and sustains the argument throughout. The various points made are relevant to the problem under consideration in the essay.

4. The essay engages in detailed analysis, developing a critical argument about discourses of speciesism, racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, or other oppressive frameworks. The student manages to present and develop his/her own ideas.

5. The essay is written in formal English of a high standard, with no mistakes of grammar or spelling.

Average:

1. Includes a problem statement, which assumes the form of an argument and is for the most part sustained throughout.

2. The essay adopts a clear structure and the points made are relevant to the problem under consideration throughout.

3. The essay engages in analysis, and demonstrates some awareness of the situatedness of the theory in question. It presents and to some extent develops the student’s own ideas.

4. The essay is written for the most part in correct English, with only minor mistakes of grammar or spelling.

Poor:

1. The student’s problem statement is excessively general or vague, or lacks substantiating evidence.

2. The structure lacks logic, and the points made are occasionally irrelevant to the problem under consideration.

3. The essay rarely engages in analysis, limiting itself to paraphrases of the theories in question. There are few ideas presented by the student.

4. There are errors in grammar and spelling, though these do not prevent understanding of the essay text.

Unacceptable:

1. The essay lacks a problem statement.

2. The structure is illogical and confusing. The points made lack relevance.

3. The essay lacks analysis, simply providing more or less adequate paraphrases of the theories in question.

4. The essay is poorly written with numerous errors of grammar and spelling.