

**English 521
American Modernisms
Spring 2025
Dr. Roggenkamp**

Office: 315 HL
Hours: MWF 11-12, 2-3, and by appointment
Email: Karen.Roggenkamp@tamuc.edu



Image: Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* (1912)

<p>COURSE DESCRIPTION</p>	<p>What does modernism mean? What is “the real thing” in life and in expression, and (how) might that differ from “authenticity”? How does one convey “authentic” experience to reading audiences—particularly ones jaded by a seemingly fragmented society? And how does one achieve artistry within a literary culture increasingly dominated by commercialism and the privileging of appearance over reality? And why is this course titled American Modernisms, anyway?</p> <p>Here are but a sampling of the loaded questions American writers posed in the “Modernist Period” (roughly defined as 1910-1945). Spinning out of the contexts of World War I and working through decades of decadence and depression toward the next World War, this period witnessed an incredibly rich and diverse flourishing of literary expression. In this graduate seminar, we’ll focus on novels, literary nonfiction, and poetry to investigate how a range of authors created—sometimes quite self-consciously—cultures of modernity. As a thematic touchstone for the course, we’ll return again and again to one of the most pressing questions the modernists asked: What do the terms “imitation,” “reality,” and “authenticity” suggest, and how can one convey those things in art?</p>
<p>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</p>	<p>For the purpose of measured Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:</p> <p><u>SLO 1</u> Students will demonstrate familiarity with periodical culture of the modernist period, as measured by the rubric used for evaluating the first major assignment.</p> <p><u>SLO 2</u> Students will demonstrate familiarity with contextual studies of the modernist period, as measured by the rubric used for evaluating the context presentation.</p>

<p>REQUIRED TEXTS</p>	<p>The following works are available at university bookstores. You may also obtain them from other sources or use editions other than the ones I have ordered through the bookstore (ISBNs refer to copy ordered via bookstore).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Agee and Walker Evans, <i>Let Us Now Praise Famous Men</i> (ISBN 978061812749) ▪ Sherwood Anderson, <i>Winesburg, Ohio</i> (ISBN 978048628269) ▪ Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White, <i>You Have Seen Their Faces</i> (ISBN 978082031692) ▪ F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i> (ISBN 978074327356) ▪ Nella Larsen, <i>Quicksand</i> (ISBN 978048645140) ▪ Sinclair Lewis, <i>It Can't Happen Here</i> (ISBN 978045121658) ▪ Alain Locke, ed. <i>The New Negro</i> (ISBN 978068483831) ▪ John Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (ISBN 978014303943) ▪ Richard Wright, <i>Twelve Million Black Voices</i> (ISBN 978156025446) ▪ Additional readings provided through D2L 												
<p>GRADING</p>	<p>Your grade for this course will be based on the following items:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="444 831 1421 1041"> <tr> <td>Participation</td> <td>30% of final grade</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Periodicals Paper</td> <td>15% of final grade</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Context Presentation</td> <td>15% of final grade</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Project Proposal</td> <td>10% of final grade</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final Project</td> <td>30% of final grade</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL GRADE</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation: I will enter grades for participation in the eCollege gradebook three at weeks 5, 10, and 15. ▪ Periodicals Paper: The first paper (about 7-8 pages + Works Cited) will be based on a project that uses primary material from digitized early-twentieth-century magazines. I will provide more information about this project soon. ▪ For several weeks of the semester, students will be asked to prepare a 10-minute presentation about some of the social and historical contexts important for that week's reading. ▪ Final Project: You will have a choice of topics for your final project. Details forthcoming. You will also have a proposal for your final project due a few weeks before the end of the term. <p>The Department of Literature and Languages does not, as a rule, allow an Incomplete (X) on the transcript; incompletes are only awarded under extraordinary circumstances, pending Department Head and Dean approval. If personal issues or conflicts arise that lead to your missing a substantial amount of class, you should consider withdrawing from the class. As a rough guideline, for what A-F grades mean, I award A for truly outstanding work, B for work significantly above the level necessary to meet basic requirements, C for work that meets basic requirements, D for work that meets only some of the requirements, and F for work that is not completed or that fails to meet the requirements of the assignment.</p>	Participation	30% of final grade	Periodicals Paper	15% of final grade	Context Presentation	15% of final grade	Project Proposal	10% of final grade	Final Project	30% of final grade	TOTAL GRADE	100%
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TOTAL GRADE	100%												

LATE WORK	I grant extensions on assignments only under the most exceptional of circumstances. I will only accept late papers if you make explicit prior arrangements with me and provide proof of your inability to complete that paper on time due to extenuating circumstances (severe illness, death in immediate family, etc.)
ATTENDANCE	Your attendance in class is crucial, and you cannot expect to do well if you do not attend each meeting (and get here on time). According to the East Texas A&M University student handbook, “students are expected to be present for all class meetings of any course for which they are enrolled.” I will keep attendance, and you can expect your grade to suffer for absences (more than two, for any reason). Students will be permitted to make up work for excused absences, which include, for instance, participation in a required or authorized university activity, a verified severe illness, or a death in the immediate family.
COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY	<p>I tend to send several emails over the semester, and I will use your university email account (myLeo), so be sure to check it every day.</p> <p>This course will be supplemented using myLeo Online (D2L Brightspace), the Learning Management system used by ETAMU. You will need your CWID and password to log into the course page via the myLeo portal. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. To complete this course successfully, you will need a computer with internet access (high speed recommended) and a word processor equipped with Microsoft Word. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system and a recent version of a browser like Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. Your course will also work with Macintosh OS along with a recent version of Safari or Firefox.</p> <p>ETAMU provides students with technical support in the use of D2L Brightspace. Technology problems are not generally an excuse for a late assignment--make sure you submit your work in time to allow for any problems accessing the Dropbox. You may reach the help desk by the following means, 24 hours a day, seven days a week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Phone 866-656-5511 ➤ Email helpdesk@online.tamuc.org ➤ Click on “Help” button for information regarding working with D2L
ADDITIONAL POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are responsible for reading and understanding all items included on this syllabus and on any additional documents you receive during the course. ▪ The Department of Literature and Languages will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalty for students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty include failure of the assignment and/or course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Refer to the ETAMU Code of Student Conduct 13.99.99.R0.10 for details: http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/

[rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf](#). Examples of plagiarism include but are not restricted to: turning in an essay written entirely or partly by someone else; copying any portion of someone else's words and presenting those words as your own (i.e. without quotation or citation); copying paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences from another source without citation; using the same ideas that you have found in another writer's essay and presenting those ideas as your own (again, without quotation or citation). If you are not clear about how to avoid any of these acts, it is up to you to clarify, either via online information or our own Writing Center on the first floor of DTH. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism, and we expect all students to understand what constitutes an act of academic dishonesty.

- ETAMU acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text or to suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. However, since this course is intended to teach you how to generate your own content, **no use of AI will be permitted**. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).
- All students enrolled in the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. ETAMU will comply in the classroom and online courses with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with registered disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Gee Library 162; phone 903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835; fax 903-468-8148; email Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu; website <http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/CampusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/default.aspx>.
- Texas Senate Bill 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in ETAMC buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas license to carry a handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the state of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 911.
- Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their

	<p>instructor, whether in person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, DTH 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head or Assistant Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (CHSSA) after following the steps outlined above. If the instructor in question is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).</p>
<p>SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS</p>	
<p>Week 1 Jan 13 – Jan 19</p>	<p>Modernism(s): An introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BEFORE CLASS, watch documentary <i>Expo: Magic of the White City</i>, EXPO – Magic of the White City (Narrated by Gene Wilder) Free Full Documentary - YouTube <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, January 13 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/93466674411?pwd=ZxtVo8GnJxsltr4HxPARUTG8EKaeb9.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 934 6667 4411 Passcode: 847345</p>
<p>Week 2 Jan 20 – Jan 26</p>	<p>THE JAZZ AGE</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i> ▪ James L. W. West, “The Composition and Publication of <i>The Great Gatsby</i>” (located in D2L Week 2 folder) <p>NOTE: THIS WEEK WILL BE ALL ONLINE DUE TO THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY!!</p>
<p>Week 3 Jan 27 – Feb 2</p>	<p>EXPERIMENTATION IN STORY FORM</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sherwood Anderson, <i>Winesburg, Ohio</i> ▪ William L. Phillips, “How Sherwood Anderson Wrote <i>Winesburg, Ohio</i>,” <i>American Literature</i> 23, no. 1 (1951): 7-30 (located in D2L Week 3 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, January 27 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p>

	<p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Week 4 Feb 3 – Feb 9</p>	<p>MANIFESTOES OF HIGH MODERNISM In D2L Week 4 folder, download and read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ F. T. Marinetti, from “Manifesto of Futurism” (1909) ▪ Ezra Pound, from “A Retrospect” (1918) ▪ Edna St. Vincent Millay, <i>Selected Poems</i> (“Renascence,” “Witch-Wife,” “Blight,” Sonnets I, II, III, IV, V, “Recuerdo,” “The Penitent” ▪ Imagist poems: Adelaide Crapsey, Amy Lowell, Wallace Stevens (“Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird”), William Carlos Williams (“Marriage,” “The Young Housewife,” “The Shadow,” “Metric Figure,” “Pastoral,” “The Thinker,” “The Lonely Street”) ▪ Miles Orvell, <i>The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940</i>, pages 240-257 (located in D2L Week 4 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, February 3 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Week 5 Feb 10 – Feb 16</p>	<p>READING FOR THE AGE: Periodicals Project. For this class session, be prepared to share what you discovered by investigating modernist periodicals. Instructions provided before clas</p> <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, February 10 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p> <p>Each all-online student will need to create a video about what they discovered while investigating modernist periodicals.</p>

<p>Week 6 Feb 17 – Feb 23</p>	<p>SPIRIT OF RENAISSANCE</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watch “Up South” short documentary http://ashp.cuny.edu/up-south ▪ “The Harlem Renaissance as History, Memory, and Myth,” from <i>The Harlem Renaissance: A Brief History with Documents</i>, ed. Jeffrey B. Ferguson (Boston: Bedford, 2003) (located in D2L Week 6 folder). ▪ Langston Hughes, from “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (1926) (located in D2L Week 6 folder). ▪ Alain Locke, <i>The New Negro</i> (1925): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction (ix-xxiii) ○ Foreword (xxv-xxvii) ○ Alain Locke, “The New Negro” (3-16) ○ Rudolph Fisher, “The City of Refuge” (57-74) ○ Jean Toomer, “Carma” (96-98) ○ Jean Toomer, “Fern” (99-104) ○ Zora Neale Hurston, “Spunk” (105-111) ○ Poems by Countee Cullen (129-133) ○ Poems by Claude McKay (133-135) ○ Poems by Langston Hughes (141-145) ○ James Weldon Johnson, “Harlem: The Culture Capital” (301-311) ○ Elise Johnson McDougald, “The Task of Negro Womanhood” (369-382) <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, February 17 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Week 7 Feb 24 – March 2</p>	<p>SPIRIT OF RENAISSANCE</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nella Larsen, <i>Quicksand</i> ▪ Lauren Rosenblum, “‘Things, Things, Things’: Nella Larsen’s <i>Quicksand</i> and the Beauty of Magazine Culture,” in <i>Communal Modernisms: Teaching Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture in the Twenty-First-Century Classroom</i>,” ed. Emily M. Hinnov and Laurel Harris (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 50-61 (located in D2L Week 7 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, February 24 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting</p>

	<p>https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p> <p>PERIODICALS PAPER DUE IN WEEK 7 DROPBOX BY 11:59 P.M., FEBRUARY 27TH</p>
<p>Week 8 March 3 – March 9</p>	<p>A DOCUMENTARY CULTURE</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ William Stott, <i>Documentary Expression and Thirties America</i>, pages 3-63, 92-140, 211-237 (located in D2L week 8 folder). ▪ Richard Wright, <i>Twelve Million Black Voices</i> ▪ Erskine Caldwell and Margaret Bourke-White, <i>You Have Seen Their Faces</i> <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, March 3 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
SPRING BREAK	
<p>Week 9 March 17 – March 23</p>	<p>AMERICAN EXODUS</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First half of John Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> ▪ Robert DeMott, “Working Days and Hours’: Steinbeck’s Writing of <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>,” <i>Studies in American Fiction</i> 18, no. 1 (1990): 3-15 (located in D2L Week 9 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, March 17 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Week 10 March 24 – March 30</p>	<p>AMERICAN EXODUS</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second half of Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marci Lingo, "Forbidden Fruit: The Banning of <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> in the Kern County Free Library," <i>Libraries and Culture</i> 38, no. 4 (2003): 351-77 (located in D2L Week 10 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, March 24 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
Week 11 March 31 – April 6	"wiggle room week"
Week 12 April 7 – April 13	<p>EXPERIMENTATION IN DOCUMENTARY</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Agee and Walker Evans, <i>Let Us Now Praise Famous Men</i> (1941), first half ▪ William Stott, <i>Documentary Expression and Thirties America</i>, pages 261-314 (located in D2L Week 12 folder). <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, April 7 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
Week 13 April 14 – April 20	<p>EXPERIMENTATION IN DOCUMENTARY</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agee and Evans, <i>Let Us Now Praise Famous Men</i>, second half <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, April 14 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>

<p>Week 14 April 21 – April 27</p>	<p>THREATS OF FASCISM Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sinclair Lewis, <i>It Can't Happen Here</i>, first half <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, April 21 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Week 15 April 28 – May 4</p>	<p>THREATS OF FASCISM Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sinclair Lewis, <i>It Can't Happen Here</i>, second half ▪ Frederick Betz and Jorg Thunecke, "Sinclair Lewis's Cautionary Tale <i>It Can't Happen Here</i> (1935): Against the Socio-Political Background in Germany and the USA in the 1930s," <i>Orbis Litterarum</i> 52, no. 1 (1997): 35-53 (located in D2L Week 15 folder) <p>Optional synchronous zoom class Monday, April 28 from 5:30-7:00. If you cannot make the zoom, you are required to watch the recording as early in the week as possible.</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://tamuc.zoom.us/j/95988235741?pwd=CpBpSuaHdeJtLKXYRF7Z8bputmaVKE.1</p> <p>Meeting ID: 959 8823 5741 Passcode: 302834</p>
<p>Finals Week</p>	<p>Final Project due by 11:59 p.m., Thursday, May 8, in Week 15 Dropbox</p>