

**English 499-901: Senior Seminar: Fitzgerald and Hemingway**  
**Spring 2018: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4-5:15 (Anderson House 101)**  
**Professor Bryant Mangum**

**I. BOOK LIST (Books are at the Virginia Book Company):**

**Fitzgerald:**

*The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald*  
*This Side of Paradise*  
*The Great Gatsby*  
*The Last Tycoon*

**Hemingway:**

*The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*  
*The Sun Also Rises*  
*A Farewell to Arms*  
*A Moveable Feast*

**(1) Optional Texts:** These texts would be helpful if you can find inexpensive copies online. I will make one copy of each available through reserve.

*Scott and Ernest: A Dangerous Friendship* by Matthew J. Bruccoli  
*The Cambridge Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald*, ed. Ruth Prigozy.

**(2) The Two Most Recent Collections of Essays Available and on Reserve are these:**

*F. Scott Fitzgerald in Context*, ed. Bryant Mangum (Cambridge University Press, 2013)  
*Ernest Hemingway in Context*, ed. Debra A. Modellmog and Suzanne del Gizzo (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

**(3) Reserve and Reference Books:** You can find a full list of the reserve books for our class by going to this web address and following the prompts: <http://www.library.vcu.edu/reserves/>. I will be setting up the reserve shelf during the first week of classes.

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:** F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway met in April 1925 in the Dingo Bar, rue Delambre, Paris, just after the publication of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and shortly before the publication of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. The relationship that developed between them during the next fifteen years was important to both of them. In this course we will examine works by both of these authors, looking closely at the ways in which their stormy friendship influenced their writing and the direction of their literary careers. Our major objective in this class will be to acquaint ourselves with the contributions to American letters of Fitzgerald and Hemingway through close reading and careful discussion of much of the fiction written by them--particularly of that fiction written during the time of their friendship, 1925-1940. Another main objective will be to familiarize ourselves with the major source material--biographical, bibliographical, and critical--for each author; and through the use of this material we will draw conclusions about their relationship to each other and to the time in which they wrote.

**III. ASSIGNMENTS**

**A. Oral Report (SR): Biographical Snapshot:** Seminar Report no longer than ten minutes long on a biographical topic from the list provided on handouts. This report (combined with biographical reports from every member of the seminar) will provide those foundational and biographical contexts important in the lives of Fitzgerald and Hemingway. Two stipulations for this Biographical Snapshot report: (1) the report

must have a sharply focused thesis or a claim, and your report should be organized around this claim, and (2) the report cannot exceed ten minutes since we will be on a tight schedule (time yourself at home before you give your presentation in class). For this assignment you will **turn in only a statement of your central claim and a bibliography of works consulted**, which you will turn in one week after your seminar report. This list should contain a minimum of eight sources, four of which need to be primary sources (letters, ledger entries, notebook entries, other things by Fitzgerald or Hemingway). Sources other than primary ones will be secondary sources such as biographies. Your online sources must be scholarly ones (i.e., from “edu” sites or sites such as the DAB online; no sources like Wikipedia, for example). Your entries must conform to MLA style as contained in the Seventh Edition (or most recent edition) of the *MLA Handbook*. 10%

**B. Oral Report (CR): Critical Reception:** Seminar Report no longer than five or ten minutes long in which you summarize the contemporary critical reception of the novel or stories being considered on the day scheduled for discussion of the work(s). In your oral presentation you will probably want to also give the class samples of selected reviews. But remember, the oral report is short: approximately five to ten minutes long. I would like you to lead off your critical reception report by telling what is contained in the volume (if it is a collection) and placing it in the context of the writer's other works (e.g., it is the first collection, etc.). Anything that you can do to give brief background information in the oral presentation will be helpful. You will find virtually everything you need to put together these reports by going to the reference shelf I've set up in the library. For Fitzgerald the two books are these: *The Critical Reputation of F. Scott Fitzgerald* and *F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Critical Reception*, both by Jackson R. Bryer. For Hemingway the book is *Ernest Hemingway: The Critical Reception*. I'll grade your oral reports based on the thoroughness with which you have examined and characterized the reviews and on the clarity of your presentation of the overall contemporary critical reception (which is to say on the clarity with which you present the shadings of the reviews from favorable to unfavorable to mixed). You will turn in a paper in which you present your findings. This paper should have a main claim that you support with summaries of the favorable, unfavorable, and mixed reviews (a paper of 2-3 pages). 10%

**C. Two 3-5-page papers.**

**1. Paper #1:** “Critical Essay Response” (due 20 February)

- a. Select a work either by Fitzgerald or Hemingway that especially interests you (story or novel).
- b. Locate three critical articles (or books or book chapters) that deal with your work.
- c. Use one of these, and react to it in a 3-5-page paper. The critical essay that you use will provide a springboard into your own analysis of the work you have chosen. You can either disagree with the critical essay or agree with it. In either case, you should begin your own paper with an explanation of the main parts of the critical essay you are responding to. Then, in your own essay, go beyond the position taken in the critical essay, either extending it or demonstrating why you do not agree with it.
- d. Include a bibliography in which you cite the three essays (or other sources) that you consulted, indicating clearly, perhaps with an asterisk, the one that you are responding to.

**2. Paper #2:** “Critical Analysis of a Work” (due 27 March)

- a. Select a work that is at least loosely related to the research you have done for your historical background seminar report. For example, if your research deals with flappers you might choose “The Offshore Pirate” or “Bernice Bobs Her Hair,” both flapper stories; if it is biographical background on the Nick Adams stories you could select one of the Nick Adams stories. The connection to your background topic need be no tighter than this. The assumption is that the research you have done will strengthen the foundation of the paper, even if it does not obviously do so.
- b. Having selected the work that will be the subject for your analysis, formulate a thesis that addresses a narrow aspect of work to be analyzed in your paper. This could be a question related to point of view, character development, image pattern, etc. It should be limited only by what you think you can accomplish in 3-5-page paper. The areas I have listed relate mainly to formal concerns (New Critical,

elements of fiction, etc.) You need not limit yourself to formal concerns, however. Just be sure that you can deal with the aspect of the work you have chosen in the space of a relatively short paper.

c. You should consult at least three sources that deal with the work you have selected. Include bibliographical information about them in the bibliography of your paper.

**OR**, if you choose for paper #2, you can simply repeat the instructions for paper #1, selecting a story by the author you did not use for #1. (15% for each paper). 30%

**D. Close Reading Test covering approximately all material read through mid-semester (1 March).** 10%

**E. 10-12-page paper:** This paper will deal with some original problem (biographical, bibliographical, or critical) including a complete check of existing treatments of the problem by other scholars. This is a documented, thesis-support paper, and I will provide you with a detailed description of it and with possible topics about halfway through the semester. This will be due on the day schedule for our final examination: 8 May, at 4 o'clock in our seminar room. 35%

**F. CLASS PARTICIPATION:** This is a subjective component of your grade, but the objective part of it relates to attendance. See the note on attendance below. 5%

#### **IV. SUMMARY OF GRADING COMPONENTS:**

- A. Oral Seminar Report (Biographical Snapshot) and Bibliography: 10%
- B. Oral Report (Critical Reception) and written report: 10%
- C. Two 3-5-page, Close-reading Papers: 30% (15% each)
- D. Close reading test: 10%
- E. 10-12-page Paper: 35 %
- F. Class Participation and Attendance: 5%

**V. ATTENDANCE:** Much of our seminar will consist of discussion of the works we are reading and the contexts related to these works. You are encouraged to contribute to class discussions and your participation will be figured into your final grade, particularly in borderline cases. Because participation is such an important component of the seminar, you are allowed to miss a maximum of four classes to receive credit for the course. **If you miss more than four classes for any reason (other than one of dire emergency such as serious illness that you suffer or a death in your immediate family) you will receive a grade of F in the course.** You are allowed one "free" cut. Any absence after that free cut will directly affect your final grade in the course. From the beginning of week two, a tardy counts as an absence. Also regarding lateness, many of our classes will begin with seminar reports or with introductory material important to the remainder of the class session. One entering the class after it has begun distracts all concerned. **Please do not come into the seminar room after the class has begun.** The last day to withdraw from the course without penalty is Friday, 23 March.

**VI. VCU HONOR SYSTEM:** "Virginia Commonwealth University recognizes that honesty, truth, and integrity are values central to its mission as in institution of higher education." This class will be conducted in strict adherence to VCU's Honor system policies, which can be found in the *VCU Resource Guide*.

**VII. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** "Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to providing students with disabilities equal opportunities to benefit from all programs, services and activities offered." Students with disabilities should identify to the instructor at the beginning of the course the services that they will need. For further information on this policy, refer to *VCU Resource Guide*.

**VIII. A NOTE ON COMPUTERS:** Much of the work in this course will depend on regular use of Blackboard and on email sent to and from your VCU email address. I will use **your VCU email address**, the university's official means of communication with students, for communication with you and will expect you to check it between each of our classes. The same is true for Blackboard: I will post announcements there and you should check it between each of our classes. If you do not have a user ID and password that will allow you to access Blackboard and your VCU email, be sure to get one before the second class meeting. You will be able to access all of the course materials by going to <http://blackboard.vcu.edu>. If you do not have a computer ID number and password you can get one by following the steps listed at the following web address: <http://www.vcucard.com/>. Reference to the university's email policy can be found at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/email.htm>.

**IX. UNIVERSITY CODE OF CONDUCT:** The University's policies regarding student conduct can be found at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/conductguide.html>.

**X. WHAT TO KNOW AND DO TO BE PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES AT VCU:**

- A. Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert/notify>). Keep your information up-to date.
- B. Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.
- C. Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
- D. Know where to go for additional emergency information (<http://www.vcu.edu/alert>)
- E. Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234). Report suspicious activities and objects.

**XI. MISCELLANEOUS:** My office is 307 Anderson House (913 W. Franklin). The telephone number is 828-1255. I will post office hours on my door (they are 2-3 on Tuesdays and Thursdays), but if you need to see me at times other than those posted please feel free to set up a time during which we can meet. There is a voice mail on my telephone, and if you leave word on it, I will call you back. My e-mail address is [bmangum@vcu.edu](mailto:bmangum@vcu.edu), and this is the best way to contact me for a quick response. My VCU webpage is <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~bmangum>. My webpage that we will use as a supplement to Blackboard is <http://www.bryantmangum.net>. We will discuss in class ways that we will use the various media platforms.