

Junior Tutorial Proposal  
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## The Campus Novel

Why is the academic campus such a popular setting, subject, and object of critique for so many 20<sup>th</sup> century American novels? How do we define “the campus,” its borders and limits, and all those things we might expect it to provide: free speech, safe spaces, educational formation? What do writers and readers find so appealing about the campus as a thematic backdrop and narrative frame? What is “the campus novel,” and why does it persist in popularity?

This tutorial will explore the preceding questions and many more, as we survey this idiosyncratic subgenre of “the campus novel” and the academic life it examines. We will specifically focus on a few threads of inquiry:

- 1) how the scope of a campus frames a narrative, offers specific structural parameters, and provides an enclosed imaginative space to work out broader social issues (regarding gender, sexuality, race, ideology, etc)
- 2) how taking academic life as its primary subject allows a novel to work out moral questions-cum-intellectual questions, combining different narrative genres at once
- 3) how the campus is taken as the place of formation for the ideal liberal subject—and how the campus novel can chronicle that formation gone awry (and the hilarious hijinks—or serious tragedy—that ensues...)

### Tutorial Goals

Because so many campus novels share similar themes and narrative structures, we will refrain from dividing the syllabus by thematic topic. Instead, we will orient our reading schedule around conducting research, dividing the tutorial into three parts:

- ~What Research is (and what the Campus Novel is...)
- ~How to Choose a Topic, Ask Questions, and Gather and Analyze Sources
- ~How to Write a Research Paper: Structure, Tactics, Craft

In focusing on *how* to write a research paper, class discussion will regularly return to the “why”s and the “what”s of research: why is the representation of education and educational spaces in novels worthy of our attention? What makes a good research question, and what commands relevancy in contemporary academic argument? In this, we will inevitably return to the meta-commentary campus novels often provide about the production of communicable research, the strengths that underlie it, and the relation of academic work to the work “outside” the campus. Ideally, students will leave the tutorial with improved research skills, knowledge of the form and tradition of the campus novel, and productive reflection on what academic research can do.

NB: This tutorial looks at the American campus novel, though it leaves room to address the campus novel as it is inflected by other locations and national traditions. (We will specifically discuss this in Week 12, with Murakami’s novel.)

### **Course Requirements:**

- 1) Regular attendance and participation in class
- 2) A visit to the department writing fellow
- 3) Weekly short response (1-2 Paragraphs) due by email 24 hours before seminar on weeks where no other assignments have been given
- 4) 5-6 page short paper, due Week 4: an extended close reading of a literary text; will be followed by an individual conference with Dena
- 5) Presentation on a novel not on the syllabus (Week 10)
- 6) 2-4 page Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography (8-10 sources) Due Week 6; The bibliography should reproduce in a few sentences the main argument of each work you intend to use. It should also include, in a few sentences, how you plan on engaging with the thesis of each summarized work.
- 7) 15-20 page Draft Due Week 11
- 8) Final version of Research Paper (Due to Dept & Dena after Week 13) and 5-min presentation at Tutorial Conference; the final paper should be 18-22 pages, and should incorporate a substantial amount of critical articles

### **Breakdown of Grading:**

The Junior Research Paper, and its related assignments, amount to over half the student's grade. Course Requirements #1-3 ~ 20%, #4 ~ 15%, #5 ~ 5%, #6-8 ~ 60%  
Please note: If you do not turn in the final paper, you will fail the course.

### **Junior Research Paper Schedule:**

Week 5: Provisional Topic Due

Week 6: 2 Page Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography (8-10 sources)

Week 10: 15-20 page draft due (with subsequent in-class workshop)

After Week 13: Junior Research Paper Due

### **Policies**

**Email:** I'll try to respond to emails within 48 hours; please do not "share" Google docs as a means of turning in your assignment.

**Office Hours:** If you can't make my office hours due to a regularly scheduled conflict, let's discuss an alternative. Routine meetings with me across the semester will be expected.

**Participation:** Participation in each meeting is expected; please come to class with your texts in hand, having read all the reading material for the week

**Extensions:** Due dates for assignments are given well in advance; extensions will be given on a case-by-case basis, and must be requested sufficiently before the deadline.

**Late Assignments:** will be docked 1/3 letter grade per day late

**Absences:** Participation at tutorial-specific and tutorial-wide events are mandatory; one unexcused absence will be allowed. Arriving late to class will affect participation grade.

**(Further policies listed at end of syllabus)**

**Course Texts:** \*Note, secondary material will be emailed out or passed out in class

Vladimir Nabokov, *Invitation of a Beheading* (1957)

John Williams, *Stoner* (1965)

Don DeLillo, *White Noise* (1985)

Haruki Murakami, *Norwegian Wood* (1987)

Philip Roth, *The Human Stain* (2000)

Francine Prose, *Blue Angel* (2000)

Zadie Smith, *On Beauty* (2005)

Jeffrey Eugenides, *The Marriage Plot* (2011)

\*And an additional novel of the student's choice

\*Also note: I don't care what published editions you buy...

### **Readings on Research and Craft:**

(selections to be passed out in class in conjunction with research-related questions, but always helpful to have a copy yourself)

Booth, Colomb, Williams, *The Craft of Research*

Richard Lapham, *Revising Prose*

### **Potential Novels Students Might Choose to Present on in Week Ten:**

Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim*; Malcom Bradbury, *Eating People is Wrong*; Michael Chabon, *Wonder Boys*; J. M. Coetsee, *Disgrace*; Junot Diaz, *The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*; Dave Eggers, *The Circle*; Jeffrey Eugenides, *The Marriage Plot*; Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*; F. Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise*; Chad Harbach, *The Art of Fielding*; Jonathan Lethem, *As She Climbed Across the Table*; David Lodge's Campus Novel Trilogy; Mary McCarthy, *The Groves of Academe*; Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*; Ishmael Reed, *Japanese by Spring*; J. D. Salinger, *Franny and Zooey*, Tom Sharpe, *Porterhouse Blue*; Tom Wolfe, *I am Charlotte Simmons*

## **Course Schedule**

### **Part One — An Introduction to the Campus Novel, and an Introduction to Research**

**Week One:** The Campus Novel, The Academic Novel, The Varsity Novel

**In class:** Read selections from Elaine Showalter's *Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and its Discontents*; read "Who's afraid of the campus novel?" from *The Guardian* Oct. 2004;

McGurl, Mark. "Autopoetics" from "Introduction: Halls of Mirror" in *The Program Era*

**Research-related question:** *What types of questions can we ask about the Campus novel?*

**Week Two:** Vladimir Nabokov, *Pnin*

**Secondary Reading:** Kager, M. "A Search for the Viscous and Sawdust:

(Mis)pronunciation in Nabokov's American Novels." *Journal of Modern Literature* 37.1

(2013): 77-89.

**Research-related question:** *How do we do ask questions about the form of the novel?*

\*\*\*Required Tutorial-Wide Meeting #1: TBD, Barker 133, at 5pm \*\*\*

### **Part Two — How to Ask Questions, Choose Topics, and Find and Analyze Sources**

**Week Three:** Jeffrey Eugenides, *The Marriage Plot*

**Secondary Reading:** Selection from Roland Barthes' *A Lovers Discourse*

Nicholas Dames, "The Theory Generation" from *N+1*

**Research-related question:** *How do we do research on the thematic organization of a novel? How do we choose a topic?*

**Week Four:** Tobias Wolff, "In the Garden of the North American Martyrs"

**Library Visit .... and 5-6 Page Short Paper Due**

**\*Students will bring in research questions to library meeting.\***

**Secondary Readings:** Selections from Helen Horowitz's *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present*

Deresiewicz, William. "Don't send your kid to the Ivy League" *New Republic*. July 21, 2014

Heller, Nathan. "The Big Uneasy: What's roiling the Liberal Arts Campus?" *The New Yorker*, May 30, 2016

**Research-related question:** *How might contemporary questions be put to literature?*

**Week Five:** Philip Roth, *The Human Stain*

**\*Students will be expected to have chosen a research topic and Week Ten novels.\***

**Secondary Reading:** Safer, Elaine B. "Tragedy and Farce in Roth's *The Human Stain*."

*Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 2002, Vol. 43(3), p.211-227

Or: Glaser, Jennifer. "A Jew in the Canon: Reading Race and Literary History in Philip Roth's *The Human Stain*." *PMLA*, 2008, Vol. 123, No. 5. pp. 1465-1478.

**Research-related question:** *How do we research the critical work on a novel? How do we find sources?*

**Week Six:** Don DeLillo, *White Noise ...* and **Annotated Bibliography Due**

**\*Students will share their bibliographies and corresponding questions in class.\***

**Secondary Reading:** Selections from Judith Ryan's *The Novel After Theory*

Selections From Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation*

**Research-related question:** *How do we incorporate theory into our research? How do we research the intellectual climate and institutional history of a novel?*

**\*\*\*Required Tutorial-Wide Meeting #2: TBD, Barker 133, at 5pm \*\*\***

**Week Seven:** Francine Prose, *Blue Angel*

**Secondary Reading:** Francine Prose, "A Wasteland of One's Own," *The New York Times*, February 2000; Selections from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*

**Research-related question:** *How do we research a novel's engagement with literary tradition?*

### Part Three — How to Write a Research Paper: Structure, Tactics, Craft

**Week Eight:** John Williams, *Stoner*

**Secondary Reading:** William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 73"

**Research-related question:** *How do we make an argument?*

**Week Nine:** Zadie Smith, *On Beauty*

**Secondary Reading:** Selections from Elaine Scarry's *On Beauty and Being Just*

**Research-related questions:** *How do we organize our evidence and structure our claims?*

**Week Ten:** In-class presentation on novel of student's choice; presentations should critically engage the areas of inquiry in the task force's report

**Secondary Reading:** "Report of the Task Force on General Education," Harvard College 2007

**Research-related question:** *How do we show our engagement with a larger conversation?*

**Week Eleven:** In Class Workshop of Drafts... and **15-20 Page Draft Due**  
**Research-related question:** *How do we write introductions and conclusions?*

**Week Twelve:** Haruki Murakami, *Norwegian Wood*  
**Research-related questions:** *How do we strengthen an argument? How do we revise and edit our drafts?*

**Week Thirteen:** Screening: *The Social Network*  
Wrap-up Discussion

**Paper Due after Week Thirteen, followed by Junior Tutorial Conference**

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### **Further Course Policies**

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or writing without giving them proper credit. Consequences of plagiarism can range from failure on the paper to dismissal from the course to even more serious actions. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with Harvard FAS's Honor Code: *"Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs."*

**Collaboration:** You are absolutely encouraged to talk with other students about the course and its readings, and to read each others' work. In individual assignments, academic collaboration and external sources should be always cited.

**Attendance:** Your attendance in tutorial is vital to your own success as well as to the success of the class as a whole; so is your attendance in Junior Tutorial General Meetings and at other required events. Missing more than one class will decrease your participation grade, and excessive absence could result in failing the course. If you have attenuating circumstances, you must communicate with me in a timely manner so that we can discuss how to deal with it.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** *"Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation."*