Maine's Women Writers and a Sense of Place

General Information
Instructor: Ms. Judy Hakola
Communication:
  mail- 25 Charles St., Orono, ME 04473
  phone- 866-4091 (home phone); leave message if necessary. Please speak clearly, especially when leaving a number for return calls.
  email- judith.hakola@umit.maine.edu (FirstClass) or judyhak@maine.edu
  course web site: Access by going to http://www.courses.maine.edu
Other numbers:
  to report technical problems- 1-800-696-HELP
  general info for students- 1-800-868-7000
  UMaine Bookstore: Phone: 207-581-1700
  UMA Bookstore- 1-800-621-0083 (for distance students)

Course Description
In the preface of her book *Of Place and Gender: Women in Maine History*, the late Marli F. Weiner describes Maine women as “complex, diverse, and open to interpretation” (p. xi). This course is an investigation of the ways that this description applies to the works of certain Maine women writers as they try to convey through their novels, memoirs, and poetry their sense of Maine as a place—a place that is also “complex, diverse, and open to interpretation.” In this six-week online course we will explore the themes, issues, and approaches found in their works as they relate to capturing and conveying a sense of place. We will try to deduce from these readings what “place” means to these writers, what aspects of place are common to their works and what aspects are unique, and even how women's sense of place may differ from men's.

Texts: Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (Dover Thrift Editions)
        Moore, Ruth. *The Weir* (Blackberry Books)
        Pelletier, Cathie. *The Funeral Makers* (Scribner Paperbacks)
        Ranzoni, Patricia. *Settling* (Puckerbrush Press) OR Wood Monica. *When We Were the Kennedys* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt/ Mariner)
        NOTE: If you have not already purchased *Settling*, acquire a copy of *When We Were the Kennedys*; you do not need to have both books.

Additional readings will be posted on the course website (accessed through www.courses.maine.edu).

Prerequisite: 6 hours of courses in literature (one course may be in Women's Studies) or permission of the instructor (contact her at judith.hakola@umit.maine.edu).

Course Objectives
This course is designed to help you achieve these rather broad objectives:
• To identify and appreciate the role of lenses (specifically gender and culture as lenses) in both the writing and the reading of literature;
• To write coherently, perceptively, and persuasively on assigned topics as well as those you develop yourself.
To apply insights generated through online discussion and the instructor’s feedback to new material.

This course is designed to help you achieve these more specific objectives:

- To understand what is meant by “the literature of place,” especially as it is distinct from regional and local color writing;
- To analyze perceptively the interplay of “Maine,” “women,” and “place” in the literature under discussion;
- To recognize and describe both the similarities and differences among the depictions of “place” in the course literature;
- To recognize and articulate the role of gender—both the author’s gender and the gender of the characters—in depictions of place;
- To appreciate the skill with which Maine’s writers present to us their visions and versions of Maine life, people and culture.

Web Format
This course, which is taught entirely on line, begins on Monday, July 13. The web components, using Blackboard (Bb), have dates attached to them (see detailed syllabus below) to assure that students keep up with assigned readings and participate in the web-based discussions. Such participation is a required component of the course. You will need to have at least twice-weekly high-speed access to the Web to take this course because, in addition to the discussion forums, other course material, such as assigned supplemental readings, videos, and audio lectures, can be accessed only on Blackboard.

Evaluation
- The course grade is based primarily on intelligent and timely participation in the web-based discussions (approximately 15% of final grade), and two short analytical papers (approximately 25% each) and a final synthesis paper (approximately 35%). Those UMaine English majors taking the course who plan to use it as their capstone course will write an alternate final paper; notify me right away if you are such a person. Those taking the course for graduate credit (i.e., enrolled in MES520) will be expected to do a more substantial final paper.
- You are reminded of the University's definition of grades: a C is a respectable, satisfactory, and acceptable meeting of course requirements; a B is earned for work that is notably better than average; and an A is earned only for work that is truly outstanding.
- In this course grades on both individual assignments and for the course as a whole (final grade) may include a plus or minus where earned.

Student Responsibilities
- Because the online sharing of ideas, reactions and opinions is an important part of the course and because I need to receive all papers as scheduled in order to comment on and return them before the next assignment is due, you are expected to observe the schedule for assignments.
- You must keep me informed via email about any factors that affect your ability to meet the expectations described above. Specifically, let me know (in advance, if possible) when illness or legitimate factors affect your participation and/or performance in the course. It also helps me to know whether you have a diagnosed learning disability.
- See the attachment to this syllabus for the University of Maine official policy on academic honesty, which you are expected to follow. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, contact me.
Disability Accommodation: See the attachment to this syllabus for important information about disability services.

Detailed Syllabus

Course Schedule Disclaimer (Disruption Clause): In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version. NOTE: Such disruptions are less likely to occur in an online course where we are not subject to winter storms, flu epidemics, etc, but the University requires that this notice be included in all syllabi.

General Notes
1. This syllabus represents the workload of a typical 14-week, upper-level literature course compressed into six week plus an extra week at the end of the course for those who need the time to complete the final assignment. Thus you should plan to spend at least twice as much time on it each week as you would for a similar course taken during a regular semester.—and you have many fewer weekends to catch up! If you have trouble keeping up, let me know before you fall too far behind.
2. Because the course material includes audio and video files as well as the usual text, you will need to plan for blocks of at least an hour of high-speed access two or three times a week. Dial-up access will not be sufficient.
3. In Blackboard, the course’s online venue, discussions on the course texts are carried on in forums in the DISCUSSION BOARD/FORUMS area of the site. However, just as in a traditional classroom, sometimes topics come up that are relevant to the course as a whole but not that week’s specific text or topic. To provide a place for sharing information, thoughts, etc. I have created a forum called At the Post Office where all of us can post messages about whatever kinds of “stuff” we would talk about with each other if we were in the same actual (rather than virtual) classroom. That might be information about events such as readings or book signings, books you have read and want to recommend, articles about Maine women writers in various newspapers around the state, personal experiences relevant to the course, etc. This forum will always be at the end of forums in the DISCUSSION BOARD. Don’t hesitate to contribute!

Using Blackboard (Bb)
Access Bb through www.courses.maine.edu. From that page, click on <user login> and read the instructions carefully. Remember to use your MaineStreet—not your FirstClass—usrid and password. If you have trouble logging in, call Tech Support at 1-800-696-HELP.
After you have logged in successfully, under “My Courses” on the right side of the screen, click on the course number(s): ENG 429/MES520. You will be taken to the ANNOUNCEMENTS page. Read this page carefully every time you log in because new announcements may provide important information about course changes and additions, as well as other useful information.

The menu on the left side of the ANNOUNCEMENTS page accesses other areas of this site:
• DISCUSSION BOARD/FORUMS accesses the discussion forums for each assigned text as well as the “At the Post Office” general forum (see note 3 above).
• SYLLABUS accesses an online version of this document.
• COURSE DOCUMENTS accesses online reading guides and other assigned readings (marked Bb in syllabus); files of videos on Jewett, Moore, and Pelletier; and audio commentaries.
Assignments

Accesses instructions for all papers (see syllabus below for due dates)

Using this syllabus

Although the syllabus is broken down by week, there are several overlapping assignments, so always check at least a week ahead as you plan your workload and online access. Often other activities, such as reading course texts, viewing videos, etc. must be carried out before the activities with deadlines can be completed, so read the whole description of that week’s work carefully. Carry out these activities in the order in which they are listed.

Week 1, beginning July 13:

NOTE: Blackboard will be inaccessible from 10:00 p.m., Thursday night, the 16th, through 10:00 p.m., Friday night, the 17th. As a result, for this week only due dates for assigned work will be slightly different.

Introductions

On Blackboard (www.courses.maine.edu)

—Read all posted announcements, then click on DISCUSSION BOARD and read and follow the instructions under Forum 1: Getting to Know Us. Complete this posting any time before 10:00 p.m., Thursday, July 16—even before the course officially begins.

—Listen to Audio commentary #1 in the Audio Commentaries folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS.

—Read classmates’ Getting to Know Us postings and reply to at least three of them by Tuesday, July 21.

—Because of Blackboard’s unavailability, download essays in the Background Readings on Place folder in the COURSE DOCUMENTS area to your home computer as soon as possible.

Read

—Sarah Orne Jewett’s The Country of the Pointed Firs (reading guide in SOJ folder of COURSE DOCUMENTS).

On Blackboard:

—View the video Master Smart Woman—28 minutes (in SOJ folder).

—Browse through material on Sarah Orne Jewett Text Project site using link in SOJ folder.

—Participate in Blackboard Forum 2, The Country of the Pointed Firs. Post your initial response to one of the discussion topics no later than midnight Monday, July 20.

Week 2, beginning July 20.

On Blackboard:

—Listen to Audio commentary #2 in the Audio Commentaries folder in COURSE DOCS.

—Return to Forum 2; read classmates’ postings and reply to at least two of them by midnight, Thursday, July 23.

Read Ruth Moore’s The Weir (reading guide in RM folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS).

On Blackboard:

—Read Jennifer Craig’s article on Ruth Moore; go to RM folder and access Writers of Maine (http://dll.umaine.edu/welcome/wom); under Maine Writers click on “Ruth Moore.”

—View Ruth Moore video I Have Seen Horizons—28 minutes (in RM folder)

—Participate in Forum 3, The Weir. Post your initial response to one of the discussion topics no later than midnight Sunday, July 26.
WEEK 3, beginning July 27.
On Blackboard:
—Listen to Audio Commentary #3 in the Audio Commentaries folder in COURSE DOCS.
—OPTIONAL because paper #1 is due this week. Return to Forum 3; read classmates’ postings and reply to at least two of them by Thursday, July 30 if you have time.
—Go to ASSIGNMENTS and locate the instructions for Paper #1. Submit this paper no later than midnight Sunday, August 2. Read and follow instructions very carefully, especially for submitting the paper.

WEEK 4, beginning August 3.
On Blackboard: Listen to Audio Commentary #4

Read: Tatelbaum’s Carrying Water as a Way of Life (reading guide in LT folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS).

On Blackboard:
—Poke around in Linda Tatelbaum’s website and related sites (links in LT folder). Click on the links at the bottom of the home page, especially “The Author.”
—Participate in Forum 4, Carrying Water. Post your response to discussion topic no later than midnight Sunday, Aug. 9.

WEEK 5, beginning August 10.
On Blackboard:
—Listen to Audio Commentary #5.
—Return to Forum 4; read classmates’ postings and reply to at least two of them by Thursday, August 13.

Read: Pat Ranzoni’s Settling OR When We Were the Kennedys (reading guides for both in PSR folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS). Note: Settling is not a quick read so don’t leave it to the last minute.

On Blackboard:
—Participate in Forum 5. There are separate sub-forums for Settling and When We Were the Kennedys; choose a topic from the appropriate one. Post your initial response to a discussion topic no later than midnight Sunday, Aug. 16.

WEEK 6, beginning August 17.
On Blackboard:
—Listen to Audio Commentary #6.
—OPTIONAL because paper #2 is due this week: return to Forum 5; read classmates’ postings and reply to at least two of them by midnight Thursday, Aug. 20 if you have time.
—Go to ASSIGNMENTS and locate the instructions for Paper #2. Submit this paper no later than midnight Sunday, Aug. 23. Read and follow instructions very carefully, especially for submitting the paper.

Read Cathie Pelletier’s The Funeral Makers (reading guide in CP folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS).

On Blackboard
—View interview with Pelletier from MPBN’s A Good Read series (link in CP folder)
— Participate in Forum 6, *The Funeral Makers*. Post your initial response to discussion topic no later than **Thursday, Aug. 22th**.

**“EXAM WEEK” (equivalent), beginning August 24**

On Blackboard:
— Listen to Audio Commentary #6

Read:
— Read poems by Native American Writer Carol Willette Bachofner (in CWB folder in COURSE DOCUMENTS). Incorporate these poems into Paper #3 as appropriate.
— Go to ASSIGNMENTS and locate the instructions for **Paper #3**. Submit this paper no later than **Thursday, Aug. 29**.

**NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. ALL CHANGES WILL BE POSTED IN THE ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION OF THE COURSE’S BLACKBOARD SITE.**

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**The Minor in Maine Studies**

or

**The Certificate in Maine Studies**

or

**The Concentration in Maine Studies**

in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program

**Undergraduate Students:** Did you know that you can complete a minor in Maine Studies if you are a UMaine undergraduate at the University of Maine if you complete 18 credit hours in Maine-related courses, such as Writers of Maine, History of Maine and similar courses?

**Distance Learning Students:** You can earn a certificate in Maine Studies from the Division of Lifelong Learning by meeting the requirements described above.

ENG 429: Maine Women Writers counts toward either the minor or the certificate.

**Graduate Students:** If you are a student in the MALS program, you may declare a concentration in Maine Studies. This course under the MES 520 designation counts toward that concentration.

Check out [http://dll.umaine.edu/mainestudy/ugrad.html](http://dll.umaine.edu/mainestudy/ugrad.html) or mail the director, Carol Toner, at carol.toner@umit.maine.edu for more information about all of these options.
Important Notices from the University of Maine

Academic Honesty: Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

Sexual Violence Policy on Sexual Discrimination Reporting
The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination involving members of the campus, your teacher is required to report this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For confidential resources on campus: Counseling Center: 207-581-1392 or Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000.
For confidential resources off campus: Rape Response Services: 1-800-310-0000 or Spruce Run: 1-800-863-9909.

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For support services on campus: Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention: 207-581-1406, Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409, University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040 or 911. Or see the OSAVP website for a complete list of services at http://www.umaine.edu/osavp/