Course Description and Outline
This course proceeds from the premise that 1925 was the \textit{annus mirabilis}\textemdash the miracle year\textemdash of American literature. Literary historian Gordon Hutner calls 1925 “a year when American fiction was arguably at its best […] a year when the modern American novel surely might be said to have ascended” (\textit{What America Read}, 55). Indeed, the year produced a catalogue of high literature so prodigious that we cannot begin to fit each title on the syllabus: Anderson’s \textit{Dark Laughter}, Dreiser’s \textit{An American Tragedy}, Lewis’s \textit{Arrowsmith}, Williams’s \textit{In the American Grain}, Yezierska’s \textit{Bread Givers}, so forth.

This course also examines an important critical methodology, seeded in the language of the preceding sentence\textemdash “the year produced.” The \textit{year} produced? Historicism, the array of practices setting artwork and historical context into dialogue, might lead us to think in such terms, to cast the year in quasi-authorial terms. And it was quite a year: under Harding’s “normalcy,” a tumultuous mix of jazz, Prohibition, a rising KKK, Gilded Age-style accumulation, and increasing proletarian affinities.

The student learning outcomes of this course are twofold:
\begin{itemize}
  \item First, students will refine their close reading skills via 1925’s breadth of formal and generic works.
  \item Second, students will explore and hone historicist methods via the depth of our focus on 1925.
\end{itemize}

The Honor Code
All of your graded work in this class is to be pledged in accordance with the Lyon Honor Code. I encourage you to talk with other students about arguments and texts as you plan and draft your essays. You may not, however, adopt another person’s writing into your own. Adopting others’ written work constitutes unauthorized collaboration and therefore plagiarism. Please consult the Honor Code for a more detailed description of this policy in the Lyon College Student Handbook.

Point Structure
\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Period presentation} & 100 points \\
\textbf{Secondary criticism presentation} & 100 points \\
\textbf{Midterm paper} & (8 pages) 200 points \\
\textbf{Research bibliography} & (20 sources) 100 points \\
\textbf{Research paper} & (20 pages) 500 points \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
Total: 1,000 points
**Required Texts***
The bulk of our readings will come from these texts, but we will also have supplemental readings that will be posted on the course website. It is your responsibility to print electronic readings and bring them to class. These books you will have to buy:


Course reserves:
- Jameson: from *Political Unconscious*
- Gallagher & Greenblatt: “Introduction” and “Counterhistory and the Anecdote” from *Practicing New Historicism*
- Moretti: “Graphs” from *Graphs, Maps, Trees*
- Fleissner: “Historicism Blues”

**Attendance**
This is a participation-oriented course. Consequently, I spot you one week’s worth of absences (2), and for every week of absences you miss beyond that, your final grade will have a hard ceiling. For example, 4 absences—whether excused or unexcused—mean you can make no higher than a “B,” 6 absences limit you to a “C,” and with 8 absences you will be automatically withdrawn from the course. If you miss class due to illness or emergency, contact me as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements for your work.

“Administrative withdrawn” will occur if a student misses the equivalent of four weeks, whether excused or unexcused. And when it comes to tallying these four weeks, Lyon’s policy is that there are no excused absences. So you need to factor in College events and travel into your attendance. (Excused absences are honored, of course, for exam dates, but they do count as absences toward your final tally). If you miss the equivalent of two weeks, you will be required to meet with the instructor.

Tardiness: Please do not come late to class; arriving late disrupts the entire class. If you enter class after roll has been called, you are late. 2 tardies result in one absence. Tardiness also lowers your participation scores.

**Participation**
Participation is a crucial part of your success in this class. You will be expected to work in small groups, participate in class discussion, and complete various other activities. You are expected to contribute constructively to each class session, whether it is a discussion or a writing workshop. **Students may be dismissed and counted absent when unprepared for classes**—especially workshops—and these absences will count against the student’s absences totals.

**Preparation & Workshops**
Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class. **Late papers, including all drafts, will be penalized 10% for every calendar day the paper is late.** All papers must be presented in MLA style, stapled, double-spaced with 1.25” margins and 12-point Times New Roman font.

Workshops are worth 10% of an assignment’s grade; **skipping workshops or coming to class without a draft lowers your grade by 10%**. Students with College-sponsored absences may submit drafts via email in advance of the workshop meeting.
Classroom Behavior and a Word on Title IX
In the classroom, as everywhere else in the Lyon community, you must abide by the Standards of Student Behavior set forth in the Lyon College Student Handbook. These guidelines establish the ideals of civility and respect for others’ rights that are the foundation of academic exchange. Accordingly, disrespectful behavior—especially harassment, but also texting during class—will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class, and might well earn the offending student a special audience with the Dean.

Title IX and Lyon’s policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Lyon encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to Clarinda Foote, Title IX Coordinator, or Patrick Mulick, Dean of Students and Title IX Investigator, about what happened so they can get the support they need and Lyon can respond appropriately. Lyon is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource (Chaplain, Counselor, or Nurse). As a faculty member, I am required to report possible Title IX violations and must provide our Title IX coordinator with all relevant details. I cannot, therefore, guarantee confidentiality.

ADA Accommodations
Students seeking reasonable accommodations based on documented learning disabilities must contact the Office of Academic Services at 307-7332. If you think you qualify for these accommodations, contact the OAS immediately.

Email
Emails between instructors and students are formal correspondence and should reflect the conventions of formal discourse.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities
Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and make available this material.

Grading Rubric
Here is the rubric by which I will grade your papers throughout the semester:
- “A” paper: strong argumentation, strong thesis/Ts organization, command of mechanics
- “B” paper: good argumentation, loose thesis/Ts organization, no more than 1 fatal errors
- “C” paper: unfocused argumentation, unfocused thesis/Ts, no more than 2 fatal errors
- “D” paper: absence of argumentation, unorganized thesis/Ts, no more than 3 fatal errors
- “F” paper: disregard for argumentation, no organization, 4 or more fatal errors

“Fatal Errors,” particularly egregious mechanical errors, include:
- Sentence boundary errors: sentence fragments, run-ons, and comma splices
- Absence of a Works Cited page when one is appropriate
- Subject-verb disagreement
- Singular-plural/noun-pronoun disagreement

Grading Scale
A  4.0  90-100
B  3.0  80-89
C  2.0  70-79
D  1.0  60-69
F  ---  0-59
Weekly Schedule

(NB: This schedule is only a guide and is subject to change. Also, assignments and readings are due the day they are listed on the syllabus, not the following day.)

Week 1: Aug. 18 — 20
T — Introduction, syllabus, opening lecture
   Introduce (and schedule) Period & Secondary criticism presentations
R — Jameson: from *The Political Unconsciousness* (course reserves)
   Period presentation sign-ups

Week 2: Aug. 25 — 27
T — Gallagher & Greenblatt: “Introduction” and “Counterhistory and the Anecdote” from *Practicing New Historicism* (course reserves)
R — Period presentations I
   Secondary criticism presentation sign-ups

Week 3: Sept. 1 — 3
T — Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (1-45)
R — Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (45-96)
   Introduce Midterm paper

Week 4: Sept. 8 — 10
T — Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (97-145)
R — Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (146-80)

Week 5: Sept. 15 — 17
T — Hemingway: *In Our Time* (11-62)
R — Hemingway: *In Our Time* (63-103)

Week 6: Sept. 22 — 24
T — Hemingway: *In Our Time* (105-56)
R — Period presentations II

Week 7: Sept. 29 — Oct. 1
T — Midterm paper workshops: bring complete draft for review
R — Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (3-64)
Week 8: Oct. 6 — 8
T – Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (65-121)
   Midterm paper due

R – Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (122-83)
   Introduce Research bibliography

Week 9: Oct. 13 — 15
T – No class. Fall Break.

R – Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (184-227)

Week 10: Oct. 20 — 22
T – No class. Service Day.

R – Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (231-97)

Week 11: Oct. 27 — 39
T – Dos Passos: *Manhattan Transfer* (298-342)
   Research bibliography due

R – Loos: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (3-73)

Week 12: Nov. 3 — 5
T – Loos: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (74-123)

R – Locke, ed.: *The New Negro* (3-44)

Week 13: Nov. 10 — 12
T – Locke, ed.: *The New Negro* (57-74, 96-114)
   Introduce Research paper

R – Locke, ed.: *The New Negro* (129-45)

Week 14: Nov. 17 — 19
T – Locke, ed.: *The New Negro* (153-60, 168-95)

R – Locke, ed.: *The New Negro* (385-414)
Week 15: Nov. 24 — 26
T – Research paper workshops: bring complete draft for review
R – No class. Thanksgiving Break.

Week 16: Dec. 1 — 3
T – Moretti: “Graphs” from *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (course reserves)
R – Fleissner: “Historicism Blues” (course reserves)
Course evaluations and final questions

FINALS Week: Dec. 7 — 11
M the 7th – Research paper due by 5 pm

Final exams schedule
F, Dec 4: Last day of regular class
M-T, Dec 7-8: Final exams
W, Dec 9: Review day
R-F, Dec 10-11: Final exams
M, Dec 14: Grades due at noon
Overview of Writing Assignments:

**Period presentation** (100 points)
On one of the two days allotted for these presentations, you will present materials pertaining to one 1925 historical event of your choosing. (NB: “Event” should be taken loosely. It may refer either to a discrete episode taking place on one or a few days or to a broader phenomenon that typified the year.) Through these presentations, the class will build a portfolio of historical materials to rely on for class discussion and, more importantly, for research projects. In other words, your job here is to teach your fellow classmates about a historical context that they may find useful; the Golden Rule should apply here. Your goal is to provide an overview of the event, as well as relay some historical analysis of the event’s relation to general developments in modern America. The presentation must run ten (10) minutes, and must generate a handout on three (3) relevant sources—with bibliographic information and a short synopsis for each—to share with the class.

**Secondary criticism presentation** (100 points)
As with the Period presentations, the goal of this assignment is to help you and your classmates build a portfolio of research materials. Students will be assigned a date to begin class with a synopsis of secondary criticism relevant to the day’s readings. As above, your job is to teach your classmates about a scholar’s argument about the text; the Golden Rule applies again. You should provide an overview of the argument, and relate it to part of the day’s passages. The presentation must run ten (10) minutes, and must generate a handout for the source that provides its bibliographic information as well as detailing its major claims.

**Midterm paper** (8 pages) (200 points)
A trial run at historicism, this paper ask you to model either Jameson’s or Greenblatt’s methodological approach as you relate one text of our semester to one event of 1925. This paper requires six scholarly sources, for which you may draw upon classmates’ Period and Secondary criticism presentations. Consider as you draft how this paper may fold into the larger Research paper.

**Research bibliography** (20 sources) (100 points)
An annotated bibliography comporting to MLA citation and formatting standards, this assignment will help you gather a base of sources to use for your research project. You should focus primarily on secondary sources, mixing historical and critical analysis. You may sprinkle in up to four (4) primary historical documents from the period. Feel free to make use of the sources your classmates have discovered for Period and Secondary criticism presentations—provided, of course, that they are relevant to your subject. Annotations should run around one hundred (100) words.

**Research paper** (20 pages) (500 points)
A full performance of historicism, this paper will again follow from Jameson’s or Greenblatt’s approaches, relating two texts from our semester (at least one must have been assigned after midterms) to an event of 1925. This paper requires 15 scholarly sources that will be culled from the Research bibliography. You may fold your Midterm paper into this project. The most successful arguments here will discuss their methods while practicing close reading and relating texts to contexts.