In this class we will continue to explore the concept of narrative and the way writers interrogate literary and social conventions. As we consider how stories shape our notions of history, love, social class, and sexual identity, we will examine how the thinking of readers, and stories, changed from the nineteenth century to the twentieth. We will follow the emergence of a new form of narration, whose protagonists include not only characters, but also time, place, the city, the reader, and language itself. We will read Stendhal’s *The Red and the Black*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and, if there's time, a novel by Italo Calvino. I usually like the last book to be by an author who plays with language, genre, form and feeling; we could try perhaps Calvino's *Cosmicomics*, or some other contemporary text that is both narratively adventurous and not too long (Ulysses will require all your intestines). I hope to focus some of our discussion on fields that reflect the interests of members of the class, and in that sense, our course will be formed by collaboration. By familiarizing you with some fundamental works in the history of narrative, as well as with some narrative theory, this course aims to deepen your ideas about the role of narrative in your lives and your work.

**Course Requirements:**

The work for the class combines class participation, intensive reading, and various types of writing. Class discussion will enable us to make connections between the material we are studying and your areas of interest. As your explorations of narrative progress, please feel free to propose readings and activities and to bring any additional material to the class that you feel might make it more meaningful.

Ground rules: Attendance is required, and more than two unexcused absences may adversely affect your grade in the course. You are expected to have completed the readings before the class for which they are assigned. Papers are due on deadline. Academic honesty is assumed and plagiarism will be penalized according to the policy in the Gallatin *Bulletin*. Please no laptops, cell phones, PDA's etc. in class. Just bring your books, brain, heart and imagination.

**Required Texts (required editions; no substitutions please; at NYU Bookstore and Shakespeare and Company):**


Various handouts.

**You might also want to consult:**

Gifford, Donald and Robert J. Seidman. *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's Ulysses*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2008. (This will be a great resource for writing papers because it provides information on many details and allusions.)

**Paper Requirements:** Writing includes six responses and three essays. Work must be handed in on time. Responses are important for my understanding of what you’re thinking about as you read, so it’s vital that you hand them in on deadline. They are also sources for your essays.

**Required Format for Papers:** Essays must have a title. When you quote from and cite your sources, I expect you to use the MLA citation format, either parenthetical documentation or footnotes. All essays must include a list of Works Cited following the MLA format. (I’m serious about this, so pay attention!). To save paper, please put your Works Cited at the end of your paper; you do not need a separate page. Every essay should be typed, double-spaced, and carefully proofread, with pages numbered. You should follow MLA guidelines; see *MLA Handbook* or you can find MLA format online! Excellent site: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/. Paper format and grammar count as part of the essay grade. Grammar and proofreading matter in your responses, too. Please hand in your work in hard copy, not via email.

**For this class, what is a "response essay"?**

A response is a 500-word essay in which you explore a passage or idea in the text; depending on how your mind works and how you connect with texts, you might start conceptually and look closely at the text to articulate and find evidence for this intuition or idea, or, you might do the opposite and start close to the text and move outward to arrive at your conclusions or ideas. Or you might develop an observation or intuition you have about the design—formal, emotional, visual—of the book. If you are a reader who starts with your feelings and intuitions about a text, your job is not to write about what you feel, but to go back to the book and try to trace and articulate how this text *produced* those feelings. Follow your hunches and develop your intuitions into fuller concepts and analyses. Try to read as a writer as well as a reader. I want to see you thinking aloud on the page, testing and pushing your ideas. Responses are for figuring out what you think and for taking intellectual risks.

Very important: The tone should be "business casual," not full dress academic formality, but not complete informality either. Try not to be frothy or wordy. Less foam, more coffee! A response is an essay, not a blog. As you are writing your response, you might find that you really get to your idea—that you get the hum, go into the zone, feel like you have found a way to explain something important about the reading—as you hit the second page (around 500 words). This is the time to keep going! Don't stop because you reach 500 words. Instead, work through the whole idea and then hand in YOUR BEST 500 WORDS!

I am also open to your undertaking experiments in your own prose that respond formally or stylistically to the form and styles we are reading. You can write as a writer, too.

**Due Dates**

**Responses** (500 words): 2/5, 2/12, 2/28, 3/12, 4/16, 4/30. Please number your responses so that I can keep track of them!

**Essays**

Essay #1 2/21 (1500 words)
Essay #2 4/9 (1500 words)
Essay #3 5/13 (1800-2000 words, depending on topic; we'll discuss)

**Grading**

Participation 15%, Responses 30%, Essays 55% (approximate breakdown: #1 15-20%, #2 15-20%, #3 20-25%)

**Schedule**

1/29  Introductions

   In-class writing

1/31  **Reading due:** *The Red and the Black*, Book I, chapters 1-10. Short handouts on French Revolution. Look at the timelines on pages 423-5 and at Paul Valéry's comments on the time period on pages 462-5 in the "Backgrounds and Contexts" section at the back of the book.

   **Recommended reading** (for now or over the next couple of weeks): If you are interested in the period, read the historical background on French Revolution (on NYU Classes).

   **Think about:** Look carefully at the opening. How does the novel give you a sense of the mood and character of Verrières and its inhabitants, of the town's social relationships? What is the function of this traveler from Paris whom the narrator mentions? How does Julien strike you? What is he like? Does he do anything that surprises or confuses you? Ditto Madame de Rénéal. What is the narrator's attitude toward his characters? Why does the narration draw attention to what the characters do not see? How would you describe the narrator's position in relation to the story he is telling? What is the role of reading and novels in this book?

   **Bring in** a passage you want to discuss from chapters 1-10. **Write** a sentence or two about what you notice in this passage or a question that you have.

2/5  **Reading due:** *The Red and the Black*, Book I, chapter 11-end of Part 1. Erich Auerbach's essay in the "Criticism" section of the book is also terrific to read.

   **Writing due:** Response #1 (Your best 500 words).

2/7  **Reading due:** *The Red and the Black*, Book II, chapters 1-7. You might also want to read René Girard's great essay in the "Criticism" section of the book.

   **Bring in** a question and/or observation about the novel. You might revisit some of the questions above and also think about the observations people have made in class.

2/12 **Reading due:** *The Red and the Black*, Book II, chapters 8-20.

   **Writing due:** Response #2--Find a passage and analyze point of view, wording, etc. Or write on a particular idea that interests you. Use textual analysis to help you test your insights and develop your views. Remember that I am an eavesdropper on your dialogue with the text, and I need to see both sides of the conversation.

2/14 **Reading due:** *The Red and the Black*, Book II, chapter 21-end. Bring in some ideas for your upcoming essay (1500 words).

   **Recommended:** Begin reading some of the critical essays at the back of the book. Read around and see who interests you, then read those essays.
2/19  Last words on *The Red and the Black*. **Reading due:** Please read the material on NYU Classes on realism and the essays on James Joyce.

2/21  Introduction to Joyce

**Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 1 (Telemachus); readings on NYU Classes

**Writing due:** Essay #1 (Please see format requirements above)

What do you notice about Stephen? about his relationship w/ Buck Mulligan? about the text's language?

2/26  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 2 (Nestor)

Bring in passages to discuss.

2/28  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 3 (Proteus)

**Writing due:** Response #3

3/5  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 4 (Calypso)

3/7  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 5 (Lotus-Eaters)

3/12  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 6 (Hades)

**Writing due:** Response #4: What are you observing about Stephen? Bloom? How are you finding your way around this book? What are you noticing? What’s important? What do you notice about the time sequence of the first six chapters? When are they happening in relation to each other? What images are associated with Bloom?

3/14  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 7 (Aeolus)

Think about the many styles in this windblown chapter. What do you make of them?

3/19 & 3/21  **NO CLASS (Spring Break)** This is a good chance to read ahead, ideally through chapter 11, and further, if you can, so that the next stretch will be a rereading rather than a first reading. Things start to go haywire, as you will see, in chapter 10 and beyond.

3/26  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 8 (Laestrygonians)

What about Bloom’s lunch? Start thinking about your second essay.

3/28  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 9 (Scylla and Charybdis)

Stephen is back. What are the connections between this chapter and others? What’s with Stephen and Shakespeare? What happens to Stephen in the library? What do you notice about the relationship between his internal monologue and the implied external events? **Bring in** ideas for your second essay.

4/2  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 10 (Wandering Rocks)

What does Wandering Rocks tell you? What do you notice? **Bring in** ideas for your second essay.

4/4  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 11 (Sirens)

What is happening to Bloom in this chapter? to language? What is happening in Sirens, both linguistically and dramatically?
4/9  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 12 (Cyclops)
**Writing due:** Essay #2 (1500 words or so). This is not an essay of conclusions, but of reflections discussing some ideas that you’ve been thinking about and particular aspects of the text. I’m not looking for a grand synopsis.

4/11  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 13 (Nausicaa)

It would be a good idea to read both chapter 14 and chapter 15 this weekend. Chapter 15 is long, and intense and amazing. Take a deep breath and start it now if you have not read it already.

4/16  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 14 (Oxen of the Sun)
Think about: What is being born here?
**Writing due:** Response #5

4/18  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 15 (Circe)
This is sort of a trip to the underground. What do you think is going on? What do you think is funny? What do you think the significance of these events is for Bloom and Stephen?

4/23  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 16 (Eumaeus)
What is happening to Bloom and Stephen here?

4/25  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 17 (Ithaca)
Why do you think this chapter is presented like this?

4/30  **Reading due:** *Ulysses*, chapter 18 (Penelope)
**Writing due:** Response #6 and ideas for final essay.

5/2  *Ulysses*, Concluding discussion
Reading due: TBD

5/7  Reading due: TBD

5/9  Last class--Concluding conversations, Narrativefest and student readings
Reading due: TBD

5/13  Essay #3 due (2000 words)