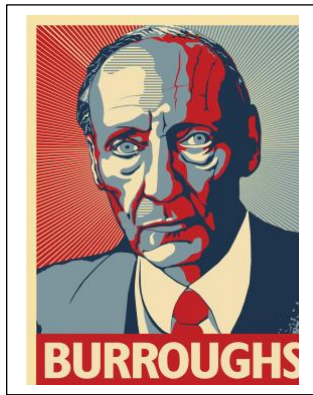


# **BEATitude** Literature of the Beat Generation

ENGLISH 5355.061 / Spring 2020 (online)

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"Artists . . . are the real architects of change, and not political legislators who implement change after the fact."

- William Burroughs

"The point of Beat is that you get beat down to a certain nakedness where you actually are able to see the world in a visionary way."

- Allen Ginsberg

"We are now contending technicians in what may well be a little American Renaissance of our own and perhaps a pioneer beginning for the Golden Age of American Writings."

- Jack Kerouac

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS**

Welcome! During the 1950s a group of experimental American writers living in New York City (and later San Francisco) began to publish literary works depicting an underground of alienated restless characters who celebrated freedom of expression, wanderlust, and the search for euphoria of body and mind in stream-of-consciousness narration. This Beat literary 'school' would expand into a cultural movement that was predecessor to the counter-culture hippies of the Sixties and punks of the Seventies, not to mention the developing civil and equal rights movements, among others. Largely perceived as a 'fraternity' of male voices, the Beat movement did include many women writers and participants whose involvement was not fully documented until the women's movement introduced revisionist histories.

In this course, we will read broadly as well as deeply in order to acquaint ourselves with the many Beat writers, their styles and influences. In the process we will analyze multiple literary genres: fiction, poetry, nonfiction, memoir, as well as academic criticism and film. We will examine cultural conformity and resistance; literary community formation; experimental writing strategies; sex and gender division; transformative modes of consciousness and alternative spiritualities; emergent environmental awareness; and challenges to mainstream publishing and censorship.

Throughout the semester, we will look for the legacies of the Beats in our own time. We will deliberate why Beat literature remains popular, as evidenced in recent literary criticism (for example, Jimmy Fazzino's *World Beats: Beat Generation Writing and the Worlding of U.S. Literature*, 2016; Bill Morgan's *The Typewriter Is Holy: The*

*Complete, Uncensored History of the Beat Generation*, 2011; John Leland's *Why Kerouac Matters: The Lessons of On the Road*, 2007) as well as the current spate of film depictions (*Howl*, 2010; *On the Road*, 2012; *Big Sur*, 2013; *Kill Your Darlings*, 2013).

### **Course Goals & Learning Objectives**

The course has six primary goals for its students: 1) Gain familiarity with experimental American literature written during the post-1945 period through the 1960s in terms of genres, authors, styles, and concerns; 2) Understand differences and draw connections between different historical periods and cultural communities that are represented in American literature; 3) Advance skills in critical thinking based on textual analysis; 4) Improve ability to effectively communicate ideas in discussion and in writing; 5) Heighten awareness and practice of personal and learning community responsibility as borne out in meeting deadlines and working to highest academic standards; 6) Enhance ability to work collaboratively to gain and apply cross-cultural knowledge and skills for academic and professional development.

These outcomes will be demonstrated through online discussions, discussion leadership, writing assignments, analytical arguments, essays, and creative writing, all aimed to elicit objective analysis and substantive discursive and written responses.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Charters, Ann. *The Portable Beat Reader* (Penguin Classics, 2003)
- Kerouac, Jack. *On the Road: The Original Scroll* (Penguin Classics, 2008)
- Knight, Brenda, ed. *Women of the Beat Generation*, 2nd ed. (Conari Press, 1998)
- Johnson, Joyce. *Minor Characters: A Beat Memoir* (Penguin Books, 1999)

*Recommended:* Hayot, Eric. *The Elements of Academic Style: Writing for the Humanities* (Columbia University Press, 2014)

### **DIGITAL ARCHIVES & RESOURCES**

#### **The Beat Generation Video Archive:**

[http://www.poetspath.com/exhibits/video\\_exhibit.htm](http://www.poetspath.com/exhibits/video_exhibit.htm)

#### **The Beat Generation: Audio and Video Materials in the UC Berkeley Libraries:**

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/BeatGen.html>

**City Lights Bookstore, San Francisco:** <http://www.citylights.com/>

**PennSound Poetry Archive:** <http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/>

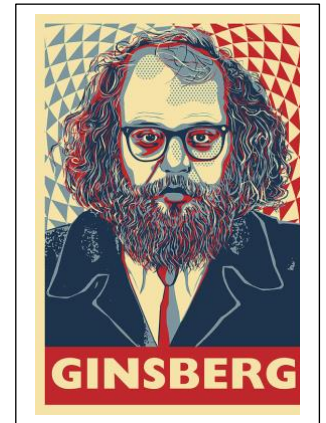
**UbuWeb:** <http://ubu.com>

#### **Kanopy.com**

This streaming service has over 30,000 award-winning films and documentaries. Public library patrons, university students and faculty are able to watch free-of-charge with their institution's library card. While the UTT Robert R. Muntz Library does not have a subscription, I was able to create an account with my Tyler Public Library card. Excellent international, indie, and Great Courses archive! There are a number of educational programming related to our topic.

#### **<https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/category/all>**

Search the University of Pennsylvania Call-For-Papers site to see current conversations that feature conferences and panels relevant to our field of study. If you are interested in submitting a conference proposal, I am happy to work with you.



## **POLICIES & PROTOCOLS**

**COMMUNICATION POLICY:** Emails will be answered within 24 hours during the school week and occur between 9am and 8pm. Feedback on written assignments will be within 2 weeks of submission. Please note: I teach on a Tuesday through Thursday schedule (both day and evening classes) this term.

**DISCUSSION FORUM POLICY:** Prompts, questions, and responses on the discussion board are to enable students to brainstorm about the readings and assignments. The postings on the discussion board must be focused on the assigned topic. All technical problems associated with Canvas, the Internet, or library databases, including passwords and user IDs, should be directed to the respective departments. The course instructor cannot answer technical questions.

**COMMUNICATION & COLLEAGIALITY:** We are all responsible for creating a seminar that is both intellectually rigorous and respectful. We commit to doing so in a way that values diverse perspectives and experiences and encourages productive reflection and interaction. Above all, be respectful (even when you strongly disagree) and be conscious of the ways that our identities position us in the classroom.

All postings on the discussion board must meet academic and professional standards. Abuses in the forms of bullying and/or discriminatory comments on gender, sex, race, or ethnicity are not allowed and will be reported if the instructor's intervention does not see immediate changes in behavior.

**HOMEWORK & PAPER FORMAT:** All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced, use normal margins and readable font. Paper headings should include your name, date, course title, and professor's name. Each page should include page number and your last name. Use MLA documentation to cite sources and include a Works Cited page.

**DUE DATE POLICY:** Assignments must be submitted through Canvas on or before the due date. Work turned in late without a compelling reason will be lowered one-third of a grade per day.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### *Discussions & Reports*

◀ **DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP:** Across the semester, each student will be responsible for initiating weekly discussions of the assigned readings through the posting of prompts and claims. I've made initial assignments; please let me know if you have a conflict with that date.

**DISCUSSANT'S POST:** Prepare a 200+-word introductory statement summarizing, synthesizing, correlating the creative and/or critical works, together with questions and/or prompts for the class to respond to. It is often effective to offer the class a passage or two to dissect in a close reading. Feel free to make connections across our critical and literary readings to that point.

**CLASS RESPONSE:** Each class member is responsible for a response to each discussant's posting, which should be 100+ words in length. Once you've posted for the week, feel free to respond more briefly to colleagues' comments.

◀ **HISTORICAL-CULTURAL CONTEXTS MINI-REPORTS:** For this assignment, I will pair you with a colleague to research and present a brief report on cultural-historical movements, events, and landmark decisions relevant to our study. Please see assignment description on Canvas with report dates and pairings.

### *Analytical & Creative Writing*

◀ **PROSPECTUS // Research Paper Design:** There will be 3 “prospectus” assignments for which students will map out an abstract for a literary-critical paper, to include a fully articulated thesis argument paragraph followed by a set of supporting passages (both creative and critical texts) and a rationale statement for how these would be used to support the thesis. You are free to choose your own topic of analysis as you explore more deeply works under review during the period of the semester leading up to the due date. **Word count should be a minimum of 500+ words and no more than 1200, including the bibliography.** *More information is posted under Assignments.*

◀ **FINAL RESEARCH PAPER:** In the end-of-term project, expand upon and/or revise one of the prospectus assignments already submitted or design a new paper topic that explores a complex set of propositions that constellate creative and critical texts into significant conversations. The paper should include a minimum of three outside scholarly sources. Use MLA documentation to cite sources and include a Works Cited page. Your essay must be typed and formatted according to the “Homework & Paper Format” description below.

Seminar paper abstracts will be posted in the final week of the semester in a mini-conference format. *If a final paper is not submitted, the student will fail the course.*

*More information will be posted soon.*

◀ **CREATIVE VARIATION & EXPLICATION** (See full description of this project under Assignments.)

**PART I:** To test your engagement with this literary movement, you will write an original **creative work** inspired by Beat authors. **This effort will not be letter-graded.**

**PART II:** In an attached **explication (600+ words)**, explain the premises for your creative work and discuss the ways in which you engage the Beat ethos. **This explication will be graded.**

## **DUE DATES**

The **DISCUSSANT'S PROMPTS** and the **HISTORY REPORTS** will be posted by midnight **MONDAY**, with discussion follow-up posts due by **SATURDAY** at midnight.

**PROSPECTUS** and **CREATIVE VARIATION** assignments will be due by that **SATURDAY** deadline.

## **GRADES & FINAL EVALUATION**

Final course grades will be based on the weighted average grades based on the following percentages. The final grade will include my assessment of your overall contribution and progress in the class. Feel free to communicate with me at any time about your grades.

Discussion Leadership & Posted Responses	30%
Historical Context Report	10%
Prospecti (3)	30%
Creative Variation	10%
Final Paper	20%

## **PAPER GRADING STANDARDS**

**Excellent (A)** papers have clear theses and soundly organized arguments that reflect detailed, nuanced understanding of the text. They are precisely and concisely written and have few if any mechanical problems—even minor ones. They weave quotations into their arguments smoothly and forcefully. A vital, graceful voice animates such essays; they say something compelling in a compelling way.

**Good** (B) papers have clear theses and are thoughtfully and reasonably organized. They may be marred by a few infelicities (inappropriateness) of style, but they will have no major mechanical problems—and not many minor ones either. These are solid, disciplined papers that make a definite point in a logical, coherent manner to a definite audience.

**Satisfactory** (C) papers have a thesis supported by evidence. The writing is clean and properly proofed, but not always compelling; it may be marred by some minor mechanical problems and one or two major ones (like fragments or run-ons). While their arguments may not be particularly cogent, these papers do say something interesting, and they say it in a comprehensible and responsible way.

**Poor** (D) papers, while giving evidence of effort on the part of the writer, lack a thesis, have major mechanical problems, poor organization, betray serious misreadings of the text, and show little sense of subject or audience.

**Failing** (F) papers have weaknesses even graver than those indicated for poor papers. They usually betray a lack of effort on the part of the writer. Any evidence of plagiarism (intentional or otherwise) will result in a failing grade—and referral to the Academic Conduct Committee.



## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

**UT Tyler Honor Code:** Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

**Students Rights and Responsibilities:** To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:  
<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

**Student Standards of Academic Conduct:** Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. “CHEATING” includes, but is not limited to: copying from another student’s test paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test; possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test; using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority; discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination; divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student; substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment; paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program; falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit; taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially. “PLAGIARISM” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit. “COLLUSION” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

### Relevant UT Tyler Resources for Students

UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)

UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)

UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

**Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:** Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise



grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date.)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment.
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid.

**State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:** Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

**Disability/Accessibility Services:** In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Tyler at Texas offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible a diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the **New Student** application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

**Student Absence due to Religious Observance:** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

**Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:** If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**Social Security and FERPA Statement:** It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation:** Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

**UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:** All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free).

**Campus-Carry:** “We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed

weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.”