

## HONR-LA 1302: Money Talk(s)

Professor: Dr. Barbara Chiarello  
Day/Time: TTh 11-12:20  
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Office Hours: T 3:00 – 4:00  
and by appt.

note: The latest that I usually check my email and cell phone for messages is 4 p.m.

### **Texts**

The Surrounded by D'Arcy McNickle; U of New Mexico Press [SUR]

Linden Hills by Gloria Naylor; Penguin [LH]

China Men by Maxine Hong Kingston; Vintage [CM]

The Assistant by Bernard Malamud; Farrar, Straus and Giroux [TA]

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros; Vintage [HM]

Course packet at the UTA Bookstore [P]

### **Course Description**

This course is not an introduction to, or a survey of, American literature. Rather it demonstrates the various ways texts reflect, reinforce and/or challenge societal values especially in terms of economic class. Since class issues are embedded in those of race, culture, gender and religion, a focus on the former necessitates examining them all. Our readings, writings and discussions will look at how literature problematizes institutionalized policies of income distribution by studying their effects on those marginalized by the dominant society including American Indians, immigrants, Jewish Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans and poor whites. Outside readings will contextualize these works historically and situate them within ongoing theoretical debates. Obviously, no one approach can adequately depict the complex conversation between the mainstream and the marginalized; therefore, we will apply various approaches to analyzing literature including those that focus solely on the text as well as those that demand alternative ways of seeing. By the end of the semester, students should be comfortable applying several cultural theories and critical strategies to a wide range of material.

### **Course Goals**

The course is designed to offer students the opportunity to develop a variety of skills. Reading notes and quizzes ask students to read, write and think critically. Exams encourage close readings and in-depth analyses. The mini-response papers ask students to support their original interpretations with evidence from the text itself and the longer final paper requires students to apply cultural theories to literary works. Class discussions, group work and oral presentations help students teach, as well as learn from, each other.

### **Course Policies**

#### **Attendance**

Since this course is structured around class discussions that require students to carefully analyze the assigned readings, attendance is very important. Everyone has three excused absences, which means that you **needn't tell me why** you miss three classes. *Each absence after three will lower your course grade five points.* If you miss six class periods or more, you will probably fail the course. Given that illness and family emergencies are unpredictable, it would be wise not to use up all three excused absences in the beginning of the semester.

## **Lateness**

Since lateness is a distraction both to me and the rest of the class, I close the door once class has begun, which may be exactly at 9:30. Students may only enter the classroom if I open the door again after general announcements or a student presentation. If you cannot come on time, you will be counted late; for every three times that you are late, you will be counted absent. It is your responsibility to see me after class to sign the roll. If there is a structural reason for your lateness, e.g.; you have to walk across campus in 10 minutes, please see me immediately.

## **Late assignments**

I do not accept late reading notes or mini-responses. I will deduct 10 points for everyday the final paper is late. If you are absent, you are expected to turn in the work on time. All assignments are due at the beginning of class even if they are emailed. If you cannot come to class and are having someone put your work in my mailbox, please ask an English department secretary to note the time on your assignment.

## **Special Arrangements**

If there are conditions which may affect your performance in this class, and which require special accommodations, please make an appointment to see me **as soon as possible** so that such arrangements can be made.

If you require an accommodation based on a disability, I would like to meet with you in the privacy of my office the first week of the semester to be sure that you are appropriately accommodated.

## **Student Success Programs**

The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. They include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate references.

## **The Writing Center**

The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, offers tutoring for any writing you are assigned while a student at UT-Arlington. During Fall 2009, Writing Center hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday; and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. You may schedule appointments online by following directions available at [www.uta.edu/owl/appointments](http://www.uta.edu/owl/appointments), by calling 817 272-2601, or by visiting the Writing Center. If you come to the Writing Center without an appointment, you will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis as tutors become available. Writing Center tutors are carefully chosen and trained, and they can assist you with any aspect of your writing, from understanding an assignment to revising an early draft to polishing a final draft. However, the Writing Center is not an editing service; tutors will not correct your grammar or rewrite your assignment for you, but they will help you become a better editor of your own writing. I encourage each of you to use the Writing Center.

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at any university. If I suspect you have presented someone else's work as your own, I will report you to the Vice President of Student Affairs for disciplinary action, in which case you will be given an incomplete for the course until your case is resolved. Forms of academic dishonesty include: **Collusion**—lending your work to another person to submit as his or her own; **Fabrication**—deliberately creating false information on a Works Cited page; and **Plagiarism**—the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether you mean to or not. Even if you put someone's ideas into your own words, you must properly credit the source.

## Drop Policy

If you withdraw from the course you must follow university procedures. It is your responsibility to execute these procedures correctly and within the deadlines. I suggest that you keep track of your grades in the spaces provided in this syllabus under **grade breakdown**.

## Necessary Changes

I have tried to make this document as complete as I possibly could. However, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies and assignments. I reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary.

## Student Responsibility

I will abide by the policies in this syllabus. I hold each student responsible for reading and understanding this document. I will be glad to clarify any sections that you do not understand. At the beginning of the second week of school, I will ask you to sign a document saying you have read and understood the syllabus. Please ask me any questions you have before that date. If you have any questions during the course of the semester -- if something needs to be clarified -- it is your responsibility to address any such concerns **as soon as possible** via email, phone or conference.

## Bomb Threats

If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellations of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternative sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

## Grade Breakdown

I.	PREPARATION FOR PAPERS	
	A. Reading Notes	15%
	B. Quizzes	15%
	C. In-class writing	15% (the first one is worth 5%; the second 10%)
II.	PAPERS	
	A. Mini- Response Papers	20% (the first one is worth 8%; the second 12%)
	B. Abstract, Prospectus, and Final Paper	20%
III.	CLASS CONTRIBUTIONS	
	A. Presentations	10% (one during the semester; one of your paper)
	B. Participation	5%

Satisfactory completion of **every** assignment is required to pass the class since each category evaluates a different skill. **Students who fail more than two letter-numbered sections will fail the course.**

## Quizzes and Exams

Announced reading quizzes will encourage you to keep up with the reading and thus have pertinent comments to add to class discussion. In-class essays will allow you to demonstrate how well you are integrating the reading material and class discussions.

## Participation

Your participation grade depends on the quality of your contributions to class discussions.

## Graded Papers

**It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all your graded papers** until after you receive your final grades from the university.

## Writing Assignments

### Reading notes

So that you do not let the reading material simply pass in one eye and out the other, I am asking you to do brief **typed** reading notes throughout the semester. (**I will only accept typed notes after class.**) These will help you prepare for the papers and exams as well as the class discussions. Be ready to agree or *disagree* during group discussions. I want you to share *your* knowledge with the class. Sometimes I will ask you to read these aloud. ***I do not accept late reading notes.***

I. Respond to the following for a reading note on the **literature**:

- 1) Is there a scene or particular passage you would like to discuss? (Please indicate page numbers.)
- 2) Why?
- 3) How does this passage relate to the reading assignment as a whole, including the entire portion of the novel and the historical and/or theoretical material in the packet? a previous assignment?
- 4) Does it relate to some aspect of economic class? If so, how?
- 5) Relate the assigned work to a specific aspect of pop culture and/or a current event. Be specific. Refer to a specific quote from a song lyric, newspaper or news magazine, etc.
- 6) Conclude your note with one discussion-provoking question; i.e., a question that has more than one answer.

II. Respond to the following for a reading note on the **non-fiction essays**:

- 1) What are the article's main points? List up to three. Be complete and thorough.
- 2) Do you agree or disagree? Why? (It is important to state your opinion of a theoretical work.)
- 3) Apply it to the assigned literary work by referring directly to a passage in the essay and in the literature due for that day. If possible, choose a connection that relates to some aspect of economic class.
- 4) Relate the assigned work to an aspect of pop culture and/or a current event and/or a previous assignment. Refer to a specific quote from a song lyric, newspaper or news magazine, etc.
- 5) Conclude your note with one discussion-provoking question; i.e., a question that has more than one answer.

### Mini-Response Papers

In these short papers, you will discuss your own **significant** interpretation of the text in terms of a theoretical position that you have either read or heard presented in class. (See the assignments for each under **Course Schedule**.) You must support it with at least three examples from the reading. Then bold your claim and support and identify the type of critical strategy you have used. The first one is worth 8%; the second, 12%.

## Final paper

This paper will be longer, but similar to the mini-responses. Again, it must go beyond class discussion by presenting a unique application of theory to one of the novels by examining issue(s) related to economic class. It will be seven to eight pages long, must have margins no larger than 1.25 inches and use standard 12 point font such as Times New Roman. It must also include a Works Cited page that satisfies MLA guidelines. I recommend having a working thesis – your own significant interpretation – before finding outside sources to support your argument. Make sure this paper is **not a summary. Do not rehash what was said in class.**

Even excellent insights may never be understood if they are buried beneath unintelligible words, phrases and sentences. Therefore, your final grade will take into account organization, use of transitions and mechanical skills such as grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Since page-length requirements demand a certain thoroughness, in addition to deducting 10 points for every day a paper is late, I will also take off 10 points each for short papers, improper fonts and margins that are too large. *I may ask you to go to the Writing Center where you will get advice in revising your paper before you write your final draft. In that case, papers that are not turned in with documentation from the Writing Center, showing that you have had a tutoring session, will be given a zero and you will fail the course.*

**Presentation** Please respond to the following questions during your 5-10 minute presentation. *You must turn in your typed presentation notes to receive a grade.*

**Note:** Include a brief biographical sketch of the author for both fiction and non-fiction if you are the first to present on a work by that author. Do not simply present exactly what you have obtained from one website. Instead, try to find information about the author that relates to the work assigned. (Be sure to cite your source(s) and indicate direct quotes with quotations marks). You may not use Wikipedia.

- Fiction:**
- 1) How does the text state and/or resist oppressive doctrines expressed through economic class? Refer directly to the text. You may use direct quotes or paraphrase.
  - 2) How are class issues embedded in those of race, religion, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and culture? Please specifically address two. Refer directly to the text. You may use direct quotes or paraphrase.
  - 3) Apply the text to an element of pop culture; i.e. movie, advertisement, TV show, song, etc. In other words, what is the **specific** connection between how economic class functions in both the text and in contemporary American pop culture? Be creative!!!
  - 4) Can the text be applied to current events? If so, how? Use a specific quote from the text and the news article.
  - 5) Add your own significant interpretation of the text and support it with at least three examples from the reading. Identify the type of critical strategy you have used.
  - 6) Conclude your presentation with two discussion-provoking questions.

- Non-fiction:**
- 1) Briefly state the article's **main** points.
  - 2) How does the article support two of its major assertions about an issue relating to economic class? Present three supports, if possible.
  - 3) Indicate those points that surprised you, as well as those that you strongly agree or disagree with. Explain. (It is important to state your opinion of a theoretical work.)
  - 4) Apply the reading to the literature assigned for that day. Cite specific passages in both that illustrate the connection.
  - 5) How does this article relate to another work of literature or article in the packet? Cite specific passages in both that illustrate the connection.
  - 6) Conclude your presentation with two discussion-provoking questions.

## Course Schedule

Please note:

- 1) [P] stands for packet.
- 2) The homework is **given** on the day it is assigned. It is **due** the next class period.
- 3) Reading notes and mini-response papers must be **typed** and are only accepted by the end of class on the day that they are due.

### Introduction

Week One. Aug 25 & 27

**T:** Course introductions; read Freire in class.

**HW:** READ: “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin [P]; “Critical Strategies for Reading [P]; “Omelas” by Ursula LeGuin [P]

WRITE: List the strategies and summarize each in a sentence.

THINK: How might “Omelas” apply to this class? How might the critical strategies be applied to “Omelas”?

**Th:** discuss readings

**HW:** READ: The Surrounded [SUR] 1-89; “The U.S. Legacy” [P]

WRITE: reading note and address the following in a paragraph or two: How have you seen, participated in or experienced (economic) class distinctions/discrimination? You might want to analyze an advertisement in terms of class.

### The Systems That Surround Us

Week Two. Sept 1 & 3

**T:** What is an oppressive ideology given that ideologies may be defined as “worldviews that express the values and opinions of those who hold them”? ( Signs of Life, 7). What is resistance literature?

**HW:** READ: SUR 90-142; Bronfenbrenner [P]

STUDY: for quiz

**Th:** introduce Bronfenbrenner

**HW:** READ: SUR 143-230; “A Matrix of Oppression;” “Crisis in Indian Affairs” [P]

WRITE: reading note

Week Three. Sept 8 & 10

**T:** **HW:** READ: SUR 231-297; afterward

STUDY: for quiz

**W:** Sept 9; Census Date (No grade is posted if a student drops before 5 p.m.)

### A Way Out?

**Th:** **HW:** READ: LH –94; “Patriarchy the System” [P]

WRITE: reading note

Week Four. Sept 15 & 17

**T:** **HW:** READ: LH 97-141; introduction to “Black Wealth/White Wealth;” “All Falls Down” [P]

STUDY: for quiz

**Th:** **HW:** READ: LH 145-231; “The Class Analysis of Poverty;” [P]

WRITE: reading note

Week Five. Sept 22 & 24

**T: HW:** READ: LH 232-end; “The Talented Tenth;” “Social Gospel” [P]  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** WRITE: mini-response # 1  
PREPARE FOR: in-class essay # 1

### **The Other as Cheap Labor**

Week Six. Sept 29 & Oct 1

**T: HW:** READ: CM: 1-23; genealogy chart; cartoon; “They’ Are All the Same . . .” [P]  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** READ: CM 24-81; “The Chinese Called It Pai Hua” [P]  
WRITE: reading note

Week Seven. Oct 6 & 8

**T: HW:** READ: CM: 85-162; “Overturning Economic Oppression;” [P]  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** READ: CM 163-233; “Mimicry, Ambivalence and Hybridity” [P]  
WRITE: reading note

Week Eight. Oct 13 & 15

**T: HW:** READ: CM 237-end  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** READ: TA 3-93; Irish Peace Society: “Social Stratification . . .”  
WRITE: reading note

### **“Whining Victimhood” or The Inequitable Distribution of Resources?**

Week Nine. Oct 20 & 22

**T: HW:** READ: TA 93-129  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** READ: TA 130-182; “Ebenezer Was Right;” “interpersonal relationships” [P]  
WRITE: reading note

Week Ten. Oct 27 & 29

**T: HW:** READ: TA 182-end  
STUDY: for quiz

**Th: HW:** PREPARE for in-class essay # 2  
WRITE: mini-response # 2  
prospectus for final paper

**Fri:** Last Day to Drop

Week Eleven. Nov 3 & 5

**T:** in-class essay

**HW:** READ: White Metropolis prologue and Chap 7 [P]

**Th: HW:** WRITE: abstract for final paper  
speaker

Week Twelve. Nov 10 & 12

**T:** speaker; poems; or film

**HW:** READ: HM 1-42

STUDY: for quiz

WRITE: begin final paper

**Th:** **HW:** READ: HM 43-end

WRITE: reading note; continue to work on final paper

Week Thirteen. Nov 17 & 19

**T:** WRITE: final paper

**Th:** poems and/or film

**FINAL PAPER DUE**

Week Fourteen. Nov 24 & 26

**T:** poems and/or film

**Th:** **THANKSGIVING**

prepare presentations

Week Fifteen. Dec 1 & 3

**T:** present papers

**Th:** present papers