

English 2329 Section 006: American Literature
University of Texas at Arlington
Fall Semester 2009

Instructor: Bethany K. Shaffer
E-mail: bshaffer@uta.edu
Classroom: Preston Hall 206
Office: 211 Carlisle Hall
Office Hours: MW from 2:20-3:50

“Literature has a double life. Born in one time and place and read in another, literary works are at once products of their age and independent creations, able to live on long after their original world has disappeared” -Preface to Longman Anthology

Required Texts/Items:

- ❖ The Bedford Anthology of American Literature Volume Two: 1856 to the Present
- ❖ Writing about Literature: A Portable Guide
- ❖ College-ruled paper, writing utensils, and access to a computer.

Purpose:

This course is designed to introduce you to the wonderful world of American Literature. We will study a variety of time periods and writing styles. You will learn how to analyze literary works using proper literary techniques. Class lectures and discussions will focus on ways of understanding and interpreting the works and on locating them in their historical, cultural, and intellectual milieus. Also, one major essay will demonstrate your ability to discuss a text in an academic format.

Objectives of the Course:

- 1) You should be able to actively engage with the text.
- 2) Learn various techniques to analyze literary works.
- 3) Be able to make connections from one work to another.
- 4) Practice critical reading, writing, and thinking.

Requirements:

READING –As this is a literature based course, doing the assigned reading is essential to both understanding the material and passing the course.

PRESENTATION- Each student will be responsible for one (1) presentation a selected novel. This presentation will be done with roughly three (3) to four (4) group members. The presentation should last 20 minutes. A separate handout will explain further details.

ESSAY –You will write one major essay for this course. It must be at least five (5) pages in length. Specifics about the essay assignment will come later in the semester. *****Note**: The essay must be typed in 12pt font, Times New Roman, MLA headings, and 1” margins. Failure to comply with these specifications will result in a failure. A separate handout will explain further details.

REACTION PAPERS –You will write five (5) brief, one page reaction papers throughout the course of the semester. The goal of these papers is to ensure that you are doing the assigned reading for the course. Basically, I am asking you to talk about the things you read for class. Discuss what you liked or disliked and why. Also, highlight any passages or themes you find interesting. Each reaction paper is worth 20 points.

TESTS- There will be two (2) major exams in this class. One will come at the midway point in the semester and one will come on the final day of class. These examinations will amount for half of your entire grade.

QUIZZES FOR BONUS- Several times over the course of the semester you will be given the opportunity to take a quiz for bonus points. Quizzes will range from three to five points. Students may earn up to fifteen bonus points from quizzes. Note: quizzes cannot be made up and no partial credit will be given.

Course Policies:

PARTICIPATION –You are expected to participate in all aspects of the course. Participation includes: completing all reading and writing assignments on time, talking in and being attentive to class discussion, reflecting on assigned readings, respecting others’ opinions and their right to express them, and cooperating and collaborating with your peers. 100 points (10% of your overall grade) comes from proper participation.

ATTENDANCE – Come to class. Your presence in class is important to the success of the class as a whole. Attending class will only help you sharpen your reading skills which will, therefore, help you become a better scholar. You may miss three classes without impunity. **Each class missed after three will result in the lowering of your grade by five percentage points.** Note: I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Choose carefully.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS –The syllabus clearly states when each and every assignment is due. Thus, if you do not turn in your assignments on the day they are due, they will not be given any credit. Should you need to make special arrangements concerning assignments, please see me. Please note that there will be no make-up opportunities for the entry paragraphs. If you miss that class, you miss the points. **Note: I will not accept e-mailed papers.**

CELL PHONES –Please turn off your cell phones before class begins. I will not accept frivolous interruptions. This also includes text messages.

Grading Policies: There are 1000 possible points for this course.

SCALE: 900-1000 = A
800-899 = B
700-799 = C
600-699 = D
0-500 = F

Assignments:

- ❖ 5 reaction papers (20 points each) = 100 points
- ❖ Presentation = 100 points
- ❖ Essay = 200 points

- ❖ Exam One = 200 points
- ❖ Final exam = 300 points
- ❖ Participation = 100 points

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.

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.

Disruptive Student Conduct- According to Student Conduct and Discipline, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks. (UTA Handbook or Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202).

Library: You will find online databases for English among the Arts & Humanities databases at <http://www2.uta.edu/library/subguides/dbEnglish.asp>

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.

Necessary Changes

I have tried to make this document as complete and thorough 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.

Special Note- It would be wise to take notes on each class period because anything we discuss in class is valid for exams. **Readings and assignments are due on the dates listed, not the class after.** All readings, unless otherwise noted, come from the Bedford Anthology.

Course Schedule for American Literature since

Week	Date	Assignment
1	8/24	Course introduction. What exactly is American Literature? Why are we studying it after 1865? Pass out novel list.
1	8/26	Antebellum America: Be sure to have a notebook and a pen for class today. Create Novel Groups Due: Top Three Novels
2	8/31	Realism, Regionalism, and Naturalism Mark Twain Read: 31-39 and 61-70 Read: 1-13 in <u>Writing about Lit.</u>
2	9/2	Henry James Read: 130-173
3	9/7	No class! Labor Day ☺
3	9/9	Jewett, Freeman, and Chopin Read: 193-228 Due: Response Paper #1
4	9/14	No official class meeting today! Meet with groups to discuss first half of the novel and fill out character sheet as a group.
4	9/16	Gillman, Cather and London Read: 251-266 and 378-396 Read: 14-37 in <u>Writing about Literature</u>
5	9/21	Crane Read: 334-354
5	9/23	Non-Fiction Hopkins, Zitkala-Sa, Washington and Du Bois Read: 412-470 Due: Response Paper #2
6	9/28	The 20 th Century Modernism Read: 499-537
6	9/30 9/30	Novel must be finished by today. Due: Process sheets 1 and 2 Read: 102-133 in <u>Writing about Literature</u> Review Day for Mid-Term Examination
7	10/5	Mid-Term Examination
7	10/7	Finding outside sources-Library Guide Poetry/ Writing about Poetry Frost

		Read: any two poems by Frost that are in the text. (581-594)
8	10/12	Stevens and Williams Read: any two poems from Stevens or Williams. (605-618 and 626-640).
8	10/14	Peer Review Day- please bring three copies of a three page draft to class with you today.
9	10/19	Work day. No official class meeting. E-conferences available
9	10/21	Langston Hughes Read: “The Negro Speak of Rivers” “Cross” and “Harlem” (752-756, 759, and 765) **Due: Major Paper**
10	10/26	World Wars and The Great Depression: How it affects literature of the time. Read: 819-827
10	10/28	Hurston and Toomer Read: 880-891 and 905-914
11	11/2	The wars are over, so what do we do now? Modernism to Postmodernism Read: 1037-1078
11	11/4	Ellison and O’Connor Read: 1134-1147 and 1301-1314
12	11/9	Plath and Walker Read: 1380-1390 and 1448-1457
12	11/11	Updike and DeLillo Read: 1390-1397 and 1421-1427
13	11/16	Cisneros and Alexie Read: 1492-1496 and 1502-1520
13	11/18	O’Brien Read: 1457-1471 Due: Response Paper #5
14	11/23	Student Presentations (Groups A, B, and C)
14	11/25	Student Presentations (Groups D and E) Review for Final Exam
15	11/30	Student Presentations (Groups F and G)
15	12/2	**Final Exam**

Additionally, do not bother coming to class if you do not bring the required reading materials. You are not welcome in my classroom if you cannot, at the very least, follow along in the book.