English 3340.002: American Literature

Professor: Dr. Barbara Chiarello  
Email: chiarello@uta.edu

Day/Time: MW 5:30-6:50 p.m.  
Office: 419 Carlisle Hall

Room: 207 Preston Hall  
Mailbox: 203 Carlisle Hall

Phone: (817) 272-2692 (English dept)  
Office Hours: M 4:30-5:20;  
(817) 919-3510 (cell phone)  
Th 3:30-4:30 and by appt.

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

Required Texts

The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston [WW]; ISBN 679-72188-6  
... And the Earth Did Not Devour Him transl by Evangelina Vigil-Pinon [TE];  
ISBN 0-934770-72-7

Course packet [P]; available only at Bird's; 208 S. East St.; call at (817) 459-1688 to make sure a copy is waiting for you.

Course Description

One can argue that American literature primarily expresses the dreams and disappointments of those who have moved away from adversity toward the promise of a better life. While this journey might be figurative and not literal, studying traditional (im)migration literature uncovers the striving that seems an essential part of all things American. Therefore, we will examine the conversations between American literatures and American history, values, myths and icons. Questions of identity, assimilation, accommodation, hybridity and resistance – in addition to several critical approaches, including New Historicism, reader-response, feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, mythological, post-colonialism and deconstruction – will elucidate the nuances of these discourses.

This course must go beyond the prototypical immigration myth, which focuses on European immigrants, to include the writings of non-Europeans. We will analyze American Indian and Mexican American texts, which often confront the underside of American expansionism. We will read literary responses to the horrors of African slavery’s Middle Passage and to the hopes and fears of those African-Americans who escaped the Jim Crow South during the Great Migration.

Course Goals

The course is designed to offer students the opportunity to develop a wide 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 paper and the longer final paper require students to apply theoretical articles to literary works. Class discussions, group work and oral presentations help students teach, as well as learn from, each other. By the end of the semester, students should be comfortable applying several critical strategies to any text.

Course Policies

Attendance

I will grade more on actual participation rather than on mere attendance. However, because this course relies heavily on class discussion and because we cover a lot of material each class period, your 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 fail the course. Given that illnesses and family emergencies are unpredictable, make sure to use the three excused absences wisely.

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 5:30 p.m. 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
Reading notes, which must be typed, will be accepted no later than the end of class on the day that they are due. I do not accept late reading notes. Papers handed in after the due date will be penalized a letter grade for each day they are late. If you are absent, you are expected to turn the work in on time. Emailed assignments must meet the same criteria. 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. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

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.

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Student Support Services Available: The University of Texas at Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. These resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals to resources for any reason, students may contact the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107 or visit www.uta.edu/resources for more information.

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at any university. If you have presented someone else’s work as your own, I will report you to the Vice President of Student Affairs for disciplinary action and give you a zero on the assignment. 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 else's ideas into your own words, you must properly credit the source.

Drop Policy
Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (http://wweb.uta.edu/ses/fao).

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.

Student Responsibility
I will abide by the policies in this syllabus. Each student is responsible for reading and understanding this document. I will be glad to clarify any sections a student does not understand. At the beginning of the second week of school, I will ask every student to sign a document saying that the syllabus has been read and understood. Therefore, questions must be asked before that date.
Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at [http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php](http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php).

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory will be asked to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS) about the course and how it was taught. Instructions on how to access the SFS system will be sent directly to students through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback data is required by state law; student participation in the SFS program is voluntary.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Course Requirements

Grade Breakdown

I. PREPARATION FOR PAPERS
   A. Reading Notes 15%
   B. Quizzes 15%
   C. In-class writing 15%

II. PAPERS
   A. Mini-Response Paper 10%
   B. Final Paper 20%

III. CLASS CONTRIBUTIONS
   A. Presentations 20% (one during the semester 15%; one of your paper 5%)
   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.

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

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 not accept notes that are not typed.) 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.
Reading notes (cont.)

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 assigned for that day? a previous assignment?
4) Indicate any portions of the text that are unclear.
5) Conclude your note with one discussion-provoking question – that is, a question that has more than one answer – which pertains to the assigned literature.

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 with each of these points? Why, or why not?
3) Indicate any portions of the text that are unclear.
4) Apply it to the assigned literary work by referring directly to a passage in the essay and in the literature due for that day.
5) Conclude your note with one discussion-provoking question – that is, a question that has more than one answer – which pertains to the assigned essay.

Mini-Response Paper
In this short paper, you will support your own significant interpretation of an assigned literary work in terms of a theoretical position that you have either read or heard presented in class. More detailed instructions will be given closer to the due date.

Final paper
This paper will be longer, but similar to the mini-response. It will examine elucidate the function of (im)migration literature in terms of at least one of the theoretical positions we have studied this semester. 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.

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.

Service Learning Assignment and Reflection Paper
The service learning project for this class is to tutor high school students under the auspices of UTA’s Upward Bound, a federally funded program designed to remove the obstacles some students face as they pursue earning a college degree. After filling out an application form and attending a 30- to 45-minute orientation if selected, you must commit to a one and one-half hour time slot between 3 and 6:30 p.m. once a week – Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Since you will be working with the same student(s), you must be present the same day and time each week.

Instead of turning in a traditional seven to eight page final paper, you must keep a journal of your experiences, especially as they relate to the required texts, which you will turn in along with a three to four page reflection paper that relates your volunteer experience to the material covered in class. (In addition, you will turn in a four to five page final paper that requires you to apply a theoretical text to one of the assigned works of fiction. See above.)
Presentation  Respond to the following questions during your 5-10 minute presentation. Make sure to time your presentation, since I will stop you after 10 minutes. Your grade depends upon the quality of the content, so feel free to choose what presentation style suits you. For example, you may want to sit in your seat, stand in front of the class, give a PowerPoint presentation, or use handouts.

I will grade your typed responses to the questions below, as well as your actual presentation, so be sure to answer them thoroughly.

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 as you would with any assignment to avoid being guilty of plagiarism.

(On the day that you give a presentation, you are not required to turn in a reading note.)

Fiction:
1) How does the text state and or resist oppressive ideologies, (i.e.; cultural assumptions that deny privilege to certain groups)? Specifically address two from the following list: culture, class, race, religion or gender. Refer directly to the text. You may use direct quotes or paraphrase. (30 pts)

2) Apply the text to an element of pop culture; i.e. movie, advertisement, TV show, song, etc. in terms of (im)migration issues, if possible. In other words, what is the specific connection between the text and contemporary American pop culture in relation to the course’s topic? Be creative!!! (10 pts)

3) Indicate any portions of the text that are unclear. (5 pts)

4) How can the text be applied to current events? (Immigration issues are frequently in the news.) Use a specific quote from the text and the news article. (10 pts)

5) Conclude your presentation with two discussion-provoking questions – that is, questions having more than one answer – which pertain to the text. (15 pts)

Non-fiction:
1) Briefly state at least three of the article’s main points. (15 pts)

2) How does the article support two of its major assertions? Present two supports for each claim. (20 pts)

3) Indicate those points that surprised you, as well as those that you strongly agree or disagree with. Explain. (10 pts)

4) Indicate any portions of the text that are unclear. (5 pts)

5) How can the text be applied to current events? (Immigration issues are frequently in the news.) Use a specific quote from the text and the news article. (10 pts)

6) Apply the reading to the literature assigned for that day, if possible. If not, apply it to a previous work of literature. Cite at least two specific passages in both that illustrate the connection. (20 points)

7) Conclude your presentation with two discussion-provoking questions – that is, questions having more than one answer – which pertain to the text. (10 pts)

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.
O Pioneers!

Week One. Aug 29 & 31
M:   **HW:**  READ: 1-69 [GE]; “Pioneers! O Pioneers! [P]
     STUDY for quiz
     UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W:   **HW:**  READ: 70-224 [GE]; “The American West and the Burden of Belief;"
Bronfenbrenner (both selections); "Total Poverty Awareness" [P]
     WRITE: A reading note for reading(s) TBA at the beginning of class.

Also, read the syllabus if you haven’t already. You will be asked to sign a form that you have read and understood its policies in class next Wednesday.

Week Two. Sept 5 & 7
M:   **HW:**  READ: 225-329 [GE]; “Foundations of the American Ethnic Hierarchy” [P]
     WRITE: reading note

W:   **HW:**  READ: 404-531 [GE]; “Floodtide” [P]
     WRITE: reading note

W:   **HW:**  PREPARE for in-class essay

What About Those Already Here?

Week Four: Sept 19 and 21
M:   **HW:**  (Due Sept 26)
Land;” “American Racism;” “Orientalism” (both selections); “North Dakota and N.C.A.A. . . . “ [P]
     WRITE: reading note
     STUDY for quiz
     UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W:   watch a movie
     WRITE: answers to questions about the movie
     REMEMBER to study for quiz

Week Five. Sept 26 & 28
Winds Dancing;” “The Indian’s Awakening;” “Evolution;” “Detour” [P]
     STUDY for quiz
     UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W:   **HW:**  PREPARE for in-class essay

“They’re Coming to America”

Week Six. Oct 3 & 5
M:   **HW:**  in-class essay
Semite and Jew” [P]
     STUDY for quiz
     UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W:   **HW:**  READ: “Patterns in the Making;” “Theories of Assimilation: Part II; The Melting Pot;” “Assimilation in
Folks . . . ” [P]
     WRITE: reading note
Forced Migration

Week Seven. Oct 10 & 12
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

The Great Migration

WRITE: reading note
suggest beginning to write mini-response, which is due next Wednesday
SIGN UP for writing workshop; students who volunteer will email their responses to me before next Wednesday’s class

Week Eight. Oct 17 & 19
M: HW: READ: “Grading” [P]
WRITE: mini-response
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W: DUE: mini-response

The (Un)Making of an American

HW: READ: 1-53 [WW]
WRITE: reading note

Week Nine. Oct 24 & 26
M: HW: READ: 57-109 [WW]
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

WRITE: reading note

Week Ten. Oct 31 & Nov 2
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W: HW: READ: 1-69 [IM]
WRITE: reading note

Friday, Nov 4 is the last day to drop with a “W”

Week Eleven. Nov 7 & 9
M: HW: READ: 70-110 [IM]
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

WRITE: reading note

Week Twelve. Nov 14 & 16
M: HW: READ: 158-198 [IM]; [P]
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings.

W: HW: WRITE: Prospectus for Critical Analysis Paper
Week Thirteen. Nov 21 & 22

**M:** DUE: prospectus for Critical Analysis Paper

**W:** Thanksgiving Break

**Being (Un)wanted**

**HW:** READ: “100 Years in the Back Door, Out the Front;” “Are Chicanos the Same as Mexicans?” [P]
STUDY for quiz
UNDERLINE a sentence or passage to discuss in each of the readings

Week Fourteen. Nov 28 & 30

**M:** WATCH slide show from NY Times article
READ in class: tE

**HW:** ALL PAPERS ARE DUE ON WED, Nov 30, at the BEGINNING OF CLASS; be sure to keep a copy for your presentation, which you will give either on Dec 5th or 7th.

**W:** Final papers due
READ in class: tE; “I Am Joaquin” [P]

**HW:** Prepare for presentations

Week Fifteen. Dec 5 & 7

**M:** Presentations of critical analysis paper

**W:** Conclude presentations