
English 242: American Literature 1865-Present (Section 2, CRN 11219)
Spring Session, 2013- MWF from 12:30-13:20 in Room 306, Armstrong Hall

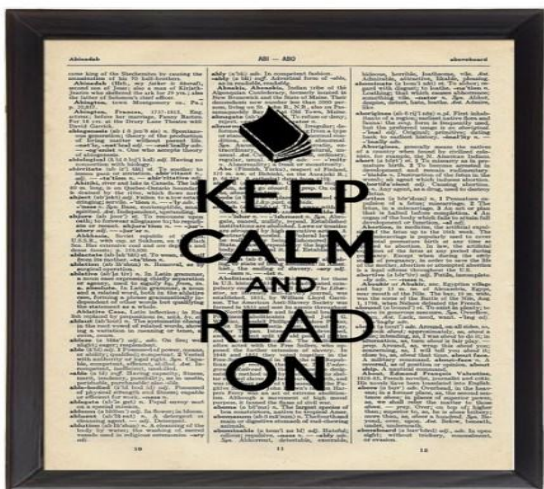
Instructor: Dibyadyuti Roy

Email: droy2@mix.wvu.edu

Phone: 304-293-3107 (Messages Only)

Office: Room 308, Colson Hall/ WVU Writing
Center, G02 Colson Hall

Office Hours: Wed and Friday
(13:30-14:30) and by appointment



Course Description

“It is precisely in times of crises that questions of human dignity, integrity, desire aspiration hope, unity, happiness—but also indignation, conceit, treachery, greed, hopelessness, division, and malaise—come sharply into focus. The global economic crisis presses us to ask these questions... To what end? To understand—in collaboration with students—the place of an individual and collective in the complicated text of the world in which one lives.”

-B.Venkat Mani, *Dreaming in Foreign Tongues*

Arguably, we live in a time of crisis where social progress is being measured increasingly through economic valuations—an outlook that leads to the questioning of educational systems and more

often than not skepticism about the need to study literature and the liberal arts. This course analyzes the American literary tradition from 1865 to the current period in order to understand why reading literature is critical toward cultivating humanist values which foster a sense of community—an enterprise that is often neglected in contemporary living. By looking at a varied range of texts from authors who represent an extraordinary spectrum of temporal, racial, gender and class diversity we will explore how radically opposite manifestations of American identity and selfhood allow us to understand and respect multiplicity. Considering the aim of the class, which is to introduce you to the widest possible range of writers and movements it will often not be possible to read all the works of every assigned author. It is hoped that the interest which you will cultivate in one or multiple authors from this class, will spur you toward further exciting literary excavations, beyond the domain of the classroom.

Course Objectives

In the process of taking this course I hope you will:

- ❖ gain substantial historical background regarding the development of these literary texts and literary movements
- ❖ develop the ability to closely and critically read texts while understanding textual symbols and their significance
- ❖ distinguish between formal terms of literary analysis relating to form, structure and content
- ❖ discover connections between different texts and gain an appreciation of diverse forms of American authorship

GEC Objectives

This course satisfies:

GEC Objective 5: Artistic Expression—apply methods and principles of critical inquiry to the analysis of literary or artistic expression.

GEC Objective 7: American Culture—develop knowledge critical to an understanding of the issues that shape the culture of the United States in all its diversity.

Required Texts

- ❖ *Norton Anthology of American Literature C, D & E* (Eighth Edition)

All texts correspond in page numbers to the three volumes of the *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Additional reading materials will be placed on WVU eCampus. **You are responsible for printing out the additional texts from WVU eCampus and for having the discussed text/s with you in class!**

To access WVU eCampus, go to <https://ecampus.wvu.edu> and log on with your MIX user name and password. If you have problems with logging on, contact the Office of Information Technology (293-4444 x 3 or oithelp@mail.wvu.edu).

Coursework Requirements:

This is a reading intensive course, so you must be prepared by reading the assigned texts **before** the date they are due. If I find out in the course of class that any student or students have not read, they will be given an absence for the day, **regardless of how much time you have spent in class that day**. This class will not be successful **unless everyone reads and participates**. The grades for the course will breakdown as follows:

❖	Class Participation and Attendance:	10%
❖	Discussion Questions (due every class)	10%
❖	Unscheduled Quizzes:	15%
❖	A Critical Response (6-8 pages):	15%
❖	Mid-Term Exam:	20%
❖	Final Exam:	30%

-I will expect you to bring to each class **at least three discussion** questions (preferably printed) related to the readings for the day, which I shall collect at the **beginning of class**. These questions should be well thought substantive reflections on the text, which provide evidence to me of your engagement with the course. They will form an important part of our class discussions. **Failure to submit a question or questions that suggest you have not read the text thoroughly (yes/no question, questions with one word answers) will not receive any credit.**

-I will drop your lowest quiz grade; missed quizzes, for any reason, cannot be made up. There will be no extra credit offered in this class.

-For the critical response, I expect you to formulate a thesis driven argument about two literary texts (preferably across two different periods/movements). You are required to use a few secondary sources to support your claims. They should be formatted with one-inch margins, double spacing, and Times New Roman, 12-point font. A proper heading should include your name, the date, and the course. You are welcome to discuss your ideas with me before completing this assignment.

-You must take both the mid-term and final exam in order to pass the class.

-I will give you sample questions for the midterm exam and final exam at both review sessions. Both tests will be essay responses and objective questions aimed at interpretation and application from the texts we read in class.

Grades will breakdown as follows:

A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69
A 94-97	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-66
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63

Attendance:

This is a reading/discussion-based course; therefore you **must be present** in order to be successful. Furthermore, this course will only be successful with **your** input; each one of my students has valuable life experiences, thoughtful contributions, and a unique perspective. All of you can, and need to, contribute positively to make this class as fruitful as I know it can be. This means that you must attend class.

You will be given **four** penalty-free absences for the semester. In order to escape penalty, you **must** contact me in advance about the absence. More than that will compromise your final grade (it will be lowered by a full letter grade every time you miss the class after you use the four allowed absences).

At seven absences you will receive a failing grade in the course.

Lateness occurs for everyone, but do not make it a habit or I will penalize you.

Class Participation Grading:

A to A-

- Student contributes to class every day or almost every day. Contributions are thoughtful and relevant, evidencing that the student has carefully read the assigned material and formed observations or questions about it.
- Student takes an active role in small group discussions, contributing suggestions and helping to keep the group focused (student is praised by classmates for these actions).
- Student listens to what classmates say and responds to the contributions of others, noting how his or her own observations differ or support those preceding. Student takes care not to overwhelm class discussions with more than three or four contributions per class.

B+ to B-

- Student makes contributions on $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of class meeting days. Again, contributions are relevant to discussion and show that student has read the assigned material.
- Student listens to other, though his or her comments may not always follow those proceeding.
- Student contributes to small group discussion and gets some recognition from classmates for this.

C+ to C-

- Student contributes occasionally, but less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of class meeting days.
- Contributions are more “ad hoc” than based on reading, or they might be off topic.
- Student is quiet in small group discussions, letting others do most of the work.

D

- Student shows up, but almost never contributes.
- Student is visibly disengaged from class discussion.
- Student is silent or unhelpful in small group discussion.

F

- The same characteristics as the D range student, but with the maximum of absences.
- OR Student behaves in ways that distract or deliberately offend classmates, including interrupting or insulting others, yelling, leaving in the middle of class, etc

Classroom ethics:

I expect all students to treat each other with respect, regardless of any differences we may have, whether personal or in the course of class discussions. **We will be discussing personal subjects, such as identity, beliefs, sexuality, etc., and I expect everyone to be respectful of other's feelings, but also mature enough, and excited, to discuss things openly for the benefit of everyone.** Although uncomfortable subjects may arise, I will always treat them with respect and understanding, which I expect from each student as well. Literary texts are open to a wide variety of interpretations and there is no "right" or "wrong" opinion on a certain work. Therefore you are strongly encouraged to voice your opinion in the class.

Computers and Cell Phones:

We will sometimes be using technology to enhance our class activities, but I need to rely on your responsible use of that technology. Similarly, the discussion of readings, peer reviews of papers, and other workshop activities require your full attention, so please turn off your cell phones, put them out of sight, and refrain from texting in class. If the class is meeting in a computer classroom, please be sure you are using the computers only as instructed for that day's class session (and not for Facebook or to check e-mail, etc.) It's good professional behavior that also shows your respect for each other and the work we're trying to do. If you are ever using technology in a way that is distracting or unrelated to the work of the class, you will be asked to put away the device or log off the computer. **If you have to be asked more than once, you will be counted as absent for that day, and you may even be asked to leave.** If there is an unusual circumstance where you must leave your phone on, please just speak to me privately *before* class.

Accommodation:

If you have a documented learning disability, a serious hearing or vision problem, or any other special need that might affect your performance and participation in class, please be sure to let me know. Also, please be aware of the support services available to you through Disability Services in room G30 of the Mountainlair. Their phone number is: (304)-293-6700, and their email is: access2@mail.wvu.edu.

Writing Center:

The WVU Writing Center is another resource that can not only help you to brush up on your basic skills, but also help support you in all aspects of the writing process. It is located in G02 Colson Hall (the lower level). This is a free resource for students! You can meet with a tutor to go over the goals of any assignment or just to get help brainstorming the best topic. Call 304-293-5788 to schedule an appointment or stop by to see if a tutor is available. Check online at: http://english.wvu.edu/centers_and_projects/wcenter.

University Counseling Services: If things seem tough for you, or if you'd just like someone to talk to (about being homesick, or feeling depressed, or getting overwhelmed by all the obligations in your life, etc.), be sure to check out the Carruth Center for Counseling and Psychological Services on the third floor of the Student Services Building, right next door to the Mountainlair. Their hours are Monday-Friday: 8:15AM-4:45PM. Or you can call their emergency hotline after hours at (304)-293-4431. Their website is: <http://wvu.edu/ccpps>.

Office Hours: Office hours are a vital component of this course, because they provide me with an opportunity to talk to you one-on-one. My office hours are on the top of this syllabus. Please drop in to see me at the listed times, or make an appointment with me to talk at other times. I can confer with you via email, too. I will try to respond to you (in email or in class) within 48 hours, Monday through Friday.

Communication: Occasionally, I will need to contact the class or individual students via e-mail, so keep your MIX account active.

Cheating/Plagiarism: The English 101 community assumes your honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with the sections on Academic Honesty in the **University Student Conduct Code, Policy Bulletin 31**, which is online at: <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. If you have any questions about when and how to document sources, or any other question that will help you avoid unintentional plagiarism, please come and talk to me. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Clear cases will result in an “F” for the course and appropriate academic discipline.

Schedule of Work

**Subject to change according to progress.

January		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
14 (Late Registration Fee in Effect after Jan 14) -Introduction to the Course -Syllabus Review	16 American Literature 1865-1914 “Introduction” pp. 3-16 Whitman: “The Wound Dresser” pp.77-79. <i>NAAL C</i>	18 (Last day to register and add new courses is Jan 18) Whitman: ““Democratic Vistas” pp. 86-88 (Skim through “Song of Myself” from pp. 24-45) <i>NAAL C</i>
21 NO CLASS—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	23 Gilman: “The Yellow Wallpaper”; “Why I wrote the Yellow Wallpaper” pp.790-804 <i>NAAL C</i>	25 Booker T.Washington: “The Atlanta Exposition Address” pp.689-697 W.E.B Du Bois ‘Of Mr. Booker T.Washington and Others” pp.892-901 <i>NAAL C</i>

28 Crane: "The Open Boat" pp.990-1006 <i>NAAL C</i>	30 Zitkala Ša: "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" pp. 1085-1108 <i>NAAL C</i>	Feb 1 American Literature 1914- 1945 Stein: "The Making of Strangers" "Tender Buttons" pp.197-213 <i>NAAL D</i> "Reflection on the Atomic Bomb" (on WVU eCampus)
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February		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
4 World War I and its Aftermath pp.214-229 <i>NAAL D</i>	6 Frost: "Home Burial"; "The Road Not Taken"; "Stopping by a Woods on a Snowy Evening" "The Figure a Poem Makes" pp.230-231;237-240;241-242;245- 246;250-252 <i>NAAL D</i>	8 Pound: Selected Poems pp. 314-320 <i>NAAL D</i> Also Read: http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/m_r/pound/metro.htm
11 <i>Modernist Manifestos</i> Read: Marinetti; Loy;Pound;Hughes beginning p. 335 in <i>NAAL D</i>	13 Eliot: "The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock"pp. 365-370 "Tradition and Individual Talent" pp. 372-375 <i>NAAL D</i>	15 Neale Hurston: "Sweat" (on WVU eCampus) "How it feels to be Colored Me" pp. 538-540 <i>NAAL D</i>

18 Larsen: "Quicksand" Ch. 1-Ch. 6 pp. 550-572 <i>NAAL D</i>	20 Larsen: "Quicksand" Ch. 7-Ch. 12 pp. 573-590 <i>NAAL D</i>	22 Larsen: "Quicksand" Ch. 13-Ch.19 pp. 591-616 <i>NAAL D</i>
25 Larsen: "Quicksand" Ch. 20-Ch.25 pp.617-632 <i>NAAL D</i>	27 Review for Midterm Exam	Mar 1 (Mid-Semester point) MIDTERM EXAM

March		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
4 Faulkner: "A Rose for Emily" pp.794-799 <i>NAAL D</i>	6 (Mid-Semester Grades Due) AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1945 Miller: "Death of a Salesman" pp. 236-251 <i>NAAL E</i>	8 Miller: "Death of a Salesman" pp. 252-268 (End of Act I) <i>NAAL E</i>
11 Miller: "Death of a Salesman" pp. 268-303 <i>NAAL E</i>	13 Kerouac: "On the Road" Ch 1-4 (on WVU eCampus)	15 Martin Luther: "I Have a Dream" pp. 583-587 <i>NAAL E</i> Obama : "Yes We Can" Speech (on WVU eCampus)

18 Ellison: "Invisible Man" pp. 206-224 <i>NAAL E</i>	20 <i>Postmodern Manifestos</i> pp. 400-418 <i>NAAL E</i> (Read all with special emphasis on Sukenick, Thompson, O'Hara)	22 (Last Day to Drop) Ginsberg: "Howl" pp.490-499 <i>NAAL E</i>
25 NO CLASS - Spring Break!	27 NO CLASS - Spring Break!	29 NO CLASS - Spring Break!

April		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1 Plath: (All poems in <i>NAAL E</i>) pp. 623-634 Charles Bukowski: Poems (to be assigned on WVU eCampus)	3 STUDENT CONFERENCES (Bring an outline of your Critical Response Paper to discuss with Instructor)	5 NO CLASS-Instructor away for professional development.
8 Due: Draft of Critical Response Paper for Peer Review	10 Le Guin: "Schrodinger's Cat"; "She Unnames Them" pp. 588-595 <i>NAAL E</i>	12 NO CLASS- Instructor away for professional development.
15 Morrison: "Recitatif" pp. 609-622 <i>NAAL E</i> Due: Critical Response Paper	17 Carver: "Cathedral" pp. 737-746 Pynchon: "Entropy" pp. 723-725 <i>NAAL E</i>	19 Anzaldua: "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"; "El Sonavabitch" pp. 849-861 <i>NAAL E</i>

22 Walker: "Everyday Use" pp. 920-926 <i>NAALE</i>	24 Komunyakaa: (All Poems in <i>NAALE</i>) pp. 1042-1048	26 Spiegelman "Maus" pp. 1058-1074 <i>NAALE</i>
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April/May		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Apr 29 Lahiri: "Sexy" pp. 1222-1238 <i>NAALE</i>	May 1 (May 2 is the Last Day to Withdraw from the University) Diaz: "Drown" pp. 1240-1248 <i>NAALE</i>	3 (Last Day of Classes for Fall semester) FINAL EXAM REVIEW

**THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2013- FINAL EXAM
(3:00-5:00 PM)**