

Irina Rodimtseva
English 242 Section 003/Spring 2010
TR 11:30 AM-12:45 PM Clark 208
English Department Phone: 293-3107 (for messages only)
E-mail: irodimts@mix.wvu.edu
Office: G19 Colson Hall

English 242: American Literature II

Course Description: Welcome to English 242! This course will introduce you to American literature from the time of the Civil War to the present. We will read and discuss a variety of texts, including fiction, poetry, and essays. To put the works of literature into broader cultural context, we will read historical introductions to each period and biographical annotations about each discussed author. Most of the selected texts have a common theme—family and various family concerns, which will allow us to study the way American family has been shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, class, citizenship, and economics.

Course Goals:

- To increase your intellectual curiosity about life and literature
- To explore how the study of literature can also be the study of culture and history
- To become familiar with American literature written from 1865 to the present
- To learn to read literary works attentively and intelligently
- To learn to ask analytical, original, and compelling questions
- To express your ideas, in class and in writing, with confidence and to respond thoughtfully to the ideas of others.

Accommodation: If you have a documented learning disability, hearing or vision problems, or any other special need that might affect your performance or participation in class, please be sure to talk to me. Support services are also available through West Virginia University Office of Disability Services: G-30 Mountainlair Phone: (304) 293-6700 Voice/TDD: (304) 293-7740 Email: access2@mail.wvu.edu

Social Justice: English 242 supports WVU's commitment to social justice. The classroom community will work to create a positive learning environment based on open communication and mutual respect. I welcome your suggestions to help meet this commitment.

Required Text:

The Norton Anthology of American Literature. Ed. Nina Baym. Shorter Seventh Edition. Volume II. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-393-93055-9

Bring your book to every class!

Additional resources (including a copy of the course syllabus) are available on the course WVU eCampus page. To access it, 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).

Office Hours: 10:30-11:15 AM Tuesday and Thursday. Office hours provide us with an opportunity to talk one on one. You may drop in during these times or make an appointment with me to ask any questions about your progress in the course or to share your comments about the class. I'd be happy to talk with you via e-mail as well, and you can expect that I will respond to you (by e-mail or in class) within 24 hours Monday through Friday.

Tardiness and Classroom Etiquette: Occasional lateness may happen. However, if you are regularly late (more than five minutes late more than three times during this semester), I will count that habitual lateness as a full absence. **If you are late, you need to check in with me after class to be sure I mark you as present.**

Please turn off your cell phones and iPods before class begins. **If I see somebody text, check messages, listen to iPods, or engage in any other unauthorized activity, I will mark this student as absent.**

Online Discussions: In case of severe weather and hazardous driving conditions, I might choose to cancel the class and give alternative assignment (usually online group discussion, details TBA at the time of cancellation). I will notify you by e-mail no later than 9:00 AM, so please check your MIX account before leaving home. PLEASE NOTE THAT PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE DISCUSSIONS IS REQUIRED AND THAT FAILURE TO POST WILL BE MARKED AS AN ABSENCE.

Incomplete Grades: The grade of "Incomplete" is warranted only in extreme circumstances, and then only if a substantial portion of the semester's work has already been completed. If an emergency comes up, contact the Office of Student Life immediately (E. Moore Hall 293-5611) and have the necessary documentation forwarded to me.

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated; cases of cheating and plagiarism will result in a failing grade and appropriate academic discipline.

If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, visit the WVU Library tutorial <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/instruction/plagiarism> that provides detailed explanations and quizzes.

Course Components and Grading:

Class participation and attendance—15% of the final grade
 Ten reading quizzes—10% of the final grade
 Three Reading Journal responses 15% of the final grade
 Three exams—60% (20% each) of the final grade

1) **Class participation and attendance (15% of the final grade):** I believe that in order to fully engage with the texts and to learn how to think about literature critically, students should share their thoughts and ideas. This is why I expect everyone to participate in class discussions. Since our thoughts about literature often start with questions about the text, I will encourage you to voice your inquiries. In fact, we will begin each class with a round of questions that will guide our discussion and interpretation of the reading.

There are other ways of contributing to discussion: you can note details in the text or facts of the author's biography that seem important to you; you can argue with the text's portrayal of event, characters, relationships, etc.; you can observe how this work challenges common beliefs or patterns of behavior; you can respond to what other students are saying; you can lead discussions in small groups. **DON'T BE AFRAID TO GIVE THE "WRONG" ANSWER!**

Your grade for this section of the course will depend on both class participation and attendance:

Participation Grade	Class participation	Attendance
A	Over 14 times during the semester	No more than 2 classes missed
B	13-10 times during the semester	No more than 3 classes missed
C	9-7 times during the semester	No more than 4 classes missed
D	6-4 times during the semester	No more than 5 classes missed
F	Fewer than 4 times during the semester	Students who miss 6 or more classes will automatically fail the course

As you see, you can only miss two classes with no penalty. PLEASE SAVE THESE ABSENCES FOR EMERGENCIES AND PLANNED EVENTS (such as athletic and other extracurricular activities). If you do miss a class, you are responsible for finding out about handouts or assignments. At any point during the semester, you can ask me what your attendance record is. THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP WORK FOR MISSED CLASSES. DON'T EVEN ASK!

2) Ten Reading Quizzes (10 % of the final grade; up to 2 points each). It is crucial that you read all assigned texts for the day before coming to class. Ten unannounced reading quizzes will occur in the beginning of class periods and will be spread throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of one or two questions about the assigned text and will require a brief (a couple of words, a sentence, a short paragraph) answer. For this reason you will want not only to stay up to date with your reading but also to read each text closely, paying attention to details. YOU MAY NOT MAKE UP QUIZZES IF YOU ARE ABSENT OR LATE.

3) Three Reading Journal Responses (15% of the final grade; up to 5 points each) should be posted on the course WVU eCampus site ("Reading Journal" topic on the Discussion Board). Journal entries are private, which means that only the author and the instructor can read them.

You can choose which literary texts you want to respond to, but please note that the first response is due by or on **February 11**, the second response is due by or on **March 18**, and the third response is due by or on **April 27**. Each response should be posted by 11:00 AM on the day that we begin discussion of the work(s) that you have chosen to consider. LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE CREDITED.

Length and formatting requirements: Each response should be at least 500 words, single-spaced, with a title. Since it is posted under your name, there is no need to include a heading. PLEASE COPY AND PASTE (OR TYPE) YOUR RESPONSE IN THE AVAILABLE WINDOW. DO NOT POST FILE ATTACHMENTS! Do not forget to use proper paragraph structure, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuations. Online posts don't have to be sloppy!

Content: Please note that your response should NOT be a summary of the text. Instead, it **should begin with an interpretive question** that you have about the material. In the rest of the response, you should attempt to answer this question and draw a conclusion. Because these responses are brief, you should choose *one* scene, *one* character, *one* image, or *one* idea to analyze closely instead of trying to explicate the entire text or to evaluate the author's significance. Your responses must include direct quotations from the text with proper page citation. Later in the semester, you might try to incorporate previous works as well, making comparisons or contrasts. Feel free to be creative and experimental in your writing. The first-person voice is always welcome. And again—DON'T BE AFRAID TO GIVE THE "WRONG" ANSWER!

4) Three Exams (60% of the final grade)

Two in-class exams are scheduled for **Tuesday, February 16**, and **Tuesday, March 23** (regular class time, regular classroom). If you must miss class on the day of an exam, please notify me in advance so that we can arrange an alternative test date. If you do not provide me with advance notice, I will only allow you to make up a missed exam with a signed medical excuse.

Each in-class exam will cover the material read during the preceding section of the course; it will be a combination of identification, interpretation, and essay questions. You will need to supply your own Blue Books. For each exam, you may bring one standard (8½ x 11) sheet of paper, on both sides of which you have copied key quotations from the assigned primary readings. You should include titles, names of authors, and page numbers BUT NOT any critical material about the texts or authors. You must turn in this sheet along with your exam. During the exams, you may not refer to your text book or to any other books or materials.

The **take-home final exam** will be due on the last day of classes (**Thursday, April 29**). It will consist of 3-4 essay questions that cover material read during the whole semester.

Schedule of Work

**Subject to change according to progress.

JANUARY	
Tuesday	Thursday
12 Introduction to the Course <i>By next class, post a paragraph about yourself and your goals for this class on the WVU eCampus Discussion Board. Please list all English classes you have taken or are taking now.</i>	14 American Literature 1865-1914 Introduction and Timeline (1-16) Sarah Winnemucca From <i>Life Among the Piutes</i> (403-414)
19 Walt Whitman Biographical Annotation (17-21) “The Wound Dresser” (69-70) “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed” (71-77)	21 Emily Dickinson Biographical Annotation (77-81) Poems: # 122, 207, 359, 656, 1096
26 Debates over “Americanization” (675-704)	28: Mark Twain Biographical Annotation (93-97) <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> Chapters I-XV (101-153) Recommended reading (on WVU eCampus) “The Case Against <i>Huck Finn</i> ” by John H. Wallace “ <i>Why We Still Need Huckleberry Finn</i> ” by Dudley Barlow, and “ <i>Huckleberry Finn: An Amazing, Troubling Book</i> ” by Toni Morrison
FEBRUARY	
Tuesday	Thursday
2 <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> Chapters XVI-XXVI (153-213)	4 <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> Chapters XXVII - The Last (213-287)
9 Booker T. Washington (452-462) W.E.B. Du Bois (551-569)	11 Henry James (315-318) <i>Daisy Miller</i> (315-356) Last day to post Reading Journal response #1
16 1st exam	18 American Literature 1914-1945 Introduction and Timeline (705-720) Gertrude Stein (763-775)
23 F. Scott Fitzgerald (1008-1009) “Winter Dreams” (1010-1025)	25 <i>Mid-semester is February 26</i> Traditional and Modernist poetry Biographical Annotations for each poet Edwin Arlington Robinson “Richard Cory” (722) Robert Frost “Design”(788) Wallace Stevens “Snow Man” (816) Mina Loy “Brancusi’s Golden Bird” (829; see color illustration after page 864) Edna St. Vincent Millay “I Too beneath Your Moon, Almighty Sex” (995)

MARCH	
Tuesday	Thursday
2 Modernist poetry Biographical Annotations for each poet William Carlos Williams “Red Wheel Barrow” (838) “This is Just to Say” (839) Ezra Pound “In a Station of Metro” “A Pact” (845) Marianne Moore “To a Snail” (856) T.S. Eliot “Journey of the Magi” (884)	4 Harlem Renaissance Biographical Annotations for each poet Claude McKay “Harlem Dancer” (969) “The Lynching” (970) Langston Hughes “Mother to Son” (1089) “I, Too” (1090) “Mulatto” (1091) “Democracy” (1094) Countee Cullen “Incident” (1108)
9 Harlem Renaissance Zora Neal Hurston (981-993)	11 William Faulkner (1040-1042) “Barn Burning” (1048-1060)
16 Ernest Hemingway (1065-1083)	18 <i>Last day to drop a class is Friday, March 19</i> John Steinbeck (1196-1107) Last day to post Reading Journal response #2
23 2nd exam	25 American Literature since 1945 Introduction and Timeline (1129-1142) John Updike (1483-1493)
30 <i>Spring Recess</i>	1 <i>Spring Recess</i>
APRIL	
6 Tennessee Williams Biographical Annotation (1158-1160) <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> Scenes One-Four (1161-1189)	8 <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> Scenes Five-Eleven (1189-1223)
13 Poetry Biographical Annotations for each poet Theodore Roethke “My Papa’s Waltz” “The Walking” (1145) Elizabeth Bishop “The Fish” “One Art” (1223) Adrienne Rich “Storm Warnings” (1445) “Five o’Clock, January 2003” (1456) Gwendolyn Brooks “The White Troops,” “We Real Cool,” “Last Quatrain” (1364-65)	15 Allen Ginsberg Biographical Annotation (1414-1416) “Howl” (1416-1424)
20 James Baldwin (1380-1392) Toni Morrison (1461-1475)	22 N. Scott Momaday (1526-1537) Leslie Marmon Silko (1608-1615)
27 Maxine Hong Kingston (1567-1577) Gloria Anzaldúa (1586-1595) Last day to post Reading Journal response #3	29 (<i>Last Day to Withdraw; April 30th is Last Day of Classes</i>) Take home exam due Jhumpa Lahiri (1681-1698)