

## Course Description

The catalog description of ENGL 242 is pretty bare-bones: “A historical introduction and survey from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.” We’ll do all that, and try to cover some more unusual texts and authors, as well, as we sort through various themes, genres, and styles to explore the question “What makes American literature *American*?”



## Contact Information

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 Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00-2:00 p.m.  
 and by appointment

## Social Justice Statement

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services, G-30 Mountainlair (phone: 304/293-6700; voice/TDD: 304/293-7740; e-mail: [access2@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:access2@mail.wvu.edu)). And of course, feel free to talk with me about how we can work together most effectively.

## Texts

Larsen, Nella. Norton Critical Edition of *Passing*, ISBN 9780393979169  
 McMichael, George, ed. Pearson/Prentice Hall *Anthology of American Literature, Vol. II* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.), ISBN 9780205779369

## Attendance Policy and Daily Procedures

It should go without saying, but ***please turn off cell phones and put them away during class.*** If you're expecting an important call, please set your phone to vibrate and take the call in the hallway. Texting in class will result in your being marked absent for the day.

*Attendance* Most of the learning in this course will come through class discussions, not lectures. Therefore, regular attendance and participation is expected, and will factor into your final grade (see the additional handout for details). Should you miss a class, I trust that you'll check in to find out what you've missed, and that you will get notes from another class member. ***Missed quizzes or other in-class work must be made up before the next class meeting—no exceptions.***

*Late arrivals* We will start class on time, and quizzes will almost always be given at the start of class, so please plan to be here at 10:00 a.m. Late arrivals are really disruptive, and if you arrive after a quiz is underway, you will not be permitted to take it.

*Leaving early* Please let me know before class begins if you need to leave early, and what time you will need to leave. In this situation, I'd also appreciate it if you'd sit close to the door so that you can slip out without disrupting the class.

*End of class* I know that some professors have a bad habit of going way over the scheduled ending time for their classes (I had some of them myself in college) but I do keep track of the time and promise to always let you out at the class' scheduled ending time. Frequently, the end of the period will be devoted to summarizing material or making announcements, so please refrain from packing up books, etc., so that you don't miss anything yourself or distract others. I will verbally dismiss the class after this wrap-up, and promise to do so on time so that you can get to your next class.

### Course Requirements

Your grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown. Detailed instructions about each of these assignments will be provided separately.

Quizzes & other in-class work	25%
Blog posts	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Attendance and participation	10%

### Grades

Blog posts and exams will be graded on a 100-point scale, with 90-100 being an A, 80 to 89 a B, 70 to 79 a C, 60 to 69 a D, and anything below 60 an F. Shorter assignments (such as quizzes and in-class writing) will be graded on a 5- or 10-point scale, or (in some cases) just with a checkmark to indicate completion.

### Late Papers/Assignments, Make-up Work, and Extensions

Deadlines for blog posts and penalties for late posts will be discussed in more detail on the blog assignment. Missed quizzes or other in-class work must be made up before the next class meeting. E-mail me to arrange a time when you can come by my office to make these up.

### Plagiarism

My policy regarding plagiarism is zero tolerance: plagiarize even one part of one assignment, and fail the entire course. Period. If I can document the plagiarism, I will also turn the materials over to the Dean of Students and the Academic Review Board. If you are in any doubt about how to document sources, please see me. I'm very happy to help you figure out how to cite others' work correctly, since I believe that is one of the most important skills a college student must acquire. But please see me with questions *before* you turn the assignment in.

## DAY-TO-DAY SCHEDULE

## WEEK ONE

- T Aug 23 Introduction to course  
 R 25 READ: Anthology, selections from Whitman: "I Hear America Singing" (118-119); "Poets to Come" (119); "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" (132-133); and "The Wound-Dresser" (136-137); also Ginsberg's "A Supermarket in California" (1755-1756) and Alexie's "Defending Walt Whitman" (2297-2298)

## WEEK TWO

- T 30 READ: Anthology, Background reading on "The Literature of the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century" (1-7); Whitman's *Song of Myself* sections 1, 6, 24, 48, and 52  
 R Sep 1 READ: Anthology, Dickinson, poems #280, 324, 341, 435, 632, 1129, 1624

## WEEK THREE

- T 6 READ: Anthology, Chesnut's "The Goophered Grapevine" and "The Wife of His Youth" (458-474) and Harris, "How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox" (480-481)  
 R 8 READ: Anthology, Hurston's "John Redding Goes to Sea" (1540-1549) and Wolfe's "Only the Dead Know Brooklyn" (1551-1554)

## WEEK FOUR

- T 13 READ: Anthology, Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* chapters 1-16  
 R 15 READ: Anthology, Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* chapters 17-30

## WEEK FIVE

- T 20 READ: Anthology, Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* chapters 31-end  
 R 22 IN CLASS: Film about challenges to *Huck Finn* over the last 120+ years and in-class writing assignment

## WEEK SIX

- T 27 READ: Anthology, James' "The Real Thing" (563-580)  
 R 29 READ: Anthology, Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (666-677)

## WEEK SEVEN

- T Oct 4 READ: Anthology, Chopin's *The Awakening* chapters 1-20 (697-744)  
 R 6 READ: Anthology, Chopin's *The Awakening* chapters 21-end (744-786)

## WEEK EIGHT

- T 11 READ: Anthology, Chopin's "The Storm" (688-692), and in *Passing* collection, Chopin's "The Father of Desiree's Baby" (213-218)  
 R 13 IN CLASS: MIDTERM EXAM

## WEEK NINE

- T 18 READ: Anthology, background reading on "The Literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1900-1945" (986-991); Pound's "A Retrospect" (1016-1022) and poems "A Pact" and "In a Station of the Metro" (1353)  
 R 20 READ: Anthology, Stein's "Susie Asado" (1242); cummings' "in just," "O sweet spontaneous," and "Cambridge ladies" (1387-1389); and Williams' Portrait of a Lady" (1458) and "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1459)

## WEEK TEN

- T 25 READ: Anthology, Frost's poems "After Apple-Picking" (1131-1132), "Design" (1136), and "Desert Places" (1137); Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1359-1363)
- R 27 READ: Anthology, Stevens' poems "Sunday Morning" (1439-1442), "Anecdote of the Jar" (1446), and "The Idea of Order at Key West" (1448-1449); Jeffers' "Hurt Hawks" and "Carmel Point" (handouts)

## WEEK ELEVEN

- T Nov 1 READ: Anthology, Dunbar's "We Wear the Mask" (963-964) and "Sympathy" (971-972); Washington's "Atlanta Exposition Address" (1006-1009); and in *Passing* collection, W. E. B. DuBois' "Criteria of Negro Art" (312-320) and Schuyler's "Negro-Art Hokum" (324-325)
- R 3 READ: Anthology, Cullen's "Yet I Do Marvel" and "Incident" (1529-1530); Hughes' "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (1622), "I, Too," "Dream Boogie," and "Harlem" (1624-1626); in *Passing* collection, news articles about the practice of passing (105-127)

## WEEK TWELVE

- T 8 READ: Larsen's *Passing*, pp. 5-43 (to Part 2, Chapter 2)
- R 10 READ: Larsen's *Passing*, pp. 43-82 (from Part 2, Chapter 2 to end)

## WEEK THIRTEEN

- T 15 READ: Anthology, Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams" and "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" (1558-1590)
- R 17 READ: Anthology, Hemingway's "In Another Country" (1592-1595) and Faulkner's "Barn Burning" (1597-1608)

## THANKSGIVING BREAK HAVE A GOOD ONE!

## WEEK FOURTEEN

- T 29 READ: Anthology, background reading on "The Literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1945-1999" (1652-1656); MLK, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (1665-1668); and O'Brien's "On the Way to Rainy River" (2000-2011)
- R Dec 1 READ: Anthology, Walker's "Everyday Use" (1993-1998) and Tan's "Half and Half" (2012-2021)

## WEEK FIFTEEN

- T 6 READ: Anthology, Diaz's "How to Date a Brown girl, Black girl, White girl, or Halfie" (2275-2277), and Alexie's "Class" (2285-2297)
- R 8 IN CLASS: Continued discussion of short stories, course wrap-up, evaluations, and final-exam review

## FINALS WEEK

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> FINAL EXAM, 11 A.M. 1 P.M.

**NOTE: NO EARLY EXAMS OR MAKE-UP EXAMS CAN BE GIVEN. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE AND PLAN ACCORDINGLY.**