E 338

American Literature from 1865 to the Present

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Semester: Fall 2016 Class blog: fall2016e338.wordpress.com

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Course Description

This course surveys American literature from the end of the Civil War to the present moment. We will pay close attention to the ways literary style shifts in relation to historical context in novels, poems, and short stories. Our major texts focus on the ways people read and misread each other's race, gender, class, nationality, and ability. The primary aim of this course is to help students develop and improve the critical reading and thinking skills needed for success in literary studies and other disciplines as they become familiar with significant literary texts of the recent past.

Assignments

Blog posts 15% (see attached instructions) Reading quizzes 15% (11 over the semester; lowest grade dropped; no make-ups)

> Two short writing assignments 20% Midterm exam (in-class) 20% Cumulative final exam (take-home) 30%

Texts

(available at the University Co-Op and elsewhere) William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* Shirley Jackson, *The Haunting of Hill House* Nella Larsen, *Passing* Claudia Rankine, *Citizen* Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*

Prerequisites

Nine semester hours of coursework in English or Rhetoric and Writing.

Flags

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase students' familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. They should therefore expect a substantial portion of final grades to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

Attendance

Attendance means being mentally as well as physically present: being prepared, participating in discussions and activities, and actively listening. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find notes and make up work. I will allow **up to five absences** before it will affect your grade. I do not **differentiate between excused and unexcused absences.** You should think of these like PTO or sick days: they are available if you need them. **Religious holy days and jury duty** do not count as absences, so you should let me know if those are coming up.

Safer space

In this classroom, we respect each other's opinions and beliefs. We recognize that our behavior affects each other. We respect each other's identities and backgrounds, and don't assume anyone's gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, immigration status, economic background, survivor status, health, etc. Many of the texts we'll read feature homophobia, sexism, cissexism, racism, and/or ableism. Several of the texts we'll read feature explicit sex scenes, as well as violence, substance abuse, suicide, self-harm and slurs. When talking about these and other sensitive topics, please be considerate of your classmates. If you need to step outside the classroom for any reason at any time, please do so. We can revise this policy as necessary.

Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic Integrity

Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. When in doubt, cite! We will use MLA citation style in this course.

Documented Disability

Please let me know if you need any accommodations for a disability. If you have or suspect you have any sort of disability, having it officially documented can be really helpful. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone), or visit

http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd

Other resources Undergraduate Writing Center <u>http://uwc.utexas.edu/</u> Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) 512-232-5050 (your call is anonymous) UT Counseling & Mental Health Center (512) 471-3515 SSB, 5th Floor CMHC Crisis Line (24/7 help) 512-471-CALL (2255)

| unit 1: reconstruction, the gilded age + the turn of the century | reading due | writing due |
|--|--|-------------|
| Wednesday, August 24 | | |
| Friday, August 26 | Whitman & Dickinson | Blog posts |
| Monday, August 29 | The Yellow Wallpaper: intro | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, August 31 | The Yellow Wallpaper: secondary sources (Canvas) | |
| Friday, September 2 | Pudd'nhead Wilson: intro – Chap. 7 | Blog posts |
| Monday, September 5 | Labor Day: No Class Meeting | |
| Wednesday, September 7 | Pudd'nhead Wilson: Chap. 8 - 14 | Blog posts |
| Friday, September 9 | Pudd'nhead Wilson : Finish | |

| Monday, September 12 | Cable, "'Tite Poulette" & Chopin, "Desiree's Baby" | Blog posts |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Wed., September 14 | Chesnutt, "The Goophered Grapevine" | Blog posts |
| Friday, September 16 | Cather, "Paul's Case" | Blog posts |

| unit ii: modernism | reading due | writing due |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Monday, Sept. 19 | NO CLASS MEETING | |
| Wednesday, Sept. 21 | James, The Turn of the Screw: Chap. I – VIII | Blog posts |
| Friday, Sept. 23 | The Turn of the Screw: Chap. IX – XVI | |
| Monday, Sept. 26 | The Turn of the Screw: Finish | Short Assignment #1 Due |
| Wednesday, Sept. 28 | Stein, "Picasso" + "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene" | Blog posts |
| Friday, Sept. 30 | Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" + poems by Eliot + Pound | Blog posts |
| Monday, October 3 | Hurston, "The Gilded Six-Bits" + "How It Feels to Be Colored Me" + poems by Cullen + Hughes | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, October 5 | Sui Sin Far (Edith Maud Eaton), "In the Land of the Free" + Le Seuer, "Women on the Bread Lines" | Blog posts |
| Friday, October 7 | Wrap up loose ends, review for exam | |

| unit iii: the midcentury | reading due | writing due |
|--------------------------|---|-------------|
| Monday, Oct. 10 | MIDTERM EXAM | |
| Wednesday, Oct. 12 | Larsen, Passing: Part 1 | Blog posts |
| Friday, Oct. 14 | Passing: Finish | |
| Monday, Oct. 17 | Faulkner <i>, As I Lay Dying</i> : pp. 1 – 99 | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, Oct. 19 | <i>As I Lay Dying</i> : pp. 100 - 179 | Blog posts |
| Friday, Oct. 21 | As I Lay Dying: Finish | |
| Monday, Oct. 24 | Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues" | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, Oct. 26 | Cheever, "The Swimmer" | Blog posts |

| Friday, Oct. 28 | Jackson, The Haunting of Hill House: Parts 1 & 2 | Blog posts |
|-----------------|--|------------|
| Monday, Oct. 31 | The Haunting of Hill House: Parts 3 - 5 | Blog posts |

| unit iv: postmodernism + the contemporary | reading due | writing due |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| Wednesday, Nov. 2 | The Haunting of Hill House: Finish | |
| Friday, Nov. 4 | Poetry TBD | Blog posts |
| Monday, Nov. 7 | Poetry TBD | |
| Wednesday, Nov. 9 | Barth, "Lost in the Funhouse" | Blog posts |
| Friday, Nov. 11 | Silko, "Storyteller" | Blog posts |
| Monday, Nov. 14 | Morrison, "Recitatif" | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, Nov. 16 | Carver, "Cathedral" + Gaitskill | Blog posts |
| Friday, Nov. 18 | Wallace, "The Depressed Person" | Blog posts |
| Monday, Nov. 21 | Lahiri, "The Third and Final Continent" | Short Assignment #2 Due |
| Nov. 23-25 | THANKSGIVING BREAK | [no class] |
| Monday, Nov. 28 | Díaz, "Drown" | Blog posts |
| Wednesday, Nov. 30 | Citizen: Parts I & II | Blog posts |
| Friday, Dec. 2 | <i>Citizen</i> : Parts III – V | Blog posts |
| Monday, Dec. 5 | <i>Citizen</i> : Finish | |
| Due date TBA | | Take-home final |

Rubric

A-level work demonstrates serious, enthusiastic engagement with class reading and discussion; a willingness to ask questions and take risks; intellectual curiosity. A-level written work is clear and creative. A-level writers support their claims with evidence. They confidently engage with their sources and acknowledge them. They learn from criticism and from their own mistakes. They write with readers in mind. They are interested in process.

B-level work demonstrates an above-average engagement with class reading and discussion. B-level writers do not always consider their readers. Their writing is mostly clear and to the point, usually well-supported, but occasionally vague, general, or formulaic. B-level writers play it safe. They are interested in product.

C-level work meets minimum requirements. It is usually formulaic. Often the prose is overly grandiose and formal or too colloquial. Work is often sloppy. C-level writers make unsupported generalizations and overly broad claims. It is not always clear whether they have engaged seriously with the assigned reading. They are interested in passing.

D-level work does not always meet minimum requirements. They submit some work, but it does not clearly respond to the prompt or fit the parameters of the assignment. They do not demonstrate that they have read or engaged seriously with the assigned texts. Their attendance is sporadic, and even when they are physically present in class, they are not mentally present. They are not interested.

F-level students rarely attend class or turn in work. When they do, it does not clearly respond to the prompt or is incomplete.

Basic Requirements

- ★ You will be required to create 3 posts this semester, and to comment on at least 5.
- ★ We'll sign up for posting days at the beginning of the semester. The schedule will be on Canvas. If an emergency or sudden inspiration arises, see if you can swap days with a classmate.
- ★ Blog posts are due at 6 PM on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, so your classmates have a chance to comment before class
- ★ Each post should be at least 250 words long, and incorporate direct quotations from the reading.
- ★ Every post should end with at least two questions for class discussion.
- ★ Throughout the semester, incorporate each of the following elements at least once:
 - 1. A reference to a classmate's blog post
 - 2. A connection between two texts we've read
 - 3. Research in the Oxford English Dictionary

Guidelines for Content

- ★ You should think of this as a public, collaborative reading journal. Write what you're thinking about the reading right now, knowing that you may change your mind later and that others in the class may (respectfully) disagree with you.
- ★ What I am looking for is a substantive response to the day's reading: that is, I want to see you thinking critically and asking questions.
- ★ Don't be afraid to be wrong or make an incomplete argument.
- ★ Your posts may take the form of mini-essays or arguments. They may take the form of lists, poems, rants, fanfiction... etc. etc. They may also include links or images.
- ★ If you don't know what to write about, here are some questions to get you started:
 - Does this reading remind you of anything else we've read or discussed?
 - Does it remind you of anything you've read or seen outside of class?
 - Are there parts of this reading that confused you? enraged you? delighted you?
 - What themes seem important in this reading?
 - How would you describe the style of the reading? Are there any literary devices, formal choices or word choices that stand out to you? What effect do these have?
 - How does this reading relate to the larger themes of this course?
- ★ You can (and are encouraged to) consider blog posts as drafts or sections of your other writing assignments and exams. The blog is a place for you to try things out.