

# AML 2410: ISSUES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Fall 2015. Section 8974

Class Meets in Anderson 32: Tuesday Periods 8 and 9, and Thursday Period 9

Instructor: Dhanashree Thorat

Email: [dthorat@ufl.edu](mailto:dthorat@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Turlington 4411, TR 7&8, and by appointment

## IMMIGRANT AND DIASPORA LITERATURE

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Since the first European settlers landed in America, there have been many waves of immigrants arriving on American shores. Indeed, one of the foundational stories about America, alongside the 'American Dream,' has been 'America, a nation of immigrants.' This course introduces students to the key figure of the immigrant in American literature and culture. Some of the questions we will take up in class include: What role did race, gender, and class play in crafting different immigrant experiences? What were the legal, political, and cultural responses to immigrants in these different time periods? What are the different visions of the American Dream that are made visible in these immigrant narratives? Through the figure of the immigrant, students will learn to think critically about concepts such as hybridity, diaspora, assimilation, multiculturalism, and globalization. This class also intends to illuminate current debates on immigration by tracing the historical responses to immigration and diasporic groups in the American nation.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

As a General Education course, this course satisfies student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

By the end of the course, I hope you will be able to:

- Think critically about issues of immigration, enslavement, exile, diaspora, and multiculturalism in American history and society
- Analyze social, political, and cultural issues through literary texts
- Demonstrate the ability to do a critical close reading, situate literary texts historically and socially, and conduct a literary analysis that advances a coherent and strong argument
- Contextualize current debates on immigration historically

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- **Miné Okubo**, *Citizen 13660*. University of Washington Press. Paperback. ISBN: 978-0295993546. <http://amzn.com/0295993545>
- **Sandra Cisneros**, *The House on Mango Street*. Vintage Publishers. ISBN: 978-0679734772. <http://amzn.com/0679734775>
- **Wajahat Ali**, *The Domestic Crusaders*. McSweeney's. Paperback. ISBN: 978-1936365173. <http://amzn.com/1936365170>

**All other readings will be made available through Sakai, or can be located easily online.**

## ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments	Length	Points
<p><b>Close Reading</b>            Conduct a close reading analysis of a passage or stanza from one of the texts we have read. In a close reading, you focus on a small section of the text to identify literary facets such as language, vocabulary, point of view, characterization, symbolism, tropes, etc. While you are focusing on a small section of the text, you may begin to see larger patterns in the text. A close reading is a building block of a literary analysis. Students will write two close reading analyses.  <b>Due: 5 Sept (close reading of Crevecoeur/Jacobs)</b>  <b>Due: 12 Sept (close reading of graphic elements in <i>Citizen 13660</i>)</b></p>	1000 words (500 words each)	100 points
<p><b>Historical Annotation and Presentation</b>            For this assignment, you will historically contextualize one of the texts we have read in class. Literary texts yield richer understanding when read in light of their historical and social conditions of production. After you have read your chosen text, identify <u>one primary historical documents</u> related to an event, law, person, text, or other aspect mentioned in that text. Your write-up should briefly explain the historical document and then show how it enriches our understanding of the text. <u>Students will present their annotations in class.</u>  <b>Due: Variable, students will sign up in the second week of classes</b></p>	500 words	50 points
<p><b>Mid Term Paper</b>            Conduct an analysis of an idea, concept, or theme by putting <u>two</u> of the texts we have read in conversation with each other. For instance, you might write about displacement in Jewish American and Vietnamese American literature. Your paper should focus on developing one main thesis statement with substantial textual evidence.  <b>Due: 9 October</b></p>	1500 words	200 points
<p><b>Reflections on My Migration</b>            For this assignment, reflect on your experiences of migration and movement. Where did your family come from? Where (in America) and why did your family move? What experiences did different family members have in the new country? This is a multimodal and creative (rather than argumentative) assignment. You may choose the medium and genre of your reflection.  <b>Due: 30 October</b></p>	800 words	100 points
<p><b>Final Paper &amp; Reflection</b>            For the final essay, you will develop an original, strong, and clear argument about a topic or text we have encountered in class. Draw on at least 2 scholarly and peer reviewed sources in your argument. The final paper should demonstrate the ability of the writer to do a critical close reading, historicize the text or topic, and synthesize scholarly sources. Students should discuss potential paper topics with the instructor a few weeks in advance of the due date.  <b>Due: 8 December</b></p>	2200 words	300 points

## **GRADING**

### **Grade Breakdown**

Close Reading: 1000 words, 100 points  
Historical Annotation: 500 words, 50 points  
Reflection Assignment: 800 words, 100 points  
Mid Term Paper: 1500 words, 200 points  
Final Paper: 2200 words, 300 points  
Quizzes: 50 points  
\*Reading Journal on Twitter: 100 points  
Participation: 100 points  
TOTAL: 1000 points

\*Students will take brief reading notes (comments, questions, etc) on the text we are reading, and post these notes on Twitter. Taking notes will help you read more critically. During the class period we will take up the ideas and questions raised by the class on Twitter. By sharing the notes on Twitter, you also have an opportunity to expand our class audience, and link the texts you are reading to current immigration debates in the United States and internationally. This reading journal should be kept weekly, from Week 3 to Week 13. Generally, students post about 10 tweets (reading notes) every week. Use #aml2410 in all your tweets so we have a class archive.

### **Grading Scale**

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

### **Grading Rubric**

Assignment specific grading rubrics will be distributed before that assignment is due. A general overview of how I arrive at the grades for all major assignments is below.

In each written assignment, I will be looking at:

- 1) Content: How strong is your argument, development, and support? Does your multimedia content (when used) seem well-constructed and relevant to your assignment?
- 2) Organization: How well-structured are your paragraphs? Do your overall ideas flow well?
- 3) Mechanics: How frequently do you make errors in grammar, style, and spelling?

You should strive to excel in all three areas.

An A level assignment is complete in content, is organized well, and has few to no mechanical errors. An assignment of this level also demonstrates originality and creativity, showing that the student took extra steps beyond what was required.

A B level assignment is solid overall in terms of content, organization, and mechanics, but may need some minor revision to one of these three areas. An assignment that receives this grade fulfills assignment expectations, but is also complete in content and relatively free of grammatical or mechanical errors.

A C level assignment has promise in some areas, but lacks the command, organization, persuasiveness or clarity of the A or B assignments. An assignment that receives this grade may be overlooking an important component of the assignment, or need significant revision.

A D level assignment does not yet demonstrate the basic lower division writing expectations. The paper has major issues in content, organization and / or mechanics. Assignments that receive this grade will often be incomplete, or have major issues with organization.

An “E” is usually reserved for students who do not do the assignment or fail to attend class. However, an “E” may also be given if an essay blatantly ignores instructions or has major problems in all three areas of evaluation.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Communication With Your Instructor**

The best way to contact me is via email. Please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond to all requests/questions/inquiries. I also encourage you to meet with me during my office hours, or to schedule an appointment with me for a different time.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Please be mindful that students come from diverse cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage in controversial issues and opinions. Many ideas might differ from your own, therefore please have an open mind to diversity.

### **Absence and Tardiness**

Because of the participatory nature of this course, attendance is crucial. You have **up to 3 absences** that you can take without penalty (aside from missing potential quizzes). Students who miss **more than six** class periods **will fail** the course (although the twelve-day rule, laid out below, is the one case for exceptions). It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences.

Prolonged absences will affect your quiz average, since in most cases (aside from the exceptions below) missed in-class assignments cannot be made up. In addition, prolonged absences will affect your grade as follows:

- 4 absences: 10% off participation grade
- 5 absences: 10% off participation grade
- 6 absences: 10% off final course grade
- 7 absences: Automatic failure of the overall course

If you are absent, please make yourself aware of all due dates and turn in assignments on time. Please check with your classmates to obtain notes for the day you missed.

All members of the class are expected to adhere to official UF time. For this reason, if you are late to class, this will count as ½ **an absence**. If you are more than **10 minutes late**, I will mark you as absent. If you are frequently late to class or absent, this will also negatively affect your participation grade in the course.

Students are expected to bring the required reading for the day to class with them. If a student recurrently fails to bring the reading (in print or electronic format), you may be marked as absent.

### **Twelve-Day Rule and Absence Exceptions**

According to University policy, students who participate in athletic or scholastic teams are permitted to be absent for 12 days without penalty. However, students involved in such activities should let me know of their scheduled absences at least 1 week ahead of time. In these cases, I will allow you to make up missed in-class work within a reasonable time frame, but you should still aim to submit major assignments and blog posts on time. Likewise, if you must miss class because of a religious holiday, please let me know at least a week ahead of time, and I will allow you to make up missed in-class work. For the official University policy on absences, please refer to <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> for more detail.

### **Preparation**

Always bring the assigned reading to class with you, along with materials for taking notes and any assignments that may be due during that class meeting. Be prepared for active discussions. To help with this, I highly recommend that you take careful reading notes and write down potential comments for class ahead of time.

### **Participation**

Being present in the classroom is not enough to succeed in this class. While I may lecture on occasion, many classes will rely on your questions and comments relating to our texts and assignments. If you are frequently quiet during class, I may call on you.

Your participation grade will be based on your participation in class discussion, in your behavior during group work, your online presence on the class website, and other behavior factors. If you sleep during class or are not present mentally in the classroom, I may mark you as absent.

### **Electronic Devices – Cell Phones, Laptops, iPads, Etc.**

Out of courtesy to myself and your fellow classmates, silence your cell phones during class time (the vibrate setting is not silent). Keep your phone in your bag or pocket – if I see you texting or surfing the web, I may ask you to leave the classroom, resulting in an absence.

You should use computers for course-related activities only. Checking Facebook, web surfing unrelated to class, and doing work for other classes are examples of behavior that may result in deductions from your participation grade or your being asked to leave class for the day. You can, however, use a computer to access the class website (to facilitate discussion) or view course readings (if you prefer not to print electronic readings).

## **Assignment Submission**

Papers and written assignments are due, via electronic copy, in .doc or .docx format, before class on the date indicated on the syllabus. Your assignment is still due if you plan to miss class.

Technology failure is not an excuse for a late assignment. If ELearning is not functioning properly when you attempt to submit a paper, you can always send me an email attachment. This email should include a Help Desk receipt with your paper or other verification of a system-wide Sakai failure.

Always back up your papers on a flash drive or on a cloud service, such as Dropbox.

## **Late Submission**

If you expect to not make a deadline, please contact me in advance of the deadline. I may allow a short extension on a due date once in the term if you contact me before the deadline, and in exceptional circumstances.

## **Academic Paper Format**

All essays must be formatted in MLA style. This means that your paper must meet the following guidelines:

- Double-spaced
- 12 point, Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins, on all sides
- MLA style headers with page numbers
- MLA style citations

For help with MLA format, find a copy of the *MLA Handbook* in the library or refer to the OWL Purdue website (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>).

Any file submitted as a Word document must have a file name that follows the “Last Name” “Assignment Name” format, e.g., Thorat Rhetorical Analysis.

## **Assignment Originality and Plagiarism**

You must produce original material for all assignments in this course – you should not re-use materials that you have written for other courses. This also applies to material within the class – for example, you cannot repeat material from a short assignment wholesale in your research paper. However, you may expand on *ideas* from your shorter assignments.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the student honor code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

“Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- a) Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

- b) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.”  
(University of Florida, Student Honor Code)

I have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. If you plagiarize, you will fail the assignment. You may also fail the class and be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Always cite your sources.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) Credit.**

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/generatl-educationrequirements.aspx>

**Statement of Writing Requirement (WR):** This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>

**Statement of Student Disability Services:** The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

**Statement on Harassment:** UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

**Statement on Academic Honesty:** All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

**Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**Important Phone Numbers for Emergencies:** University counseling services and mental health services: (352) 392-1575 <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> ;University Police Department: (352) 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies

# SCHEDULE

The schedule may change at the discretion of the instructor.

Short pieces and poems can be located easily online, or will be added under Resources in Sakai.

Pertinent handouts on the writer, movement, or literary style will be placed on Sakai, and students will be expected to read them to prepare for class.

## Week 1

- Aug 25 Introduction  
Aug 27 Cosmic Migrations in Native American Creation Stories: “Iroquois Creation Myth” ([http://dept.cs.williams.edu/~lindsey/myths/myths\\_12.html](http://dept.cs.williams.edu/~lindsey/myths/myths_12.html))

## Week 2

- Sept 1 **Becoming American**  
Crevecoeur, “What is an American?” (pg 48-56, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/CREV/letter03.html>)  
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (pg 1-44) <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html>  
Sept 3 Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (pg 44-67, 82-97)  
**Close Reading 1 Due (5 Sept)**

## Week 3

- Sept 8 **Becoming American**  
Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (Preface, pg 1-70) & Reading a graphic novel (Sakai)  
Sept 10 Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (pg 70-130)  
**Close Reading 2 Due (12 Sept)**

## Week 4

- Sept 15 **Becoming American**  
Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (pg 130-190); Japanese American Concentration Camp Haiku (Sakai)  
Sept 17 Miné Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (pg 190-240); Introduce Mid Term Paper assignment

## Week 5

- Sept 22 **Displacement (Jewish-American Experience)**  
Anzia Yesierska, “The Lost Beautifulness” and “America and I” (pg 1-13);  
Edward Said, “Reflections on Exile” (pg 137-149)  
Submit mid term paper topics  
Sept 24 **NO CLASS – Instructor away for conference**

## Week 6

- Sept 29 **Displacement (Vietnamese American Experience)**  
Aimee Phan, “Gates of Saigon”;  
Monique Truong, “American Like Me” and “Vietnam: Into Thin Air”  
Oct 1 **Student Conferences**

## Week 7

- Oct 6 **Coming of Age in America**  
Edwidge Danticat. “Nineteen Thirty-Seven” and “New York Day Women”  
Peer Review of midterm paper  
Oct 8 Paule Marshall, excerpt from *The Poets in the Kitchen*.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1983/01/09/books/from-the-poets-in-the-kitchen.html>

## Midterm Paper Due (9 Oct)

- Week 8**  
Oct 13 **Coming of Age in America**  
Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (pg 1-50)  
Handout on 'Bildungsroman'  
Oct 15 Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (pg 50-75);  
Introduce Reflection assignment
- Week 9**  
Oct 20 **Coming of Age in America**  
Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (pg 75-110);  
Sandra Cisneros, "Barbie Q"  
Oct 22 Gloria Anzaldua, "How To Tame a Wild Tongue"
- Week 10**  
Oct 27 **Love and Desire**  
Junot Diaz, "How to date a brown girl"; Benjamin Alire Saenz "He Has Gone To Be With The Women"  
Oct 29 Jhumpa Lahiri, "Sexy," and "Third and Final Continent"  
**Reflection Assignment due (30 Oct)**
- Week 11**  
Nov 3 **Muslim-Americans after 9/11**  
Wajahat Ali, *The Domestic Crusaders* (Act I)  
Nov 5 Wajahat Ali, *The Domestic Crusaders* (Act II)
- Week 12**  
Nov 10 **Muslim-Americans after 9/11**  
Wajahat Ali, *The Domestic Crusaders* (Act II contd.); Naomi Shihab Nye, "Two Countries;" Suheir Hammad "First Writing Since"  
Introduce Final Paper  
Nov 12 Excerpt from *Guantánamo Diary* by Mohamedou Ould Slahi
- Week 13**  
Nov 17 **Muslim-Americans after 9/11**  
Moustafa Bayoumi, Chapters 1 and 2 from *How Does It Feel To Be a Problem*  
Conducting Research, Using Scholarly Sources  
Submit Paper Topics  
Nov 19 **E-Literature: A Show of Hands**  
([http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/marino\\_ashowofhands.html](http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/marino_ashowofhands.html));  
Flight Paths ([http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/pullinger\\_flightpaths.html](http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/pullinger_flightpaths.html))
- Week 14**  
Nov 24 **Research**  
Research Day  
Nov 26 Thanksgiving Break
- Week 15**  
Dec 1 **Work on Final Paper**  
Student Conferences  
Dec 3 Peer Review of final paper
- Week 16**  
Dec 8 **Final Paper Due**