

AML2070-03A5: Survey of American Literature, Fall 2018
Writing a Nation

Instructor Name: Jacqueline Schnieber

Course meeting times & locations: MWF 1:55-2:45pm, MAT 0108

Office Location and Hours: TUR 4367, Monday 12:30 – 1:30pm and by appointment

Course website: Canvas (elearning.ufl.edu)

Instructor Email: jschnieber@ufl.edu

Course Description and Objectives:

What is the United States of America? What makes one “American”? Since the founding of the nation, writers have tried to answer these questions in manifold, complex and often conflicting ways. Under the theme of “Writing a Nation,” this course investigates how American literature has attempted to reflect, constitute, negotiate, and/or challenge American national identities.

Tied into the question of what the United States of America is, will or should be is the question of who is to be part of it as a citizen. In defining the American citizen, however, certain groups of people are necessarily excluded from the rights and privileges of citizenship in the country that proclaims to be “the land of opportunity.” Thus, this class will feature a variety of writers who faced exclusion and often violence because of their gender, race, ethnicity, or sexuality. The texts of these writers exposed the contradictions of the American national narrative.

In the course of this survey class, students will acquire the following:

- A broad overview of American literature, its diversity, and its historical context,
- Familiarity with and a broad understanding of different text forms (novels, plays, poetry, short stories),
- A theoretical framework encompassing theories of gender, race, and sexuality to accompany their understanding of the multiple facets of each text,
- The ability to critically interrogate texts within their respective contexts and develop an original argument (= literary analysis),
- The ability to conduct adequate research to back up their claims,
- Familiarity with and the ability to use the MLA citation style.

General Education Objectives:

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different

audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts:

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (available online)

Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron Mills* (available online)

Henry James, *Washington Square* (available online)

Charles Chesnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition* (available online)

Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

James Baldwin, *Another Country*

David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

See schedule below for additional readings, which are available on Canvas.

Assignments (see p.9-10 for Grading Rubric):

Assignment	Words	Points
Passage Analyses	4x 300 = 1200	4x 50 = 200
Close Reading Paper	1,000	100
Critical Response Paper	1,500	150
Final Paper Proposal	300 (excl. bibliography)	100
Final Paper (Critical Analysis)	2,000	200
Discussion Leaders		150
Class Participation/ In-Class Work		100
Total	6,000	1000

Passage Analyses (20%):

This assignment is a brief critical reading of a short passage of a reading of your choice. Passage analyses go beyond summarizing or giving your impression of a passage; contextualize the passage you chose and then analyze it critically. Be brief and concise—you only have space to analyze one aspect in-depth.

The passage analyses are **due on Canvas before the class of the respective text that is analyzed in your critical reading**. You may only hand in **one passage analysis per week**.

Close Reading (10%):

The close reading paper is a brief critical analysis of an aspect of one of the texts we have discussed in class. Think of it as an extended passage analysis, i.e. analyze in-depth one single aspect that stood out to you. For example, you may discuss the aspects we focus on in class (race, gender, sexuality, national identity, etc.) and/or the form of the text, its characters, setting, etc. Contextualize your analysis, and cite or paraphrase when appropriate.

This paper is due **on Canvas** before class and as a **hard copy** at the beginning of class.

Critical Response (15%):

For this paper, you are required to analyze a text using one other critical (i.e. scholarly) article published within the last 15 years. This paper is supposed to be a conversation between you and the other critic about one specific aspect of one the texts we have discussed so far. Analyze the text you have chosen, and state where you agree or disagree with the critic's opinion or explicate what they might have missed in their analysis. Furthermore, discuss how the argument of the author enhances your own reading of the text. This requires you to cite from the scholarly article or give a summary of the argument when appropriate.

This paper is due **on Canvas** before class and as a **hard copy** at the beginning of class.

Final Paper Proposal (10%):

For this assignment, you need to provide a summary of your final paper topic. The proposal will include an explanation of the research question in addition to a working thesis and a preliminary bibliography with annotations. A more specific guideline will be posted on Canvas.

The proposal is due **on Canvas** before class and as a **hard copy** at the beginning of class.

Final Paper (20%):

This is a focused analysis of one text discussed in class. You need to present an original argument that involves some of the questions and issues we have discussed in class. You need **at least three secondary sources** to back up your claims.

You are encouraged to use your passage analyses, close readings, and/or your discussion leader notes for the final paper.

Discussion Leaders (15%):

Discussion leaders are responsible for developing 2-3 questions for discussion and highlighting key points for further analysis. Relevant supplemental materials may be brought in to help contextualize the discussion (e.g. a short article, video, etc.).

Supplemental material should be limited in length and quantity. Your presentation should cover context and pose questions that invite deeper levels of analysis of the material. You are encouraged to be creative, e.g. bring in videos or come up with a brief exercise for the class. Your presentation should take about 10 minutes (and definitely no more than 15) and is designed to lead your peers into a discussion of one or two aspects of the text that you found noteworthy and/or challenging.

A **one-page handout** is required and needs to be sent to me at least **the day before class, by 7pm**.

Course Policies:

1. *Attendance:* Attendance is required. Missing **more than three periods** without a formal excuse (e.g. a doctor's note) or frequent tardiness will negatively affect your grade. If you miss **six periods or more** during a semester, you will fail the entire course, unless those absences involve university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me prior to the date that will be missed. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Important: It is your responsibility to check whether your attendance was taken, particularly if you come in late. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. If you miss class, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

2. *Assignments:* In order to pass the course, **all required coursework** listed in the latest version of the syllabus **has to be submitted on or before their respective due dates**. Papers are due at the beginning of class or on-line at the assigned deadline. You may be

granted one extensions for the short papers (i.e. the close reading or critical response) and on the instructor's discretion only (see #3).

3. Late Papers/Assignments: A whole letter grade will be deducted from all papers and assignments submitted within 24 hours of the missed due date. Papers and assignments that are submitted later than that will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

If you are struggling with an assignment or think you will not be able to meet a deadline, please talk to me at least 48 hours before the due date about an extension.

4. Classroom Behavior and Netiquette: Students come from various cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Many of the texts we discuss touch upon sensitive and/or controversial topics, and it is required that you display open-mindedness and respect in class at all times, but particularly during class discussions and group work, where ideas may be presented that differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal from the class and, accordingly, an absence for that day.

5. Email Correspondence Policy: You are encouraged to email me questions, concerns, ask for feedback, or make an appointment with me outside my office hours via email. However, please only use your UF email to contact me, and refrain from sending me messages on Canvas (as these might be missed and might not get a timely response!). I try my best to respond within 24 hours—if I do not, feel free to send a follow-up email.

6. In-Class Work: Knowledge is created in collaboration with others. Active participation is thus a crucial part of success in this class and is part of your final grade. You are expected to contribute meaningfully and constructively to each class session. These discussions are designed to help us gain a better understanding of the complexities of the texts and their context, which will prove particularly useful for your final paper. That means that you should come to class prepared to talk and ask questions about the readings. You will also be expected to work in small groups and participate in class and group discussions as well as other in-class activities. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up.

7. Electronic Devices Policy: Laptops and tablets are allowed, but I reserve the right to check your screen periodically to ensure that they are not used for anything unrelated to class. If you should be caught misusing this privilege, you will be prohibited from further using laptops/tablets during class and required to bring in hard copies of all readings. **All other electronic devices, including cellphones, are strictly prohibited** unless specifically announced by the instructor beforehand. Therefore, you are not allowed to use your phones to access your readings. Texting in class is extremely rude and, after one initial warning, will result in dismissal and an absence.

8. Paper Format & Submission: All papers have to be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) or PDF (.pdf) documents to Canvas. **Hard copies of the short papers and the final paper**

proposal are due at the beginning of class. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner.

All papers and assignments must have your name, the course number and title, name of instructor, and the date printed on the top left-hand side of the first page. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, pages numbered, and include a title representative of your argument. Additionally, all papers must be written in accordance with MLA style (in-text citations, Works Cited, and headers). Be sure to staple papers before submitting hard copies. Unstapled papers will not be accepted.

9. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities: It is your responsibility to keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

10. Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student 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, 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.

Student Honor Code Sanctions: For a violation or violations of the Honor Code, a student may receive any of the sanctions that can be imposed for Student Conduct Code violations, including but not limited to conduct probation, suspension and expulsion as well as any educational sanctions. In addition, students may receive the following:

- a) Assignment grade penalty. The student is assigned a grade penalty on an assignment including but not limited to a zero.
- b) Course grade penalty. The student is assigned a grade penalty in the entire course including but not limited to an "E".

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007

<<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#).

11. Grade Appeals: In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

12. *Course Evaluations:* Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

13. *Special Accommodations for Students:* The classroom is for everyone, and I will try my best to make the classroom as inclusive as possible. Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor. These are specialists who will help me by giving me advice on how to make the classroom accessible to you.

14. *UF's Policy on Harassment:* UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:

<http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

15. *Counseling and Wellness Center:* Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

16. *U Matter, We Care:* Your well-being is important. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

17. *Policy on Environmental Sustainability:* Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

18. *Writing Studio:* If you seek additional help with your writing, the University Writing Studio is located in Tigert 302 and is available to all UF students. Please make sure to make an appointment before you go in.

SYLLABUS

Readings with an asterisk (*) are available on Canvas.

WEEK 1

- 8/22 Introduction: Syllabus, Course Policies & Goals, Assignments, Canvas
 8/24 The Declaration of Independence*
 Benjamin Franklin's autobiography (excerpts)*

WEEK 2

- 8/27 Introduction to Literary Analysis and MLA
 Nünning et al., "Introduction to Literary Studies"*
 Garber, *The Use and Abuse of Literature* (excerpts)*
 8/29 Excerpts by Dana Nelson, *National Manhood** and Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages**
 8/31 Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*

WEEK 3

- 9/3 **Labor Day**
 9/5 "The Iroquois Creation Story"*
 Seneca, "The Origin of Stories"*
 9/7 Native American trickster tales*

WEEK 4

- 9/10 William Bradford, excerpts from *Of Plymouth Plantation**
 9/12 Sarah Wakefield, "Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees"
 Elizabeth Hanson, "God's Mercy Surmounting Man's Cruelty"*
 9/14 Ralph W. Emerson*: "Self-Reliance", "The Poet", "Nature"

WEEK 5

- 9/17 Whitman*: "Song of Myself" (excerpts), "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer"
 Emily Dickinson*: "To Hear an Oriole Sing", "Success is counted sweetest"
 9/19 Phillis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America"*
 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*
 9/21 Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron Mills*

WEEK 6

- 9/24 **Close Reading Paper Due**
 William Dean Howells, "Editha"*
 Edith Wharton, "Roman Fever"*
 9/26 Henry James, *Washington Square*
 9/28 Henry James, *Washington Square*

WEEK 7

- 10/1 T.S. Eliot, excerpts from *The Waste Land**
 10/3 F. Scott Fitzgerald*: "Babylon Revisited", "Winter Dreams"
 10/5 Kate Chopin, "Désirée's Baby"*
 Sui Sin Far, "In The Land of the Free"*

WEEK 8

- 10/8 bell hooks, excerpts from *We Real Cool**
 Gwendolyn Brooks, "We Real Cool"*
 Charles Chestnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition*
- 10/10 Stephen Knadler, "Untragic Mulatto"*
 Charles Chestnutt, *The Marrow of Tradition*
- 10/12 Langston Hughes*: "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", "Weary Blues", "Mother to Son"

WEEK 9

- 10/15 Zora Neale Hurston*: "How it Feels to be Colored Me", "The Gilded Six-Bits"
- 10/17 Ernest Hemingway, "The Battler"*
 Ralph Ellison, "The Battle Royale" (from *Invisible Man*)*
- 10/19 Hemingway*: "Indian Camp", "The Doctor & Doctor's Wife"
 Zitkala-Sa, "School Days of an Indian Girl"*

WEEK 10

- 10/22 Michael Kimmel, excerpts from *Manhood in America**
 Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*
- 10/24 **Critical Response Paper Due**
 Sylvia Plath*: "Lady Lazarus", "Fever 103" and "Ariel"
- 10/26 Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

WEEK 11

- 10/29 Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*
- 10/31 Alice Walker, "Everyday Use"*
 Audre Lorde, "The Woman Thing"*
 Gwendolyn Brooks, "To The Diaspora"*
- 11/2 **Homecoming**

WEEK 12

- 11/5 James Baldwin, *Another Country*
- 11/7 James Baldwin, *Another Country*
 Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex"*
- 11/9 Louise Erdrich, "The Red Convertible"*
 Leslie Marmon Silko, "Lullaby"*

WEEK 13

- 11/12 **Veterans Day Observed**
- 11/14 John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly"*
 David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
- 11/16 **Final Paper Proposal Due**
 David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

WEEK 14

- 11/19 **Thanksgiving (Canvas Assignment Day)**
 Maxine Hong Kingston, "No Name Woman"*
 Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek"*
 11/21 **Thanksgiving**
 11/23 **Thanksgiving**

WEEK 15

- 11/26 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*
 11/28 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*
 11/30 Aimee Phan*: "Miss Lien", "Gates of Saigon"
 Michael Puleolo, "Something in the Wind"*

WEEK 16

- 12/3 Junot Díaz*: "Drown", "Negocios", "How to Date a Brown girl, Black girl, White girl, or Halfie"
 12/5 Course Wrap-Up
 12/7 Reading Day

WEEK 17

- 12/10 Reading Day
 12/12 Reading Day
 12/14 **FINAL PAPER DUE**

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

General Education Assessment Rubric

Please note: Assignments and papers short of the minimum word count as well as papers that fail to follow the instructions of the assignment prompts **will not receive credit**.

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.