

AML 2070: Survey of American Literature, Section #8023 - Class #25777, Fall 2020

Instructor Name: Maurice A. Evers

Course meeting times & locations: Synchronous sessions MWF period 10 on Zoom

Office Location and Hours: W period 11 on Zoom; available by appointment

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: mauriceanthony1@ufl.edu

Course Description: This survey will introduce students to major writers and issues through a cross-genre examination of representations of the family. The course will explore various authors, styles, and literary movements from the Jeffersonian Era to the present. It will look at engagements between key texts and social difference, such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, and deal with socio-cultural, economic, and political conflict. Ultimately, this course will be concerned with questions around what constitutes family and how family values are reflective of crises of national identity over time.

COVID-19 Statement: In the light of the ongoing public health crisis, this course will be offered entirely through synchronous online class sessions. We will meet for sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays period 10 on Zoom.

Please be sure to download Zoom on your personal computer before the start of the class and familiarize yourself with how it works. Our classes will consist of lectures with PowerPoints, clips from films, your participation in discussion, and I will be monitoring the chat as well. I will send instructions via email about how to join our Zoom meetings.

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:

Rachel Hope Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America* (uploaded to Canvas)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (Canvas)

Richard Wright, *Black Boy* (Canvas)

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (Canvas)

Tennessee Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Canvas)

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (Canvas)

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar* (Canvas)

Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

Sherman Alexie, "What You Pawn I Will Redeem" (Canvas)

Junot Díaz, *Drown* (Canvas)

You may find these texts at online booksellers: AbeBooks, Amazon, Bookshop, Google Books, iBooks. You might also consider local options like Third House Books or Book Gallery West and both Library West and the Alachua County Library System.

Recommended Texts:

The Elements of Style (any edition), E. B. White and William Strunk Jr.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Reading Quizzes (10 multiple choice quizzes; 100 points):

Reading quizzes will be administered in class and will test your familiarity with the text's plot, narrative, and characters, as well as its key themes. These will be announced quizzes and their dates have been mentioned on the weekly schedule.

In-class Presentation (100 points):

After the first week, students will select a text from the syllabus for an 8-10-minute class presentation. During the presentation, you will share your research on the history and cultural significance of any one dimension of the family represented in the text. You will prepare 3 PowerPoint slides to supplement your presentation. Once every one selects a text for presentation, I will create a schedule and post it on Canvas.

3 Reading Responses (500 words; 50 points each):

Write-Ups where you will reflect on any concept, idea, or claim that has been invoked in a text from the syllabus which aroused your intellectual curiosity. These are geared towards bringing about a fuller understanding of the reading and facilitating a better grasp over analytical thinking and writing.

Midterm Paper (1000 words; 200 points):

This paper will consist of a thematic analysis of one of the texts we are reading for class. The essay will incorporate **two** critical secondary sources that speak to similar issues and themes you are exploring in your texts. Consider the ways in which criticism can help you to build your own original arguments on the text. I encourage you to consult with me before you begin the writing process.

Research Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography (500 words; 100 points):

In this assignment, you will write a brief proposal for the topic that you wish to work with for your final research paper. Your proposal should include a primary text, a central argument, your proposed methodology and plan of research. Additionally, you will create an annotated list of provisional secondary sources that you propose to use in your research paper.

Final Research Paper (2000 words; 350 points):

In this essay, you will use the skills we have built throughout the course and in our previous essays. Your paper should have a strong, clear, and creative argument about a text of your choosing, and should consult at least **three** critical secondary sources. This should not be a regurgitation of the issues, ideas, and themes we have discussed in class, but should instead be a result of your own critical thinking and understanding of the text.

Total word count for this course = **6,000 words**

Course Policies:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: Use your allotted absences wisely (for emergencies, major illness) as you would for any job. You will fail the course if you accrue **six** 50-minute absences. You will earn a lowered course grade if you accrue **four**.

- The official UF Attendance Policy: Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first-class meeting. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Students should be prepared to notify me *prior to* participation/observance of these events.
 - Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
 - Students cannot participate in classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.
 - If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and they have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.
 - The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

- 3. *Tardiness*: Latecomers receive partial absences and must contact me after class, so I know you attended. Being tardy 3 times = 1 absence.
- 4. *Classroom behavior*: Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.
 - *Netiquette*: Additionally, emails to me must follow professional protocols of subject, grammar, and tone--including proper salutations and signature. Remember that all emails sent through our UFL accounts are Public Records (Florida Statutes, Chapter 119).

- 5. *UF's policy on Sexual Harassment*: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>
- 6. *Paper Format & Submission*: Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered and correct MLA formatting. All papers will be submitted as an MS Word (.doc or .docx) to Canvas no later than the beginning of class.
- 7. *Late Papers/Assignments*: No late papers or assignments will be accepted.
- 8. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
- 9. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism*. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work

submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

The current UF Student Honor Code defines plagiarism as: a student must not represent as the Student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student’s own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student’s own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.
5. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.
6. *Students who are in distress* or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF’s Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
7. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
8. *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). Please contact Ms. Blount at cblount@ufl.edu Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
9. *Course Evaluations*. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

Recommended Policies:

15. *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.)

Tentative Course Schedule

Wk	Date	Read/View for Class	DUE
1	8.31	Class Introduction and Syllabus Review	
	9.2	Screening, <i>The Cosby Show</i> pilot episode	
	9.4	Rachel Hope Cleves, <i>Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America</i>	
2	9.7	Holiday	
	9.9	Cleaves continued	
	9.11	Cleaves wrap-up	Quiz 1
3	9.14	Workshop: Reading Responses & Presentations	
	9.16	Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i>	
	9.18	Douglass continued	
4	9.21	Douglass wrap-up	Quiz 2
	9.23	Richard Wright, <i>Black Boy</i> (excerpts)	
	9.25	Wright continued	

5	9.28	Wright wrap-up	Quiz 3
	9.30	Workshop: Thematic Analysis & Secondary Sources	Reading Response 1
	10.2	John Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (<i>*Homecoming moved to 12.24*</i>)	
6	10.5	John Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	
	10.7	Steinbeck continued	
	10.9	Steinbeck continued	
7	10.12	Steinbeck continued	
	10.14	Steinbeck wrap-up	Quiz 4
	10.16	Tennessee Williams, <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>	
8	10.19	Williams continued	
	10.21	Williams wrap-up	Quiz 5
	10.23	Workshop: Research Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography	Reading Response 2
9	10.26	Lorraine Hansberry, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	

10.28 Hansberry continued

10.30 Hansberry wrap-up

Quiz 6

10 11.2 Screening, prime-time TV families

11.4 Prime-time TV families wrap-up

**Midterm
Paper / Quiz 7**

11.6 Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

11 11.9 Plath continued

11.11 Holiday

11.13 Plath wrap-up

**Reading
Response
3 / Quiz 8**

12 11.16 Junot Diaz, *Drown*

11.18 Diaz continued

11.20 Diaz wrap-up

Quiz 9

13 11.23 Sherman Alexie, "What You Pawn I Will Redeem"

**Presentations
cut-off**

11.25 Holiday

11.27 Holiday

14 **11.30** Alexie wrap-up

Quiz 10

12.2 Screening, *Icebox*

12.4 *Icebox* wrap-up

15 **12.7** **Research paper peer review**

12.9 Course wrap-up

Final Research Paper

Grading/Assessment Rubric

Letter Grade GPA

A 4.0

A- 3.67

B+ 3.33

B 3.0

B- 2.67

C+ 2.33

C 2.0

C- 1.67

D+ 1.33

D 1.0

Percentage (Point %)

93–100

90–92

87–89

83–86

80–82

77–79

73–76

70–72

67–69

63–66

D- 0.67

60–62

E 0.00

0–59

Grade Meanings:

A—Student did what the assignment asked at a high-quality level, meeting all of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Additionally, his or her work shows originality, creativity, and demonstrates that the student took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.

B—Student did what the assignment asked at a quality level, meeting most of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

C—Student did what the assignment asked but overlooked some of the composition objectives. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D—Student neglected some basic requirements of the assignment and completed it at a poor-quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete, and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.

E—An E is usually reserved for students who do not do the work or do not come to class. However, if work is shoddy, shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, and/or an inability to meet the composition objectives, he or she will receive a failing grade.