

AML2410-3698 10560—Photographic American Literature, Fall 2018

Instructor Name: Maurice A. Evers

Course meeting times & locations: MWF Period 2 (8:30am-9:20am); TUR 2336 (Turlington)

Office Location and Hours: TBA, and by appointment.

Course website:

Instructor Email: mauriceanthony1@ufl.edu

Course Description: This course brings together literature and photography to explore ways of thinking through the juxtaposition of word and image. Entering ongoing conversations about literature, photography, memory and temporality, subjectivity, representation and realism, we will attend to questions regarding how photographic discourse has informed literature and how literature influences the way we read photography. We will read photo-text collaborations alongside influential photographic theory to understand how the histories and practices of literature and photography have developed together since the nineteenth century and consider how we understand these interactions today. We will engage in close and contextualized readings of our course materials, considering key historical, social, political, cultural, racial, gendered and personal contexts to understand the intersections of the literary and the photographic in constructing national identity. Additionally, we will apply key concepts and practice image analysis throughout the semester.

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:

James Agee and Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

John Berger, *Another Way of Telling*

Teju Cole, *Blind Spot*

Norman Mailer & Jon Naar *The Faith of Graffiti*

Claudia Rankine, *Don't Let Me Be Lonely: An American Lyric*

Carol Shloss, *In Visible Light: Photography and the American Writer, 1840-1940*

Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices*

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Reading Quizzes and In-Class Participation 200 pts

Short Analytical Papers (400 words x 3) 150 pts

Essay 1: Close Reading (900 words) 100 pts

Essay 2: Visual Analysis (1,500 words) 200 pts

Prospectus for the Research Paper (400 words) 50 pts

Essay 3: Research Paper (2,000 words) 300 pts

Total points for this course = 1,000 points

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*: Attendance is required and will be taken every day.
You are allowed three (3) absences. For every absence exceeding this, your final grade will drop by one letter grade. If you miss six (6) classes, you will automatically fail the course.
The University of Florida exempts from this policy only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, military duty, and court-mandated responsibilities (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Students who participate in athletic or extracurricular activities are permitted to be absent twelve (12) scholastic days per semester without penalty. A scholastic day is defined as any day on which regular class work is scheduled. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor **prior** to the date that will be missed. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to be aware of all due dates. If you are absent due to a scheduled event, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.
3. A note on tardiness: Students who enter class after roll has been taken are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.
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>
4. *Paper Format & Submission*: *Paper Format & Submission*: All written assignments should be submitted electronically to Canvas as a Microsoft Word document (doc or docx). Other file types will not be accepted. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All drafts should conform to MLA style.

5. *Late Papers/Assignments*: No late papers or assignments will be accepted. I *may* consider extenuating circumstances, *but you must contact me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due and provide documentation*. Computer or email problems are not valid excuses for late work; save documents frequently and on multiple disks.
6. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
7. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism*. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
8. 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.
9. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
10. *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.
11. *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>
12. 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>
13. *Classroom behavior and netiquette*: 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. 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).
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/>

Course Schedule: Readings/viewings appear in parenthesis on the day they are due

Week 1

8.22 Class Introduction: Syllabus Review, Course Requirements, Paper Assignments & Due Dates

8.24 Nicholas Mirzoeff, "The Age of Photography"

Week 2

8.27 Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

8.29 Sontag continued

8.31 Sontag wrap-up + image analysis

Week 3

9.3 No Class—Holiday

9.5 John Berger, *Another Way of Telling*

9.7 Berger continued

Week 4

- 9.10 Berger wrap-up + image analysis
- 9.12 “Eudora Welty as Photographer” (Smithsonian.com)
- 9.14 Welty wrap-up + image analysis

Week 5

- 9.17 **Essay 1 Peer Review**
- 9.19 James Agee & Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*
- 9.21 Agee & Evans continued + **Essay 1 DUE**

Week 6

- 9.24 Agee & Evans wrap-up + image analysis
- 9.26 Carol Shloss, *In Visible Light*: Chapter 5 (on Agee and Evans)
- 9.28 John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Week 7

- 10.1 Steinbeck continued
- 10.3 Steinbeck continued + Federal Writers’ Project/Farm Security Administration
- 10.5 Steinbeck continued + Dorothea Lange photography (MoMA.org)

Week 8

- 10.8 Steinbeck wrap-up + Lange image analysis
- 10.10 Carol Shloss, *In Visible Light*: Chapter 6 (on Steinbeck and Lange)
- 10.12 Pare Lorentz, *The Plow that Broke the Plains*

Week 9

- 10.15 Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices*
- 10.17 Wright continued
- 10.19 Wright wrap-up + Gordon Parks photography (Gordon Parks foundation)

Week 10

- 10.22 **Essay 2 Peer Review**
- 10.24 bell hooks “In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life” + Parks image analysis
- 10.26 Norman Mailer & Jon Naar, *The Faith of Graffiti* + **Essay 2 DUE**

Week 11

- 10.29 Mailer & Naar continued
- 10.31 Mailer & Naar wrap-up + image analysis
- 11.2 **No Class—Holiday**

Week 12

- 11.5 Claudia Rankine, *Don’t Let Me Be Lonely: An American Lyric*
- 11.7 Rankine continued image analysis
- 11.9 Rankine wrap-up + Judith Butler, “Photography, War, Outrage”

Week 13

- 11.12 **No Class—Holiday**
- 11.14 Teju Cole, *Blind Spot*
- 11.16 Cole continued

Week 14

11.19 Cole wrap-up + image analysis + **Prospectus Due**

11.21 **No Class—Holiday**

11.23 **No Class—Holiday**

Week 15

11.26 “Race, Crime, and Media Bias” & “If They Gunned Me Down, What Photo Would Media Use?” + O.J. Simpson mugshot image analysis

11.28 Nicole R. Fleetwood “Posing in Prison: Family Photographs, Emotional Labor and Carceral Intimacy”

11.30 Alexandra Samuel, “Facing Ourselves Online” + **Conferences**

Week 16

12.3 **Essay 3 Workshop**

12.5 **Essay 3 DUE**

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	GPA	Percentage (Point %)
A	4.0	93–100
A-	3.67	90–92
B+	3.33	87–89
B	3.0	83–86
B-	2.67	80–82
C+	2.33	77–79
C	2.0	73–76
C-	1.67	70–72
D+	1.33	67–69
D	1.0	63–66
D-	0.67	60–62
E	0.00	0–59

Assessment Rubric

Reading Quizzes and In-Class Participation 200 pts

Quizzes: To encourage detailed reading, there will be quizzes to ensure and supplement out-of-class assignments. Quizzes will take place during the first ten minutes of class and will be on the reading assigned for that day. They can be either multiple choice or short essay, both open and closed book, both announced and unannounced.

In-Class Participation: Students should read each of the texts for its themes, central ideas and the compositional elements of the text. Students are encouraged to find critical resources (critical summaries,

scholarly journal articles, etc.) to supplement their reading and contribute to their overall understanding of the text. Additionally, students are expected to bring their notes to class and be prepared to engage in class discussions.

Short Analytical Papers (400 words x 3) 150 pts

The *Short Analytical Papers* will ask students to write about how visual culture shapes a specific text. Each student is responsible for writing a total of *Three Short Analytical Papers*, and each student will choose which days to respond. These papers are due at the beginning of class. These papers will be focused and organized, showing critical thinking and an attempt to integrate ideas into course topics and objectives.

Students are welcome to visit and respond to the Harn Museum of Art's exhibit "I, Too, Am America: Photographs of the Civil Rights Era" by Steve Schapiro, Gordon Parks, Bruce Davidson, which runs from November 6, 2018 – March 31, 2019.

Essay 1: Close Reading (900 words) 100 pts

The *Close Reading* essay asks students to choose a *passage* from one of the course texts to read closely. Students will analyze the passage by paying close attention to its composition and will make an argument about the way in which the author's composition influences their reading.

Essay 2: Visual Analysis (1,500 words) 200 pts

The *Visual Analysis* essay will consist of a visual analysis of one of the works we have read for class. The essay will incorporate *at least two critical sources* that speak to similar issues and themes the student is exploring in one's text. Consider the ways in which scholarly criticism can help to build out one's own original arguments.

Prospectus for the Research Paper (400 words) 50 pts

The *Prospectus* will consist of 1-3 paragraphs that includes students' topic and research question(s), thesis statement, and annotated bibliography of 4 sources. Writing a prospectus requires that students begin researching for the *Research Paper* to assess available sources and effectively define a topic and research question.

Essay 3: Research Paper (2,000 words) 300 pts

The *Research Paper* will ask students to apply the critical readings to an argument on the representations of visual culture in *one work* of American literature we have read this semester. Use the skills we have built throughout the course and in the previous essays. *Research Papers* should have a strong, clear, and creative argument about a text of the student's choosing, and should consult *at least four critical 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 one's critical thinking, understanding of the text and secondary research.

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.

Note: You must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words. **NOTE ALSO:** a grade of “C-” **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.