

AML 2070: Survey of American Literature

Anastasia Kozak
 Spring 2016, Section 0535
 Class periods: T 8-9 (3:00-4:55 pm) R 9 (4:05-4:55 pm)
 Location: MAT 0115

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 Office hours: R 7-8 (1:55-3:50 pm) in TUR 4415
 Instructor's home page: <http://olaza.ufl.edu/kozak/>
 Canvas site for AML 2070: <http://elearning.ufl.edu>

Course Overview

In this course, we will read, analyze, and write about major works in American literature, starting with texts from the colonial era and ending with late 20th century writing. In particular, we will look at literature that explores issues of unstable or ambiguous identities. As we shall see, concerns with ambiguity has been an ongoing topic of interest in American literature and American authors explored these topics in a variety of literary productions, including autobiography, slave narratives, nature writing, sensationalist journalism, expatriate literature, crime fiction, and political writing. Ultimately, we will attempt to answer the questions of how fluid identities (of both people and places) in American literature shape our own worldviews; and how our fascination with ambivalence might be connected to the insecurities about our own authenticity and origins.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of the course is to help students acquire a diverse portfolio of critical and practical skills. By the end of the course, students will have:

- Learned to read, write, and think critically about American literature
- Acquired good understanding of key American literary movements and periods
- Demonstrated ability to do a critical close reading and situate literary texts historically
- Conducted research utilizing a wide range of on-campus and digital resources
- Practiced presenting their own ideas and research to their peers
- Cited their sources in correct MLA format

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>.

Wiki Learning Environment

All lecture notes and resources in the course will be posted and assessed in the course wiki (Canvas "Pages"). A portion of your coursework will be completed in the wiki as well. Practical training on how to work in wiki environment will take place during the first week of class.

Readings

The following texts are available at the UF bookstore and online vendors. If you choose to buy your texts online, I recommend sources such as Abebooks.com, Alibris.com, and Betterworldbooks.com that serve independent booksellers.

- Didion, Joan. *Miami*. Penguin Random House, 1998. ISBN: 9780679781806.
- Highsmith, Patricia. *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Norton, 2008. ISBN: 9780393332148.
- Larsen, Nella. *Passing*. Norton, 2007. ISBN: 9780393979169.

Additional course readings and podcasts will be available electronically via Canvas or through George A. Smathers Libraries Course Reserves (ARES).

Useful Online Resources

- Brief Timeline of American Literature: <http://public.wsu.edu/~campbell/amlit/timefram.html>
- Documenting the American South: <http://docsouth.unc.edu/>
- Library of Congress American History page: <http://www.loc.gov/topics/americanhistory.php>
- Mark Twain Interactive Scrapbook: <http://www.pbs.org/marktwain/scrapbook/index.html>
- Copyright and Fair Use (Stanford): <http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>

Course Policies/Requirements

Attendance

Please be courteous to others by arriving to class on time. If you're more than 15 minutes late, your attendance will not be recorded. Three (3) tardies constitute one full absence.

You are allowed four (4) period absences in the course (no explanation required). Do not miss a day on which you're due to present. Each additional unexcused absence after the initial four, unless taken for university-related events or religious holidays, will lower your final course grade by five (5) points. Absences due to major illnesses will only be excused if you submit appropriate medical documentation on the day you return to class. **If you miss more than six (6) class periods, you will fail the course.¹**

Late Work Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted for grading. You are allowed one-week extension on any one (1) assignment of your choice, except for the presentation materials and the final paper. To take advantage of the extension, you must submit a brief written request at least 24 hours before the deadline. Please note that because of our full class calendar and your classmates' commitments in other courses, presentation dates cannot be rescheduled once assigned.

Mode of Submission and Paper Maintenance

Students will submit essays **BOTH** as a hardcopy in class and through Canvas. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and numbered pages, and MLA style citations. Word count (not including the references) must be prominently displayed on the first page. Electronic submissions must be in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format.

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Homework and class preparation

This class requires a timely submission of all assignments and ongoing participation (in class and via wiki). Always come to class prepared by doing all the readings and watching the assigned videos. You are expected to have access to either print or electronic version of the texts we are discussing in class and to contribute meaningful and relevant comment during class discussions. Since this is a literature class, **expect to read, on average, about 100 pages per week.**

Laptop and tablet policy

You are allowed to use your own laptop or tablet to read electronic course materials; however, any use of electronic devices not related to classroom learning are disruptive and will not be tolerated. Cell phones must be set to silent during class.

¹ Since our course meets for two periods on Tuesdays, missing class on that day counts as two absences.

Communication with instructor

Your instructor is available by e-mail and during office hours. Please note that e-mail will not be checked after hours, on weekends, or holidays. Your communications with the instructor should be considered professional and the style and content should reflect that. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. Contact the instructor about an appointment if you are not available during the scheduled office hours.

Student feedback

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>.

Academic honesty

The University community's policies and methods regarding academic honesty are clearly spelled out in the UF Student Honor Code. Visit <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code> for more information.

Accommodations

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Visit <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/> for more information.

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more information about UF policies regarding harassment, visit http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/.

Assignments and Grading

- Close reading assignment: 10% (500 words)
- Historical Annotations: 10% (700 words)
- Presentation: 15% (1,000 words)
- Midterm paper: 20% (1,500 words)
- Final paper and proposal: 30% (2,500 words, including a 250-word proposal)
- Weekly reading quizzes: 5%
- Professionalism, homework, and collaboration: 10%

All assignments must meet the required minimum word count in order to count towards the final grade. Please note that listed word counts do not include bibliographic references. See below for detailed descriptions.

Close reading: 10% (500 words)

Conduct a close reading analysis of a passage or stanza from one of the texts we have read. In a close reading, you should focus on a small section of the text to identify literary facets such as language, vocabulary, point of view, characterization, symbolism, tropes, etc. **Due: January 26**

Historical Annotations: 10% (700 words)

Locate one (1) historical document related to an event, person, document, place, or other aspect mentioned in your chosen text. You may choose to consult the materials listed in “Useful Online Resources” of the syllabus or take this opportunity to explore the Smathers Library catalog and databases. After carefully examining your chosen document, prepare a write-up that briefly summarizes the document and then show how it enriches your understanding of the original text.

Due: February 16

Critical analysis presentation: 15% (1,000 words, 10-15 min)

Prepare and present a short paper that explores a key theme in the text that we read in class. You must formulate and explore a specific question within that theme, articulate a focused thesis statement, and defend your argument with relevant examples from the text. You are welcome to bring in outside source with relevant historical or biographical details, but the majority of the paper should reflect your own critical approach to the text. Be prepared to lead a short class discussion and answer questions after your presentation. **Students will sign up for presentations in-class.** After presenting your paper, you will have **one (1) week** to revise your original ideas, update your write-up, and submit it for grading.

Midterm paper: 20% (1,500 words)

Conduct an analysis of an idea, concept, or theme by putting **two (2)** of the texts we have read in conversation with each other. You should dedicate equal attention to both text, to have a clearly formulated thesis statement, and support your claim with relevant examples from both texts. Essay prompts will be distributed two (2) weeks before due date. **Due: March 8**

Final paper (including a 250-word proposal): 30% (2,500 words total)

Choose one or two texts that we have read in this course and develop an original and well-sustained claim. At least one of your texts should be picked from the second part of the course (i.e. after Spring Break). In order to ensure that you give yourself plenty of time for research and conceptualization of your ideas, final paper will be submitted in three stages. Your initial paper proposals are **due on March 29**, followed by complete draft on **April 14**. One-on-one conferences with the instructor will take place during the final week of classes. Final drafts are **due on April 26th @ 7 pm (no exceptions)**.

Reading Pop Quizzes: 5% (best 10 out of 12)

Pop quizzes will usually take place at the beginning of class and will be based on the reading for that week. If you show up late to class you will receive a grade of zero for the quiz. Missed quizzes, even for excused absences, cannot be made up.

Professionalism and collaboration: 10%

This grade includes your punctuality, attendance, class preparation, etiquette, and collaboration. We will not have the time to discuss everyone’s work in detail during class time; therefore, treat your classmates as a valuable support and editorial network. You will also be working in groups on several in-class exercises.

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

Grade point equivalencies

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. Visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> for more information.

Grade appeals

Complaints about individual assignments should be addressed to the instructor. Complaints about final grades should be discussed with the instructor in at least one conference soon after the next term begins. If the conference on the final grade does not resolve the problem in a valid, college-level manner, the complaint can be expressed on a form in the English office, 4008 Turlington, which is available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. The form must be accompanied with copies of every assignment and the instructor's directions.

Assessment Rubric

**Please note that this is the general rubric that applies to all student work. Individual assignments will have additional requirements, which will be thoroughly explained in class. **

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Assignments 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.	Assignments either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Lack of 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.
REVISION	Work exhibits evidence of continuous, substantial, and critical revision of all your work based on peer and instructor feedback.	Absence of revision or insufficient revision in student's work. Disregard of peer and instructor feedback.
STYLE & FORMAT	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Documents are presented according to the specific formatting guidelines (including appropriate usage of hyperlinks and citations).	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Incorrect formatting of documents.
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.

"A" work is strong in all of the above five (5) areas.

"B" work warrants improvement in at least one (1) of the above areas.

"C" work needs considerable improvement in, but shows potential for, at least two (2) of the above areas.

"D" work requires significant revision in order to be improved upon in at least two (2) of the above areas.

Course Schedule

The following schedule is tentative and subject to change. Always consult Canvas and course wiki for the most up-to-date deadlines and requirements. You are also expected to check your Canvas inbox daily for course announcements. Readings and writing exercises are due on the day that they are listed in the calendar.

Week 1 Introduction to the course

Jan 5: Course orientation

Jan 7: John Smith, *A True Relation of Such Occurrences and Accidents of Noate as Hath Happened in Virginia* (excerpts) (1608)

Week 2 What is an American?

Jan 12 Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (excerpts) (1782)

Jan 14 White, *Narrative of K. White* (excerpts) (1809)

Week 3 Slave narratives

Jan 19 Phillis Wheatley, *Poems on Various Subjects* (1773)

James Williams, *Narrative of James Williams, an American Slave* (1838)

Jan 21 *Narrative of James Williams* (continued)

Week 4 Urban identities

Jan 26 **Close Reading DUE**

Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Wakefield" (1835)

Herman Melville, "Bartleby the Scrivener" (1853)

Jan 28 Herman Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" (1855)

Week 5 Nature and reality

Feb 2 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature" (1844)

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* (excerpts) (1854)

Feb 4 *Walden* (continued)

Week 6 Americans at home and abroad

Feb 9 Mark Twain, Pieces from *Virginia Daily Territorial Enterprise* (1861-1864)

Presentations #1 and #2

Feb 11 Henry James, "The Real Thing" (1892)

Henry James, "Europe" (1899)

Week 7 Harlem Renaissance

Feb 16 **Historical annotation DUE**

Presentations #3 and #4

Nella Larsen, *Passing* (1929)

Feb 18 *Passing* (continued)

Week 8 Harlem Renaissance

Feb 23 *Passing* (continued)

Midterm essay questions released

Presentations #5 and #6

Feb 25 *Passing* (continued)

Week 9 Spring Break - NO CLASS

Week 10 Suburbia

March 8 Midterm paper DUE

John Cheever "The Housebreaker of Shady Hill" (1956)

Flannery O'Connor, "Good Country People" (1955)

Presentations #7 and #8

March 10 John Cheever, "The Five-Forty-Eight" (1954)

Week 11 Crime

March 15 Patricia Highsmith, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955)

Presentations #9 and #10

March 17 *Ripley* (continued)

Week 12 Crime

March 22 *Ripley* (continued)

Presentations #11 and #12

March 24 *Ripley* (continued)

Week 13 Love/Politics

March 29 Final proposals DUE

Helen Norris, "The Pear Sitter" (1986)

Raymond Carver, "Intimacy" (1986)

Raymond Carver, "The Train" (1983)

Presentations #13 and #14

March 31 Joan Didion, *Miami* (1987)

Week 14 Politics

April 5 *Miami* (continued)

April 7 *Miami* (continued)

Week 15 Pseudowriting

April 12 Nasdijj, "Blood Flows Like the River Through My Veins" (1999)

Anthony Godby Johnson, *A Rock and a Hard Place* (1995)

April 14 Final paper draft DUE

Course wrap-up and evaluations

Week 16 Wrap-up

April 19 Student conferences to discuss revisions

Final revisions DUE on Tuesday, April 26th @ 7 pm