

## **Survey of American Literature: Modern Warfare and American Literature AML 2070: 4C48**

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**Office Hours: M-F Period 3**

**Class Meeting Time: MTWTHF Period 2**

**Location: MAT 0004**

### **Course Description:**

In this course we will be examining several key historical moments, particularly moments of war, in American History and examine how Literature is not only a vehicle for examining those moments but how these authors (and us as readers) are able to work through the traumas of those historical moments. Michael Rothberg, in his book on trauma studies, *Traumatic Realism*, argues that, “realism, modernism, and postmodernism can also be understood as persistent response to the demands of history. Like the demands themselves, these responses are also social; they provide frameworks for the representation and interpretation of history. In the representation of a historical event, in other words, a text’s “realist” component seeks strategies for referring to and documenting the world, its “modernist” side questions its ability to document history transparently; and its “postmodern” moment responds to the economic and political conditions of its emergence and public circulation” (9). It is this framework and these questions that anchor this course, which will lead us to think about modern war far and trauma. First, we will explore the impact of the Civil War and the emerging racial tensions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We will then move on to discuss warfare in the 20<sup>th</sup> century – WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, and the traumatic impact on soldiers and the nation. We will then move into our contemporary moment and examine the post 9/11 wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the traumatic aftermath. While there are many more moments to engage, this is meant as a sampling, so why we will explore these moments, we will also discuss the larger historical trajectory and traumatic impact that these events have for individuals and the nation.

Additionally, you will engage in close critical analysis of various genres and texts, as well as conduct writing assignments that will help further your understanding of the larger issues and connects made throughout the course.

### **Course Goals:**

By the end of the semester you should have improved your ability to do the following:

- Have a better grasp American Literature, Culture and History
- Develop your literary analysis skills and engage with critical sources;
- To draw upon your existing knowledge base and to think critically about the text(s);
- And develop knowledge of the writing process at its various stages;

- Learn that the writing and arguments you make are not restricted to the class, but rather translate to the larger world you inhabit – you will not be strictly writing to your instructor, but rather, you will be writing towards to the larger discourse community(ies) that you encounter. You will learn to think about and navigate your topic within those discourse communities.

You will also have the opportunity to strengthen your writing skills in the following areas:

- To think, read and write critically;
- To synthesize ideas and materials from outside sources;
- To develop clear and cohesive ideas on the sentence and paragraph levels;
- To navigate the UF library research facilities and tools;
- To formulate clear and answerable research questions;
- Receive instruction in the logic and form of documentation within a discipline (MLA); learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material); write analytical and argumentative papers appropriate to genres, rhetorical situations and larger discourse communities.

### **Required Texts**

You may find these at the UF bookstore, [www.ufl.bkstr.com](http://www.ufl.bkstr.com) (the one at the Reitz). Additionally the books are readily available on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and at local bookstores.

Books:

*A Farewell to Arms* (Ernest Hemingway) ISBN: 978-0684801469

*The Harlem Hellfighters* (Max Brooks) ISBN: 978-0307464972

*Slaughter-House-Five* (Kurt Vonnegut) ISBN: 978-0385333849

*Ceremony* (Leslie Marmon Silko) ISBN: 978-0-143104919

*The Complete Maus* (Art Spiegelman) ISBN: 978- 0141014081

*Home* (Toni Morrison) ISBN: 978-0307594167

*Dispatches* (Michael Herr) ISBN: 978-0679635250

*Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (Ben Fountain) ISBN: 978-0-06-088561-8

Films (available to rent on Amazon.com and at the UF library)

*The Thin Red Line* (Terrence Malick)

*Full Metal Jacket* (Stanley Kubrick)

\*In addition to the required text, see schedule for resources and course readings on Sakai

## **Course Assignments:**

### In-class-Participation: 35 points:

Consists of class discussion, activities and quizzes.

### Discussion Board Questions: 6@ 15 points each: 90 points:

#### **Post once a week!**

Provide a brief comment (120-150 words is sufficient, but feel free to write more) about the week's reading.

To receive full credit for your response, it must do the following: engage a particular aspect of the reading, with direct reference to the text (include quotes and page numbers), present an observation or question about the reading selection as a whole, and offer a point of inquiry or analysis to take up in the discussion. If there are multiple readings, you must also consider the readings as a whole in relation to your comments.

Don't merely state if you like/don't like the text – this activity is meant to prepare you for class discussion, so address issues you wish to discuss in class. This activity is also a good way to test out new ideas you might want to expand upon in longer writing assignments and get feedback from your peers. Also, if you are quieter in class, this gives you a space to voice your opinions and ideas on the text.

**To receive credit for the week's posting, you must post no later than 5 pm of that week! You may not post on film response or about the same thing you are doing your presentation on – you may post on the text but not the same issues/concerns.**

### Writing Assignments:

#### Close Reading Paper: 1000 words, 100 points.

In this paper you will closely examine a specific theme or motif and closely engage 2-3 passages that help extrapolate an argument that you construct about how that particular theme plays out in your chosen passages. A more detailed assignment description will be provided on Sakai.

#### Synthesis Paper 1500 words, 200 points.

For this paper you will engage a set of critical concerns about two texts. This is similar to your close reading paper, but looks at a larger spectrum of issues. You will formulate an argument that supports both your observations of the text closely and analyze specific themes, motifs, literary and rhetorical devices, plot, character development, and other devices, as well as the text's relationship to the larger course themes. A detailed assignment description will be posted on Sakai.

Research Paper 2500 words, 300 points.

For this paper you will incorporate 3-4 secondary sources in your discussion of a primary text. You determine the theme and scope of this paper, and you will be responsible for finding and conducting research using the library databases. A preliminary paper proposal with source list will be required in order for you to have your topic approved by the instructor.

All papers must focus on a particular question/theme/concern about the text and provide textual support and evidence to back up your claims and arguments. You need to develop a clear and coherent thesis statement that articulates your argument. You must follow MLA guidelines and citation. Your papers must be proofread carefully and formally written, i.e. use third person, academic voice.

More specific guidelines/questions for each essay will be provided on Sakai.

Secondary Source Presentation and Bibliographical Reflection: 100 points; 250 words

For this assignment you will conduct a 5-8 minute presentation in which you do the following:

- Prepare a close-reading of the text in which you lead class discussion for 5 - 8 min.
- Contextualize and reference one secondary scholarly source to back up your observations
- Create a handout that includes the following: a summary of the author's argument, relevant passages, an outline of themes/main points, and provide three questions to prompt discussion.
- Finally, write a brief bibliographical reflection in which you expanded on your discussion, assess the source, critique the author's arguments and outline the effectiveness and utility of the essay (as if were you to use it in a research paper).

Film Response: 2 @ 250 words each, 50 points each, total: 500 words; 100 points

You will write a reflection on each film we watch and connect it to the themes discussed in class. This will be due at the beginning of the class period on the day we discuss the film. More details will be posted on Sakai.

Trauma Comic and Discussion: 250 words; 75 points

Since we will be reading several comics that deal with war and trauma in this course, you will create and analyze your own comic. For this assignment, you will create a comic that explores a traumatic aspect in your life. In addition, you will provide a 250-word discussion about your comic, the choices you made and connections to one of the texts discussed in the class. More information will be posted on Sakai.

**Total Points: 1000**

**General Grading Criteria for Papers:**

“A” Paper

Ideas are clearly explained and supported. There is a strong focus and organization; thesis claims/ideas are maintained throughout the text. All supporting claims reinforce that larger trajectory of the argument. The paper critically engages the text(s) and provides thoughtful support and analysis. Ideas are developed and attention is give both to the themes of the text, rhetorical devices, and the larger themes of the course/prompts. The essay’s writing is clear, and MLA formatting and mechanics have no errors.

“B” Paper

Ideas are mostly clearly explained and supported. Focus, organization, and the larger claims and ideas are strong; however, one or two points need further explaining/better focus. No floating quotes and all sources are introduced and properly supported. Ideas generally developed but could be expanded to further emphasize the main points. The essay’s writing is mainly clear, and MLA formatting and mechanics may have one or two errors.

“C” Paper

Ideas and claims are somewhat supported. Some organization is found, but the larger claims need more support to validate them. There are floating quotes, underdeveloped ideas, and the writing, mechanics, and MLA formatting has significant errors, but is not unreadable.

“D” Paper

Ideas and claims are not supported. Organization is lacking and the argument is difficult to follow. Ideas are not developed and the text is not closely engaged. There are many mechanical and MLA formatting errors.

“E” Papers

Ideas and claims are not supported. Organization is lacking and there are many errors. Writing is unreadable. No citations.

**More Detailed Grading Criteria and Rubrics will be provided for each assignment on Sakai.**

**GRADING SCALE**

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000		C	2.0	73-76	730-769
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A-	3.67	90-93	900-939		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

### Statement on 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/general-education-requirement.aspx>

### Statement of Writing Requirement

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>

### Course Policies:

#### Attendance

This is a discussion based, participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that you will build your skills incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Consequently, attendance is required. If you miss more than **six** periods during the semester, you will **fail** the entire course. The only exempts from this policy are those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. **Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your six allowed absences. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be deduced participation points. 20 minutes or more will result in an absence.**

**\*\*\*If you are absent: You are required to submit by the next class period a 250-word response discussing that missed day's reading. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point deduction from your overall grade. \*\*\***

**\*\*\*If you miss a quiz, or are late for a quiz you will not be able to make it up\*\*\***

If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Please do not come late to class or leave class early; arriving late or leaving early disrupts the entire class. Please make every effort to be on time and do not schedule things that conflict with class time. Additionally, missing a scheduled conference with the instructor will result in an absence. If you need to reschedule a

conference, you must give amply warning, a minimum of one hour before the conference schedule through email.

**If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for submitting any assignment that may be due that day.**

### **Preparation**

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to in-class and on-line activities and discussion will affect your overall grade. Make sure you check Sakai and your email regularly – this is where assignments, course related materials and announcements will be posted.

Make sure you back up your work. Failure of technology is not an excuse for late papers.

If there is a word you do not know in a reading or other assignment, make sure you look it up. Also if there is a reference to a person or event and you do not know who or what it is, look it up. Part of being prepared for class is not just doing the reading, but making sure you grasp what you are reading. If you have questions about a specific reference or idea, bring it with you to class to discuss or post it on the Help/questions section of the discussion board.

Proofread, proofread, proofread! Before you turn in any assignment, whether it be a major assignment, a discussion board posting, or even an email, make sure you read over it to catch any grammatical mistakes. A great way to catch your grammar mistakes is to read your paper aloud. It is often easier to catch your grammatical mistakes when you hear them rather than looking over your paper with tired eyes.

### **Late Work**

Late submissions and assignments will not be accepted. Extreme circumstances and emergencies do occur, so extensions will be granted at the instructor's discretion on a case-by case-basis. If you feel that you require an extension, please contact the instructor in a timely manner – less than 24 hours is not sufficient. If you fail to submit an assignment by the deadline you will receive a zero for that assignment.

### **Mode of Submission**

All papers must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman (or equivalent), double-spaced, 1-inch margins, following MLA guidelines. All assignments will be submitted electronically through Sakai. Do not bring hard copies of your assignments. It is your responsibility to make sure your documents are readable in all aspects for your instructor. Your final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. If you do not submit your paper to the appropriate place

or save it in a way that can be opened by the instructor, you will not receive credit for the assignment. Please save your paper in the following format:

**NameResponsePaper1.docx** (or .doc, or .rtf. – you may use the Apple pages equivalent to Word documents as well, or save your paper as a .pdf).

**\*Note – you may use the “textbox” in Sakai for response paper, as specified by the instructor.**

## **Academic Honesty**

All students are required to 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>

Important Tip: Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if the student fails to know and employ proper documentation techniques.

Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor for class group work, all work must be your own. Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

## **Graded Materials**

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 re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

## **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. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

## **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/>

## Technology

- **Laptops/Tablets:** You are welcome to bring laptops to class to take notes, however, if your device prevents you from paying attention in class, i.e. you are caught Facebooking or tweeting, shopping on line, or anything non-course related, you will be asked to put it away and will lose laptop privileges for the rest of the semester.
- **Cell Phones/MP3 players/Portable Electronic Devices, etc.:** Please keep your device put away and on silent at all times.

## Students with Disabilities

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/>

## Schedule (Tentative and subject to change)

\*Indicates resource is on Sakai

### Week 1 (June 30 – July 4)

#### **M** Course Introduction – Modern Warfare and Literary Analysis

Walt Whitman's "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown"

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/237384>

Walt Whitman's "The Wound Dresser"

<http://www.bartleby.com/142/124.html>

#### **T** Modern War Narrative

Read Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* \*

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/73/73-h/73-h.htm>

Writing Focus: Literary Symbolism

#### **W** The Great War

Read *A Farewell to Arms* (Hemingway) up to Chapter 12

Writing Focus: How to Do a Close Reading

#### **Th** The 20<sup>th</sup> Century and WWI

Read *A Farewell to Arms* up to Book III

Writing Focus: Summary vs. Analysis

#### **F** No Class, Holiday!

## Week 2 July 7 – 11

### **M** The War to End all Wars

Finish *A Farwell to Arms*

Writing Focus: Extended Themes

### **T** Race, War and Comics

Fredrick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass An American Slave*  
*Written By Himself*

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm>

*Harlem Hellfighters* up to "Poems by Alan Seeger"

Writing Focus: How to Write a Summary

### **W** Race, War and Comics

Finish *Harlem Hellfighters*

Writing Focus: Writing about Comics

### **Th** WWII, or The Child's Crusade

Read *Slaughter House Five* up to Chapter 3

Writing Focus: Thesis Statements

### **F** Postmodernism and War Narratives

Read *Slaughter House Five* up to Chapter 5

**Paper 1 Due!**

## Week 3 July 14 – 18

### **M** This All Happened, More or Less

Finish *Slaughter House Five*

Writing Focus: Contextualizing Quotes

### **T** Native American Literature and War

Read *Ceremony* (Silko) up to pg 75

Writing Focus: Explaining Quotes

### **W** Oral Histories

Read *Ceremony* up to pg 141

Writing Focus: Developing Arguments

### **Th** Healing Stories

Finish *Ceremony*

Writing Focus: Writing about Film

### **F** Watch the *Thin Red Line* (Malick)

**Film Response 1 Due!**

### **Week 4 July 21-25**

**M** Holocaust and Survivor's Tale

Read *Maus* Part 1

Writing Focus: Writing about Comics

**T** Bleeding History

Read *Maus* Part II

**Traumatic Comic and Response Due!**

**W** Race Wars

Read *Home* (Morrison) up to Chapter 7

Writing Focus: Transition Statements

**Th** The War at Home

Finish *Home*

Writing Focus: Topic Sentences

**F** Good Morning Vietnam!

Read *Dispatches* (Herr) up to "Hell Sucks"

Writing Focus: Thesis Statements

### **Week 5 July 28- August 1**

**M** New Journalism

Read *Dispatches* up to "Illumination Rounds"

**Synthesis Paper Due!**

**T** Vietnam: The Failed War

Finish *Dispatches*

Writing Focus: Incorporating Sources

**W** Solider Stories – The Civil War and Vietnam

Read Ambrose Bierce's "Chickamauga" and "A Tough Tussle"

<http://www.online-literature.com/bierce/992/>

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/TougTuss.shtml>

Read Selections from *The Things They Carried* (Tim O'Brien) on Sakai

"The Things They Carried"

"How to Tell A True War Story"

“The Lives of the Dead”  
Writing Focus: Writing about Film

**Th** The Smell of Napalm in the Morning  
Watch *Full Metal Jacket* (Kubrick)  
**Film Response 2 Due!**

**F** Soldier Poet  
Walt Whitman’s “The Wound Dresser”  
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/237970>

Read poem selections from *Here, Bullet* (Brian Turner) TBA on Sakai  
Writing Focus: Close Reading

### **Week 6 August 4-8**

**M** Celebrity Soldiers  
Read *Billy Lynn’s Long Half Time Walk* (Fountain) to “We are All Americans Here”  
Writing Focus: Research Questions

**T** Spectacles and Soldiers  
Read up to “XXL”  
Writing Focus: Narrowing your Topic

**W** The Most Sought After American Heroes  
Read up to “Raped by Angels”  
Writing Focus: Revision

**Th** War Voyeurs  
Finish *Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk*  
Writing Focus: Revision

**F** War, Where Are We Now?  
Course Wrap up, Reading TBA  
**Final Papers Due!**