

## *Minority Report: Survey of American Minority Literature and Culture*

AML 2070-0541; Spring 2015

Instructor: Keasha Renee Worthen. Office Hours: Wed. 10:40 – 12:30pm and by appt.

Turlington Room:

Meeting Times: MWF

Place: Matherly, Room 009



### Course Description

This American Literature survey course will examine the cultural experiences and expressions of America's diverse minority groups. It will examine the four main categories of American minorities – Black American, Hispanic American, Asian American and American Indian – as well as the multiple ethnic groups that are within each category. Using critical essays, novels, and films, we will attempt to understand how minorities experienced America in the 20<sup>th</sup> and how they are experiencing America in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will also interrogate the concept of minority by asking the question: What makes a minority? In doing so, we will address notions of social identity (group names – American Indian, Native American, or Indigenous Peoples for example) and cultural identity (the idea of the hyphenated American).

We will analyze each text based on the concept of double consciousness, and we will emphasize the dual cultural experiences that contribute to the concept of ethnic identity and, more generally, American multiculturalism. We will engage each text through oral discussion, quizzes, essays, and exams meant to develop student's skills as both writers and readers of texts. By the end of the semester, students should have a greater grasp on the complexity of American culture as well as the intricacies of experiences and cultures that constitute America.

### Course Outcomes

AML 2070 will teach students to

- Analyze various texts and sources with a critical mindset
- Read, write, and think clearly and concisely
- Develop essay-length arguments built around a core thesis
- Consider texts within a historical and literary context

- Synthesize various ideas and concepts over the semester into a final paper

### Required Readings

Each textbook is listed below in the order that they will be read. I suggest you purchase them early as possible. Note: I have no objection to students using electronic versions of these texts to save money; however, students need to be able to point to specific passages in the texts during class discussions.

Silko, Leslie M. *Ceremony*. New York, N.Y: Penguin Books, 2006. Print. ISBN-10: 1440621829,

Momaday, N. Scott. *House made of dawn*. Harper Perennial, 1999. ISBN-10: 0061859974

Anaya, Rudolfo A, and Bernadette Vigil. *Bless Me, Ultima*. New York: Warner Books, 1994. Print. ISBN-10: 0446600253

Alvarez, Julia. *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*. Chapel Hill, N.C: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2010. Print. ISBN-10: 156512975X

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy: A Novel*. Macmillan, 2002. ISBN-10: 0374527350

Bambara, Toni C. *Those Bones Are Not My Child*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000. Print. ISBN-10: 0679774084

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003. ISBN-10: 0618485228

Cao, Lan. *Monkey Bridge*. Penguin, 1998. ISBN-10: 0140263616

### Grading Policies and Assignments

Since this course is designed to help students learn to read and analyze texts, there will be four short essays, a midterm, and a final exam. The course is divided into four units, and students will have to write an essay at the end of each unit. The instructions for each essay can be located on Sakai. Student grades will also include participation and quizzes. Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, English Department Program Assistant; this may result in a higher, lower, or ultimately unchanged grade.

### Reading Responses

There will be four reading responses, and they should be about 1500 words each. Each reading response will have a different writing prompt, but generally for the reading responses, students will attempt to synthesize all of the texts in the unit. This means that students will need to choose a specific theme and discuss how the texts respond or represent that theme.

**Note on the responses:** The essays are designed to help you not only think about the text but also to write about your experience with the texts. The essays can also serve as a study guide for the essay portion of the exams.

### Exams

There will be two exams in this class. Each exam will be a combination of short answer and essay. Students will need to purchase a blue book in order to take the exams. No makeup exams will be given.

Quizzes: There will be 8 unannounced quizzes. The two lowest quiz scores will be dropped.

**No late work will be accepted. No makeup quizzes will be administered.**

Reading Response (4): 100 points each

100Midterm: 150 points

Final: 200 points

Quizzes (5): 10 points each

**Total Possible points:** 800 points

**A to A-:** Students did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it also demonstrates that you 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 grammatical or mechanical errors (papers with more than one or two errors cannot receive an A).

**B to B-:** Students did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

**C to C-:** Students did what the assignment asked of you. 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 to D-:** Students did what the assignment asked of you 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 people who don't do the work or don't come to class.

## Course Outline

Week 1: January 6 - 9

### **Course Introduction**

Wed: Syllabus Review and Course Requirements/Due Dates

Fri: Course Introduction Lecture, Essays, and Exams

Unit 1: Native American

Week 2: January 12-16

Mon: "Native American Literature and the Canon" Arnold Krupat –*JSTOR*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native\\_Americans\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native\\_American\\_name\\_controversy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_American_name_controversy)

Wed: *Ceremony* Leslie Marmon Silko

Fri: *Ceremony* Leslie Marmon Silko

Week 3: January 19 - 23

Mon: *No Class – Holiday*

Wed: *Reel Injun* (2009) – Neil Diamond (Documentary – In Class)

Fri: *Reel Injun* – Neil Diamond (*Documentary – In Class*)

Week 4: January 26 – 30

Mon: *House Made of Dawn* M. Scott Momaday

Wed: *House Made of Dawn*

Fri: Unit Review

### **Unit Literary Review Essay 1 Due**

#### Unit 2: Chican@/Latin@

#### Week 5: February 2 – 6

Mon: “Trends in Hispanic American Literature”- Manuel Pedro González

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic%E2%80%93Latino\\_naming\\_dispute](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic%E2%80%93Latino_naming_dispute)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic\\_and\\_Latino\\_Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic_and_Latino_Americans)

Wed: *Bless Me, Ultima* - Rudolfo Anaya

Fri: *Bless Me, Ultima* - Rudolfo Anaya

#### Week 6 February 9 - 13

Mon: *El Norte* (1983) - Gregory Nava (Film – In class)

Wed: *El Norte* (1983) - Gregory Nava (Film – In class)

Fri: *El Norte* (1983) - Gregory Nava (Film – In class)

#### Week 7 February 16 - 20

Mon: *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* - Julia Alvarez

Wed: *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* - Julia Alvarez

Fri: Unit Review

### **Unit 2 Reading Response 1**

#### Week 8: February 23 – 27 Midterm

Mon: Midterm Review

Wed: Midterm

Fri: No Class

### **Week 9: March 2 – 6 Spring Break**

#### Unit 3: Black America and Blacks in America

#### Week 10: March 9 – 13

Mon: ““What, Then, Is the African American?” African and Afro-Caribbean Identities in Black America” - Violet M. Showers Johnson (JSTOR)

“What’s in a Name? Negro vs. Afro-American vs. Black”

[http://www.virginia.edu/woodson/courses/aas102%20\(spring%2001\)/articles/names/bennett.htm](http://www.virginia.edu/woodson/courses/aas102%20(spring%2001)/articles/names/bennett.htm)

Wed: *Lucy* - Jamaica Kincaid

Fri: *Lucy* - Jamaica Kincaid

#### Week 11: March 16 – 20

Mon: *Africans in America: The Unfolding of Ethnic Identity* (2004) - Ray LeJeune

Wed: *Soundtrack for a Revolution* (2009) – Bill Guttentag, Dan Sturman

Fri: *Soundtrack for a Revolution* (2009) – Bill Guttentag, Dan Sturman

#### Week 12: March 23 – 27

Mon: *Those Bones Are Not My Child: A Novel* - Toni Cade Bambara

Wed: *Those Bones Are Not My Child: A Novel* - Toni Cade Bambara

Fri: Unit Review

### **Unit 3 Literary Analysis Due**

#### Unit 4 Asian Americans

#### Week 13: March 30 – April 3

Mon: “Whither the Asian American Coalition?” - Paul Spickard (JSTOR)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian\\_American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_American)

Wed: *The Namesake*. – Jhumpa Lahir

Fri: *The Namesake*. – Jhumpa Lahir

Week 14: April 6 – 10

Mon: *Joy Luck Club* (1993) - Wayne Wang

Wed: *Joy Luck Club* (1993) - Wayne Wang

Fri: *Joy Luck Club* (1993) - Wayne Wang

Week 15: April 13 – 17

Mon: *Monkey Bridge* – Lan Cao

Wed: *Monkey Bridge* – Lan Cao

Fri: Unit Review

**Unit Reading Response 2**

Week 16: April 20 – 23

Mon: Final Review

Wed: Final Exam

Course Policies

**Attendance**

AML 2070 is a participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that students will build 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.

Students are allowed to miss 3 classes without penalty; however, the fourth absence results in the deduction of a letter grade, and each continued absence will reduce the student's course grade by one further letter. The sixth absence results in an automatic failure of the course. If a student arrives late to class, they will be marked tardy; two tardies are equivalent to one absence.

Students must keep track of their absences over the semester. Failure to do so may result in greatly reduced final averages.

**Mode of Submission**

All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. **Hard copies will not be accepted.** Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. **All papers will be submitted to Sakai.**

**Writing Requirement**

Students must pass this course with a grade of C or better to receive 6,000-word Gordon Rule credit (E6).

Students must turn in all papers to receive credit for writing 6,000 words. A grade of C or better satisfies the University's General Education Composition (C) or the Humanities (H) requirement. Students must pass with a grade of C or better if this course is to satisfy the CLAS requirement of a second course in Composition (C).

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>

If you are not in CLAS, check the catalog or with your advisor to see if your college has other writing requirements.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire 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):

- Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- 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. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 August 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

Students commit plagiarism when they present the ideas or words of someone else as their own. Students commit plagiarism if they use the following without crediting the source:

- Any part of another person's essay, speech, or ideas
- Any part of an article in a magazine, journal, newspaper; any part of a book, encyclopedia, CD-ROM, online WWW page, etc.
- Any idea from another person or writer, even if you express that idea in your own words.

Important tip: There should never be a time when a student copies and paste something from the Internet and without provide 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 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.

## **Students with Disabilities**

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, located at Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

**Statement on 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 about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>