

AML 2070 - (section 5613), FALL 2017

Survey of American Literature: Utopia, Dystopia, and the Dynamics of Power

Instructor Name: Christopher Smith

Course meeting times & locations: MAT 151, Tuesday period 8-9, Thursday period 9

Office Location and Hours: Tuesday/Thursday period 10, and by appointment.

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: esmith32@ufl.edu

Course Description:

American Literature, much like its nation of origin, has grown and evolved rapidly, finding its own distinctive concerns and themes. As people become more uncertain about the future, of both the United States and the world, we have seen a resurgence in the popularity of dystopian fiction, such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Hunger Games*. In centuries past, however, it was utopian literature that presented readers with dreams of an ideal future. In this course, we will examine how these utopian and dystopian expressions are manifested in novels, poetry, and ways of thinking about and experiencing the world. Additionally, and especially through the voices of marginalized people (women, African Americans, Native Peoples), we will examine what influences American writers to envision a future of hope or despair, and how the visions of these groups may in fact conflict.

Through an engagement with poetry, short stories, essays, and novels, students of AML 2070 will deepen their understanding of American literature, as well as the cultural and historical contexts which shaped it. Furthermore, students will practice analyzing and researching literature, as well as presenting their arguments in writing and through participation in class discussions.

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.
- **Please be aware that word count does not include the title, header, or works cited. It is only the body of the text.**

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:

Woman on the Edge of Time [1976] - Marge Piercy. ISBN-10: 044900094X - ISBN-13: 978-0449000946.

(Please try to get the 1997 reprint edition by Ballantine Books.)

Parable of the Sower [1993] - Octavia Butler. ISBN-10: 0446675504 ISBN-13: 978-0446675505

The Handmaid's Tale [1985] - Margaret Atwood. ISBN-10: 038549081X - ISBN-13: 978-0385490818.

(The Kindle Version is free on Amazon with Prime. As a UF student you have access to Amazon Prime free for six months.)

Other Texts (Links to all of the following texts will be provided on Canvas):

Mary E. Bradley Lane - *Mizora: A Prophecy*.

Edited by Milo Milton Quaife - *The Life of Blackhawk: Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak*.

W.E.B. Du Bois *The Comet*.

“The Crisis” magazine.

Harriet Jacobs - *The Deeper Wrong, Or, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.

Ray Bradbury - “The Veldt” and “There Will Come Soft Rains.”

Sylvia Plath - “Daddy” and “Lady Lazarus.”

Maya Angelou - “Caged Bird” and “Still I Rise.”

Emily Dickinson - “A Bird Came Down the Walk,” “Fame is a fickle food,” “Hope is the things with feathers,” and “Crumbling is not an instant’s Act.”

Sharon Kahn Rudahl - “Adventures of Crystal Night.”

Sherman Alexie - “Honor Society,” “Fixed Income,” “Search Engine,” and “How to Write the Great American Indian Novel.”

PLEASE NOTE: Students must bring the assigned readings to class on the appropriate day(s). If you are using an eBook or we are discussing digital materials that day, you must bring either a laptop or a tablet on which to view digital materials in class. A cell phone is not sufficient, as some materials may not be compatible with small-screen devices. If you cannot bring a laptop or tablet to class, printing out some of the materials may be acceptable; discuss with instructor. In short, you are expected to have the texts in front of you when we are discussing them.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Short Analysis: 8 @ 350 words each.

The goal of the Reader Response assignments is to prompt students to engage with the text analytically, particularly with regards to the questions and themes we have discussed in the course. What are the utopian themes/ideas present in the reading? How does the author present them in the text?

Students must go beyond the “I like this, because...” type of response, and should recall some of the points we have discussed in class. There is no strictly “correct” answer, but I will provide feedback and explain whether, and why, certain points are or are not relevant and supported based on the reading. Think of this as on-going preparation for your first major assignment.

Analysis Paper: 1000 words (Draft: 750 words minimum)

You will choose two or more short stories or poems that we have read so far this semester and conduct a persuasive close reading of those works. In this assignment, you will analyze the selections and develop an argument about the way in which the text confronts issues of utopia, dystopia, and dynamics of power. Keep in mind the topics and ideas in class we have discussed throughout the semester. This assignment is designed to assess analytical and critical skills, so no outside research should be conducted.

Final Critical Research Paper: 2200 words (Draft: 1800 words)

In this assignment, you will use the skills developed throughout the course and in previous papers. This assignment is a sustained, formally researched critical analysis in which you will make an original argument about one of the novels we have read this semester a specific theoretical, historical, or critical lens, particularly as it relates to the topics and ideas we have discussed this semester. You will develop a topic of your own choosing, subject to my approval. This assignment is an opportunity to develop unique, interesting arguments. The paper should incorporate both primary and secondary texts and offer evidence of your critical thinking and interpretive abilities.

1. Course Policies:

You must complete *all assignments* to receive writing credit for this course. The word count of the assignments adds up to the 6000-word total. You **will not** have the option to make another assignment longer to make up the word count.

2. Attendance Policies:

AML 2070 is a participation-oriented, discussion-based writing course. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class, so it is important that students be present, as well as engaged and attentive.

Absences related to university-sponsored events, such as athletics, band, and religious holidays must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed. **When you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed and come to the next class prepared; contact a classmate to find out what work you've missed.**

You are permitted to be absent for a maximum of six 50-minute periods, assuming I have officially acknowledged that you have a legitimate reason to be excused from class. You are only permitted a maximum of three unexcused 50-minute periods. Any unexcused absence beyond the third period will result in an automatic fail for the class. Unexcused absences will also automatically result in a penalty to your attendance and participation grade.

Remember: One Tuesday class counts as two 50-minute periods.

3. Participation:

Participation is a crucial part of success in this class. Students will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions and peer reviews. Peer reviews require that students provide constructive feedback about their peers' writing.

4. Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the 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):

- a.) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b.) 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 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the internet without providing the exact location from which it came

5. *Physical, Mental, Emotional Support:*

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202 (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/T), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

Students who face difficulties completing the course due to personal, social, or other circumstances, or who need 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>.

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/>.

6. *Classroom Behavior:*

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Many 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.**

Laptops are only open for composing research or reading. No internet surfing during class. And stay off your phones.

Talking while the instructor or your fellow students are speaking or discussing the text is both rude and distracting. It will not be tolerated.

7. *Course questions and Formatting concerns:*

Please remember that I do not discuss grades via email. If you wish to discuss grades, you must make an appointment or come to my office hours.

If you have a question about how to format your paper according to a certain style, such as MLA or APA, please consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab. I have provided the link below:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

If you cannot find the information on the Purdue web site, let me know and I will do my best to help.

8. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:*

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.

9. Assisnment Submission:

All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman/Arial font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, and every page should include your name and a number. If a source has been used in a paper, it **must** be cited on a references page.

Every paper will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to Canvas by the due date and time. Canvas does not read other formats. To prevent issues, please use only .doc or .rtf files.

Assignments on Canvas will close at the time they are due, meaning students will not be able to submit the assignment after that point.

Save and submit all papers in Canvas using the following file name:
lastnameAML2070nameofassignment (SmithAML2070Analysi s).

Course Evaluations:

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/results>.

Writing Studio:

The University Writing Studio, a valuable resource for students who would like extra help with writing mechanics, is located in Tigert 302 and is available and free for all UF students.

SYLLABUS

Wk	Day	Reading/Discussion Material	Due
1	T 8/22	Introduction to course. History of Utopia/Dystopia. <i>Declaration of Independence</i> . America as a New Eden.	
	R 8/24	Discuss: William Apess, “An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man” http://webmees.uidaho.edu/engl504trauma/WmADess.Ddf “Utopia” by Phillip Wegner.	
2	T 8/29	Discuss: Andrew Jackson, “Message of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Twenty-First Congress, December 7, 1830.” <i>Life of Blackhawk: Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak</i> . Excerpt - http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/blackhawk.asp	
	R 8/31	Discuss: Mary E. Bradley Lane, <i>Mizora: A Prophecy</i> , Part 1, Chapters 1-4. http://www.2utenbem.org/files/24750/24750-h/24750-h.htm	
3	T 9/5	Discuss: <i>Mizora</i> , Part 1, Chapters 5-13.	Short Analysis 1
	R 9/7	Discuss: <i>Mizora</i> , Part 2, Chapters 1-4.	
4	T 9/12	Discuss: <i>Mizora</i> , Part 2, Chapters 5-11.	Short Analysis 2
	R 9/14	Discuss: Emily Dickinson (“A Bird Came Down the Walk,” “Fame is a fickle food,” “Hope is the things with feathers,” “Crumbling is not an instant’s Act”). <i>Mizora</i> , Dickinson, and utopia.	
5	T 9/19	Discuss: Harriet Jacobs: <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (pgs. 11-24, 28-48, 67-70, 97-104). Dickinson and Jacobs.	
	R 9/21	Discussion: W E B. Du Bois, “The Comet.” Du Bois, black experience, Modernism.	Short Analysis 3

6	T 9/26	Discuss: <i>The Crisis</i> , June 1941. WWII, Apocalyptic fiction.	
	R 9/28	Discussion: Ray Bradbury, “There Will Come Soft Rains” and “The Veldt.” Nuclear war, Sara Teasdale poem “There Will Come Soft Rains.”	Short Analysis 4
7	T 10/3	Discuss: Marge Piercy, <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> - “Introduction” and Chapter 1-3 (pgs. 3-81).	Literary Analysis Draft
	R 10/5	Discuss: <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chapter 4-5 (pgs. 82-111). Women and mental health.	
8	T 10/10	Discuss: <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chapter 6-9 (pg. 112-206).	
	R 10/12	Discuss: <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chapter 10-12 (pg. 207-280).	
9	T 10/17	Discuss: <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chapter 13-17 (pg. 291-368).	
	R 10/19	Discuss: <i>Woman on the Edge of Time</i> , Chapter 18-20 (pg. 369-417).	Short Analysis 5
10	T 10/24	Discuss: Sylvia Plath, “Daddy,” “Edge.” Maya Angelou, “Still I Rise,” “Caged Bird,” “Harlem Hopscotch.”	Literary Analysis Final
	R 10/26	Discuss: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> , Introduction, Chapters 1-6 (pgs. 1-33). Atwood, dystopian futures.	
11	T 10/31	Discuss: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> , Chapters 7-29 (pgs. 37-188). Comparative visions.	
	R 11/2	Discuss: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> , Chapters 30-34, (pgs. 191-223).	
12	T 11/7	Discuss: <i>The Handmaid’s Tale</i> , Chapters 35-46, Historical Notes (pgs. 224-311). Thematic discussion of the novel.	

		Questions and comments about Annotated Bibliography.	
	R 11/9	Discuss: Sharon Kahn Rudahl, “Adventures of Crystal Night.” Eugenics, utopia/dystopia in graphic representation.	Annotated Bibliography
13	T 11/14	Discuss: Sherman Alexie, “Honor Society,” “Fixed Income,” “Search Engine,” “How to Write the Great American Indian Novel.”	Short Analysis 6
	R 11/16	Peer Review	
14	T 11/21	Discuss: Octavia Butler, <i>Parable of the Sower</i> , Chapters 1-6 (pgs. 1-65). Dystopia, climate, and POC.	Critical Research Paper Draft
	R 11/23	NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY -	
15	T 11/28	Discuss: Octavia Butler, <i>Parable of the Sower</i> , Chapters 7-16 (pgs. 67-173).	Short Analysis 7
	R 11/30	Discuss: Octavia Butler, <i>Parable of the Sower</i> , Chapters 17-20 (pgs. 174-228)	
16	T 12/5	Discussion: Octavia Butler, <i>Parable of the Sower</i> , Chapters 21-25 (pgs. 229-294) Tying together the texts from throughout the semester. Recap of what was covered.	Short Analysis 8

Grading:

Grading for this course will be rigorous. If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will not receive a passing grade. The writing assignments for this course are designed to meet the requirements of the University Writing Requirement credit. To satisfy this requirement, **every** assignment's word count must be fulfilled. I **will not** grade assignments that do not meet the word count; the assignment will be returned to you and you will have the opportunity to turn it in late for a reduced grade.

As your instructor, I will evaluate and provide feedback on your written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. I will also deliver more specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments over the course of the semester.

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/reaulations/info/grades.aspx>

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.

Grade Issues

University policy prohibits discussions of grades via email. If you have a question about a grade, you may schedule an appointment to meet with me to discuss it.

Grade Scale

A:	93-100	C:	73-76
A-:	90-92	C-:	70-72
B+:	87-89	D+:	67-69
B:	83-86	D:	63-66
B-:	80-82	D-:	60-62
C+:	77-79	E:	0-59

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers 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.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack 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.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
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.

