

# ENG4936: Honors: Law and American Literature, Fall 2018



**Course Meetings:** Tuesdays, period 4 (10:40 AM-11:30 AM); Thursdays, periods 4-5 (10:40 AM-12:35 PM) in TUR 2349

**Instructor:** Prof. Susan Hegeman, Department of English

**OFFICE:** 4119 Turlington Hall

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesdays, 11:35-1:35, or by appointment

**PHONE:** (352) 294-2815

**EMAIL:** Canvas email, or [shegeman@ufl.edu](mailto:shegeman@ufl.edu)

## Course Description

In this course, we will study works of American literature written between 1850 and 2018 that substantially engage with some aspect of our legal system. We will discuss how these works of literature address important themes related to the law including justice, crime, punishment, and the power of the state. We will also study the formal relationships between legal and literary forms of storytelling, and compare literary interpretation and legal reasoning. Course reading will include novels (Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, Louise Erdrich's *The Round House*, among others), court cases, and works of legal and literary theory and criticism.

## Course Objectives

Through genuine and persistent engagement with course materials, activities, and discussions, students will:

- gain detailed knowledge of some classic works of American literature that substantially engage with some aspect of the US legal system

- gain knowledge of key moments in the history of American law and basic theories of legal interpretation and argumentation
- develop their skills in literary interpretation, including close reading and contextual analysis
- develop advanced skills in reading and interpreting works of literary criticism, literary theory, and legal theory
- develop advanced skills in critical thinking, analysis, and argumentation
- develop their skills in oral communication, interpretation, and argumentation in a small group setting
- develop advanced critical writing skills through the completion of an extended research paper

## Required Course Materials

The following books are required for the course. They are listed in the order in which we will read them. Other editions, including e-books, are acceptable.

- Herman Melville, *BILLY BUDD, BARTLEBY, AND OTHER STORIES* (0143107607 PENGUIN)
- Mark Twain, *PUDDN’HEAD WILSON* (0140430407 PENGUIN)
- Richard Wright, *NATIVE SON* (006083756X HARPER)
- E.L. Doctorow, *THE BOOK OF DANIEL* (081297817X RANDOM)
- David Guterson, *SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS* (067976402X Vintage)
- Louise Erdrich, *THE ROUND HOUSE* (0062065254 HARPER)

Students are also required to screen the following film:

***Anatomy of a Murder, 1959, dir. Otto Preminger.*** It is on reserve for this course in Library West, or it can be viewed via streaming services such as Amazon.

All other course materials—other required and supplementary readings, syllabus, documents, assignments, course calendar and discussion prompts—are posted on the course’s Canvas e-learning website.

## Canvas E-Learning

You are required to have access to Canvas for accessing course materials and turning in assignments. Canvas e-learning can be accessed via the following link: “E-Learning Support Services” <https://lss.at.ufl.edu> Click on the orange “log in to e-learning” button. You will then be asked to log in using your GatorLink username and password. If for some reason have trouble using your GatorLink account, go to the GatorLink website (<http://gatorlink.ufl.edu>).

For help with Canvas, contact the UF Computing Help Desk:

Web: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>

Walk-in: HUB 132

Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)

Email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

Any requests for accommodations (i.e. credit for overdue work) due to technical issues must be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem.

## Course Requirements and Grading

### GRADING SCALE

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
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

### BREAKDOWN OF FINAL GRADE

Attendance	100 points; 10% of final grade
Classroom participation	100 points; 10% of final grade
Online participation	200 points; 20% of final grade
Paper proposal	100 points; 10% of final grade
research paper	500 points; 50% of final grade

## Attendance (10% of final grade)

Attendance is defined as attentive presence in the classroom. In other words, if you are very late to class or engage in non-class related activities during class time (sleeping, studying, texting, web browsing, etc.) you will be counted as absent. University policy requires that absences be accepted with prior notice for university sponsored events (e.g., athletics) and religious holidays. Otherwise, all absences will be regarded as unexcused.

Your attendance grade will be determined as follows:

- 0-1 absences: maximum attendance grade: A
- 2 absences: maximum attendance grade: A-
- 3 absences: maximum attendance grade: B+
- 4 absences: maximum attendance grade: B
- 5 absences: maximum attendance grade: B-
- 6 absences: maximum attendance grade: C+
- 7 absences: maximum attendance grade: C
- 8 absences: maximum attendance grade: C-

9 or more absences: automatic failure of the course

### **Classroom Participation (10% of final grade)**

A major goal of an honors course is to expose students to the intellectual, aesthetic, and professional rewards of participation in an intensive seminar setting. An indispensable ingredient for the success of this kind of class lies with each of you. During the next sixteen weeks, we will come together to form an intellectual community with a shared set of interests and tasks, and we will exchange ideas, insights, and expertise about a range of issues. For this to occur in the most productive manner possible, everyone in the group needs to engage in the class discussion in an active, thoughtful, serious, and respectful manner. As a consequence, participation in each week's seminar discussion thus will be a central part of your final course evaluation. In this class, we will all learn by respectfully listening to and engaging with each others' ideas. It is therefore expected that students come to class prepared to discuss the material assigned for that day. Students will be graded on the quality of their oral contributions to classroom discussion. The best grades will be given to those who offer informed, incisive, and relevant comments regarding the course readings and related discussions. Poor attendance will adversely effect students' participation grade.

### **Online discussions (20% of final grade)**

Students are expected to post weekly to the "Discussions" section of the Canvas course website. Posts should be about 100-300 words. They are due at 5 pm on Friday of the week for which they will get credit. They can be responses to prompts from me, reflections on readings or class discussions, further research on a topic of interest to you, comments on other students' posts, or a space for developing paper topics. Students are expected to maintain the same standards of respectful exchange that they are held to in class discussions.

The online discussions will be graded as follows:

- 100 = 12 posts
- 93 = 11 posts
- 89 = 10 posts
- 86 = 9 posts
- 82 = 8 posts
- 79 = 7 posts
- 76 = 6 posts
- 72 = 5 posts
- 69 = 4 posts
- 66 = 3 posts
- 62 = 2 posts
- 59 = 1 post
- 0 = 0 posts

### **Paper proposal (10% of final grade)**

Students will write a formal proposal, outlining the topic and tentative argument of their final assignment for the course, a formal academic paper consisting of 4500-6000 words (approximately 15-20 pages) plus reference matter. The proposal will also include a preliminary bibliography. Your paper proposal will need to be approved in order for me to accept your final research paper. If it is not approved, I may ask you to redo your proposal using another topic.

### **Research Paper (50% of final grade)**

Students will write a formal academic paper, consisting of 4500-6000 words (approximately 15-20 pages) plus reference matter. This paper is an independent research project, wherein you will have the opportunity to further expand upon, analyze in more detail, or take in new directions the material covered in the seminar. You may want to explore in more depth one of the works we read; make connections to readings you are doing elsewhere; examine a specific theme or issue that emerges in a number of different works; apply one of the theoretical or historical approaches; compare and contrast the arguments of different scholars; begin preliminary work on your honors thesis; or try something else altogether. All paper topics must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Papers will be graded wholistically on the following criteria, in general order of emphasis:

- Argumentation: clear thesis, logical sequence of argument, logical conclusions
- Use of appropriate evidence from the texts
- Demonstrated understanding of contextual issues in relation to works discussed (accurate explication of concepts and arguments; accurate use of terminology and historical information; accurate application to texts)
- appropriate and adequate use of reference matter
- Mechanics: punctuation, spelling, word choice and usage, sentence construction, paragraphing
- Proofreading and citations

### **Accommodations for Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor. Students needing accommodations should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

Students are required to review the university's Academic Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>). Plagiarism or

any other form of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic failure of the assignment and the filing of a report in your academic file.

Types of plagiarism include (but are not limited to): presenting work written in whole or in part by someone else as your own (for example submitting a paper written by a friend; a purchased or retyped paper; or one taken from a file); directly quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing from external sources without proper citations. Many students fail to fully understand that even such possibly innocent mistakes as paraphrasing the work of others or failure to give proper citation is a serious form of plagiarism. Because such mistakes have potentially serious consequences, talk to the Instructor if you have any questions about plagiarism, academic honesty, or proper research and citation methods.

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals>. 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/>.

### **Campus Resources**

#### **Health and Wellness**

*U Matter, We Care:* If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

*Counseling and Wellness Center:* <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS):* Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

*University Police Department* at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

#### **Academic Resources**

*E-learning technical support:* 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu) / <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

*Career Resource Center:* Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

*Library Support:* <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

*Writing Studio*: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

## Schedule of Readings and Discussions

The schedule, located on the Canvas calendar, represents my current plans for readings and discussions. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change based on the interests and needs of the class as a whole. Any such changes will be communicated early, in class and via Canvas. Students are responsible for staying informed about any changes in the class schedule by regularly consulting e-learning.

## Course Summary:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	
Thu Aug 23, 2018	<a href="#">Course Introduction</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Aug 28, 2018	<a href="#">What is the law?</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Aug 30, 2018	<a href="#">Melville I</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Sep 4, 2018	<a href="#">Melville II</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Sep 6, 2018	<a href="#">Melville III</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Sep 11, 2018	<a href="#">Twain I</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Sep 13, 2018	<a href="#">Twain II</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Sep 18, 2018	<a href="#">Twain III</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Sep 20, 2018	<a href="#">Twain IV and Glaspell</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Sep 25, 2018	<a href="#">Glaspell</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Sep 27, 2018	<a href="#">Wright I</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	
Tue Oct 2, 2018	<a href="#">Wright II</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Oct 4, 2018	<a href="#">Wright III</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Oct 9, 2018	<a href="#">Wright IV</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Oct 11, 2018	<a href="#">Anatomy of a Murder</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Fri Oct 12, 2018	<a href="#">Paper proposals due</a>	due by 5pm
Tue Oct 16, 2018	<a href="#">Doctorow I</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Oct 18, 2018	<a href="#">Doctorow II</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Oct 23, 2018	<a href="#">Doctorow III</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Oct 25, 2018	<a href="#">Guterson I</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Oct 30, 2018	<a href="#">Guterson II</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Nov 1, 2018	<a href="#">Class canceled; finish reading Guterson</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Nov 6, 2018	<a href="#">Guterson III</a>	10:40am to 11:35am
Thu Nov 8, 2018	<a href="#">Erdrich I</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Nov 13, 2018	<a href="#">Erdrich II</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Nov 15, 2018	<a href="#">Erdrich III</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Nov 20, 2018	<a href="#">Erdrich IV</a>	10:40am to 11:35am
Thu Nov 22, 2018	<a href="#">THANKSGIVING BREAK</a>	12am

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	
Tue Nov 27, 2018	<a href="#">Erdrich V</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Thu Nov 29, 2018	<a href="#">Law, Literature, and Interpretation</a>	10:40am to 12:35pm
Tue Dec 4, 2018	<a href="#">Law, Lit and interpretation continued</a>	10:40am to 11:30am
Mon Dec 10, 2018	<a href="#">Research papers due</a>	due by 11:59pm