

AML 2070 VISIONS OF AMERICA
SEC. 1625 FALL 2021

Instructor Name: Thomas Johnson

Course Meeting Time and Location: T, Period 8-9 (3:00 p.m.-4:45 p.m.), MAT 0005;
R, Period 9, (4:05 p.m.—4:45 p.m.), MAT 0012

Office Location and Hours: TUR TBA, T, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. or by appt.

Course Website: Canvas

Instructor Email: tdjohnson@ufl.edu

Course Description:

This course will explore American literary history, with “literature” defined broadly to include novels, short stories, poetry, plays, essays, and speeches. The selected readings will give students a clear sense of the breadth of American literature, from the pre-colonial Native American oral tradition, to 18th-century founding documents such as *The Federalist Papers*, through authors such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Emily Dickinson writing on either side of the American Civil War, up to authors of color such as Toni Morrison and Jhumpa Lahiri writing in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Some of our guiding questions will be: To what degree do our authors engage with concepts outlined in America’s founding documents, such as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”? How do their racial, gender, and sexual identities, and their socioeconomic standings, influence their perspectives on these so-called “American ideals”? How do American writers contribute to larger literary movements such as modernism and postmodernism?

Students will have the opportunity to explore these questions through a series of writing assignments: five responses on individual readings, a literary analysis essay that makes an argument about a single reading, an essay that makes an argument by comparing and contrasting two readings, and a final essay that makes an argument about a reading of one’s choice through use of secondary sources. Each of these assignments will hone students’ analytical and interpretative skills by requiring them to pay close attention to the form and content of individual readings and, in some cases, to situate those readings within the social and cultural contexts in which they were written.

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 includes multiple forms of effective writing; different writing styles, approaches, and formats; and various methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts. Students will learn to organize complex arguments in writing by using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and logic analysis.

- 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.

2

General Education Learning Outcomes:

This class is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/>

At the end of this course, students will be expected to achieve 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 developing reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. (ISBN: 978-0393617313)

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*. (ISBN: 978-0-393-93138-9)

Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49*. (ISBN: 006091307X)

Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie*. (ISBN: 978-0811214049)

All other readings will be available as PDFs on Canvas.

Course Policies:

1. You must complete *all assignments* to receive credit for this course. You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time.
2. **Attendance:** a) AML 2070 is a participation-oriented course, which means that you will build your skills and gain knowledge incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Attendance is crucial in engaging with other students about the reading and writing assignments. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Consequently, if you miss six or more 50-minute periods, you will fail the entire course. b) Only those absences involving military service; court-mandated obligations, such as jury duty and court testimony; university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, are exempt. Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your three allowed absences. Please provide a

doctor's note. Each absence beyond three may lower your overall grade. 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. c) Please do not come late to class; arriving late disrupts the entire class. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent. Being tardy three times will equal one absence. Save your absences for when you really need them.

3. **Paper Format and Submission:** All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and follow other MLA formatting and citation guidelines. All assignments will be submitted on Canvas.
4. **Late Papers/Assignments:** Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class. Extensions can be negotiated in advance of deadline; late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.
5. **Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:** Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned and/or graded work in this course until the semester is over.
6. **Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:** Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
7. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565 <https://disability.ufl.edu/>), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
8. For information on UF Grading Policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ungrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
9. **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, cblount@ufl.edu). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
10. **Course Evaluations:** Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.
11. Students who face difficulty completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center, (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
12. **Cell Phones and Laptops:** Cell phones must be silenced or on vibrate at the beginning of class. Laptops are not necessary for this class and must be kept shut and put away unless the instructor gives you permission to use them.
13. 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: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/> 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 with controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

	Readings	Homework Due
	Week One	
Tuesday 8/24	Syllabus Overview Excerpts from Native American Oral Literature	
Thursday 8/26	Jonathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741)	
	Week Two	
Tuesday 8/31	Thomas Paine, “Common Sense” (1775-76) Excerpts from <i>The Federalist Papers</i> (1788)	SEP
Thursday 9/2	Washington Irving, “The Devil and Tom Walker” (1824)	
	Week Three	
Tuesday 9/7	Lydia Huntley Sigourney. “Indian Names” (1834) and other selected poems Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birthmark” (1843)	
Thursday 9/9	Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839) and “The Cask of Amontillado” (1846)	Last possible date for reading response #1
	Week Four	
Tuesday 9/14	Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance” (1841) Henry David Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (1849)	

Thursday 9/16	Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , Installments 1-3 (1851)	
	Week Five	
Tuesday 9/21	Frederick Douglass, "The Hypocrisy of American Slavery" (1852) Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street" (1853)	
Thursday 9/23	Mark Twain, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" (1865)	Literary Analysis Due
	Week Six	
Tuesday 9/28	Emily Dickinson, Selected Poems (1861-1865) Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" (1867)	
Thursday 9/30	Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat" (1897) and "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" (1898)	Last possible date for reading response #2
	Week Seven	
Tuesday 10/5	Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> (1899), p. 1-51	
Thursday 10/7	Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> (1899), p. 51-end	
	Week Eight	
Tuesday 10/12	Henry James, "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903) Gertrude Stein, Selected poems from <i>Tender Buttons</i> (1916)	
Thursday 10/14	F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Winter Dreams" (1922)	

	Week Nine	
Tuesday 10/19	Zora Neale Hurston, "Spunk" (1925) Ernest Hemingway, "Fifty Grand" (1927) and "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" (1933)	
Thursday 10/21	William Faulkner, <i>As I Lay Dying</i> (1930), p. 1-49	Last possible date for reading response #3
	Week Ten	
Tuesday 10/26	William Faulkner, <i>As I Lay Dying</i> (1930), p. 50-149	
Thursday 10/28	Langston Hughes, "Let America be America Again" (1938) and other selected poems	Compare/Contrast Essay Due
	Week Eleven	
Tuesday 11/2	Robert Frost, "The Gift Outright" (1942) and other selected poems Tennessee Williams, <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> (1944), Acts I and II	
Thursday 11/4	Tennessee Williams, <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> (1944), Act III	
	Week Twelve	
Tuesday 11/9	James Baldwin, "The Harlem Ghetto" (1955) Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963)	Last possible date for reading response #4
Thursday 11/11	Holiday	
	Week Thirteen	
Tuesday 11/16	Thomas Pynchon, <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i> (1965), p. 1-100	
Thursday 11/18	Thomas Pynchon, <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i> (1965), p. 101-162	

	Week Fourteen	THANKSGIVING WEEK
Tuesday 11/23	Flannery O'Connor, "Revelation" (1963) Sylvia Plath, Selected poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)	
	Week Fifteen	
Tuesday 11/30	Maya Angelou, Selected poems from <i>Oh Pray My Wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well</i> (1975) Toni Morrison, "Recitatif" (1983)	
Thursday 12/2	Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek" (1991)	Last possible date for reading response #5
	Week Sixteen	
Tuesday 12/7	Jhumpa Lahiri, "A Choice of Accommodations" (2008) Wrap-Up	Research paper due December 16 by 11:59 p.m.

Assignments (see below for grading rubric):

Literary Analysis Essay (1,000 words; 100 points): You will choose one text discussed in class and perform a close-reading. Make a claim about the author's purpose for writing and how the author achieves their purpose. Use quotes and other evidence from the text to support your argument. Outside sources should not be used.

Compare and Contrast Essay (1,500 words; 200 points): You will choose two texts discussed in class and compare and contrast the fantastic narrative elements found in each. Your argument should center on why the differences and similarities in the two texts are present, taking into consideration each author's historical and cultural context. Cite textual evidence to support your claims. Use two to three scholarly sources to support your argument.

Researched Critical Essay (2,000 words; 300 points): You will choose one text discussed in class and develop an original critical argument about your interpretation of the text. Consult three to four academic sources to situate your argument in the context of a scholarly discussion. Use quotes from the text to support your argument.

Analytical Reading Responses (300 words each, 60 points each; 1500 words total, 300 points total): The responses are 300 words due every three weeks on a day of your choice for a total of 5 responses over the course of the semester. Each reading response should comment on that

particular class day's reading. (For example, if you submit a response on Thursday, your response should comment upon Thursday's reading.) What was interesting, provocative, or troubling about the content of that reading assignment? What are your feelings about a particular character, plot development, or the author's use of literary devices? How does the reading relate to contemporary culture? These are just a few effective approaches to this assignment.

Class Participation (100 points): Participation is a crucial part of success in this class. Students will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, peer reviews, and other in-class activities. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. Missing a peer review will result in a 10% deduction from the final grade of the essay.

Assignments and Grade Distribution	Points
Literary Analysis (1000 words) - 10%	100
Compare and Contrast (1500 words) - 20%	200
Researched Critical Essay (2000 words) – 30%	300
Reading Responses (1500 words) – 30%	300
Class Participation – 10%	100
	Total: 1000

A: 94-100 (4.0)
 A-: 90-93 (3.67)
 B+: 87-89 (3.33)
 B: 84-86 (3.0)
 B-: 80-83 (2.67)
 C+: 77-79 (2.33)
 C: 74-76 (2.0)
 C-: 70-73 (1.67)
 D+: 67-69 (1.33)
 D: 64-66 (1.0)
 D-: 60-63 (.67)
 E: 0-59 (0)

A - You successfully completed the assignment at a high-quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Your paper reveals that you have grappled deeply with the assignment's topic. Your paper is clearly structured, thoroughly supported, and persuasive. The assignment contains no errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

B - You successfully completed the assignment at a moderately high level. Your paper reveals that you have thought deeply about the assignment's topic and have developed a largely persuasive argument, although your work may need slight revisions in terms of structure and/or

content. The assignment is almost completely without errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

C - While your paper reveals that you have given some thought to the assignment's topic, your paper seems more of a rough draft than a final version and requires substantial revisions, likely in terms of both structure and content, in order to persuade the reader. While your assignment may be readable, it contains some errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

D - You did what the assignment required of you at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The paper's main ideas are poorly supported, and an organizational structure is difficult to discern. Frequently, writing at this level may suffer from many problems in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax which are so serious as to render portions of the paper nearly unreadable.

E - Papers which earn E's fail to show that the writer has given any consideration to the assignment's topic. The paper offers slim to no support for its argument, and an organizational structure cannot be discerned. The paper contains an unsatisfactory number of errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax. Importantly, if any of the paper has been plagiarized, it will also receive a failing grade.