

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Department of English

AML 2410

Issues in American Literature and Culture: Introduction to Postcolonial Studies

Fall 2023

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor	MS. Sayantika Chakraborty (she/hers)
Office	Turlington 4309
Office Hours	Mondays, 3-5 PM. Also, <u>by appointments.</u>
E-mail	schakraborty1@ufl.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Time	M, W, F: Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)
Location	MAT 0118

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“All national rootedness, for example, is rooted first of all in the memory or the anxiety of a displaced-or displaceable-population.”
(Jacques Derrida- Spectres of Marx)

With a focus on the displacement of the marginalized population, this course will provide a broad overview of postcolonial studies in relation to the ‘American’ literature. It will introduce students to the complexities, nuanced histories, and legacies of colonialism and neocolonialism, and postcolonialism as reflected in literatures and cultures of the Americas. It will also address these works via adjacent critical discourses such as environmental humanities, feminism, critical race theory, and minority/refugee studies. Texts will include fiction, non-fiction, and excerpts from the works of various theorists and scholars in these fields.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In addition to gaining a deeper appreciation of the expressive potential of language and the varieties of literature, students will develop a broader cultural literacy and an understanding of the changing definition and role of literature in society.

1. Therefore, by the conclusion of the course it is expected that students will be able to:

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of specific literary works in ‘American’ literature and the structures and conventions of different literary genres, especially related to postcolonial studies.
3. Produce original, critical readings of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation and analysis, while identifying and interpreting formal and genre-related elements in the texts.
4. Critically assess the variety of roles that literature has played historically and continues to play in the human experience.
5. Draw connections between literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts of authorship and reading.

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.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Aimee Phan, “Emancipation” from *We Should Never Meet*.

Viet Thanh Nguyen, “The Americans” from *The Refugees*.

Gloria Naylor, “The Two”, *The Women of Brewster Place*.

Linda Hogan, “One Mind”, *The Radiant Lives of Animals*.

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*.

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*.

Salman Rushdie, "The Courter" from *East, West: Stories*.

I will try to upload most of the texts listed here on Canvas, especially the secondary critical materials, the short stories and essays. However, it is expected that the students should purchase the longer texts.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE- 1000

Attendance & Participation (100 points)

Attendance (50)

Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. **Students may lose 3% from their final grade for every unexcused absence.** Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and the twelve-day rule (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>). Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class.

Participation (50)

Students are expected to do the assigned readings before class. Each week will begin with a series of basic questions on the contents of the assigned readings. **If students are unable to answer these questions, it will be assumed that they have not prepared the homework and may lose 2% of their final course grade.** Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade. Kick-starting discussions, offering observations, bringing complex passages to the attention of class, as well as raising productive questions are all forms of acceptable participation.

Asking questions about assignment details DO NOT count as participation. In addition to regularly participating in class discussion, each student shall choose ONE text from the syllabus and present on that selected text (100).

A sheet along with everyone's name will either be circulated in class or be uploaded in Canvas by the end of second week. Students will get back to the instructor with their selected text by the end of third week.

Four Analytical Responses (Total Words: 2000, Total Points: 400; 100x4 = 400 points)

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (500 words minimum for each) response to the week's reading. **These responses must be uploaded to the Canvas discussion board BEFORE the day (latest by 11:59 PM) of the class.** Discussion boards will be available to students each week (excepting weeks when a major assignment is due, and holiday weeks). Students can choose any four of the posted discussion boards throughout the semester to make their four required responses.

Description of assignment: Interpretive (or Critical) questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for opinions on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also ask for judgments regarding the period, history, politic and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of Interpretive and Critical questions—which often use phrases such as "do you think" or "why do you suppose"—indicates that there may well be neither simply "right" nor simply "wrong" answers; the success of response is based on the evidence and reasoning students employ to support their analysis and judgment.

Annotated Bibliography with THREE Sources (Total words: 1000, Total points: 150)

As a preliminary step to the final paper, you will submit an annotated bibliography explaining how you will use three of your sources. You will focus on three sources from the listed items you have already chosen in your bibliography. All the sources **MUST** be scholarly in nature, either from peer reviewed journals or book chapters.

Your annotation **MUST** include short summaries of each source and clear explications of the argumentative position you will take regarding the source.

Draft of Research Paper + Bibliography with AT LEAST THREE Secondary Sources (Total Words: 1000, Total Points: 150)

This is a draft of the final version of your research paper. As a draft, it need not be extremely polished or sophisticated. However, it **MUST** contain your thesis statement, the text(s) you will work on, and at least three secondary sources that you will consult for writing the final paper.

CITATIONS ARE NOT A PART OF THE MINIMUM WORD COUNT.

5. Final Research Paper+ Bibliography with AT LEAST FOUR Secondary Sources (Total Words: 2000, Total Points: 250)

This critical essay will be a formally researched paper, where you will make an original argument. The argument could be about one or more literary texts through a particular theoretical, historical, or critical lens. In this paper, you **MUST** substantiate your thesis statement with proper textual evidence and scholarly research. The paper should contain a concise methodology along with a minimum of five secondary sources.

CITATIONS ARE NOT A PART OF THE MINIMUM WORD COUNT.

6.Class Presentation (Total Points: 50)

You are also required to do a class presentation on a text of your choice. The presentation should include a clear and coherent thesis statement, a close analysis of the selected text, evidence of critical/scholarly work done on the topic, and a conclusion. Students can use a power point during the presentation, but is not mandatory. The session will be followed by a QnA, where peers will comment on your paper and ask question.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Makeup Policy

Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuses (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>) there will be NO make-up option for missed exams or late assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case of illness or other emergencies, student should contact instructor to discuss the options.

Late Policy

Since this class puts great emphasis on discussion, it is expected that the students will arrive in time for the class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Students may lose 2% from their final grade for more than three late absences.

Cell phone policy

As a kind gesture to the peers and instructor, it is expected that students turn their cell phones to silent before coming to class.

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent)

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	63-66	62-60	59-
(4.0)	(3.67)	(3.33)	(3.0)	(2.67)	(2.33)	(2.0)	(1.67)	(1.33)	(1.0)	(0.67)	(0)

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/> <https://student.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Please see the sample rubric for a detailed idea of the evaluation criteria:

<https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-courses/structure-of-wr-courses/sample-writing-assessment-rubric/>

Paper Format & Submission

All assignments, including the Short Responses, will be submitted under Assignments on Canvas. They should be formatted per **MLA 8th edition standards (TNR 12, double-spaced, one-inch margins, MLA header/pagination, and MLA citations, if applicable)** and submitted to the

assignment on Canvas as a .doc or .docx file. Please note that failure of technology is not an excuse for missing or late assignments, so plan your time accordingly.

Make sure you read and adhere to UF student computing requirement (<https://it.ufl.edu/policies/student-computing-requirements/>).

Late Papers/Assignments

Assignments that are submitted late will lose ten percent off their final grade for each day that they are late (unless the student has a doctor's note or a valid reason for the late submission). In the case of the student missing a documented reason for the late submission, **after three days, I will NOT accept the assignments and the student will receive zero (0)**.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

All papers and assignments for this course MUST be submitted online, through Canvas "Assignments" section. Only MS Word and PDF files will be accepted, and all submitted assignments will go through the Canvas plagiarism checker, TurnItIn.

Academic Honesty

Students are required to be honest in their coursework, may not use notes during quizzes or exams, and MUST properly cite all sources that they have consulted for their projects.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more details on University of Florida's honor code, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

Plagiarism includes but is NOT limited to:

Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, 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.

Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in failure of the assignment in question and/or the course. Similarly, all acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism, however, can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, therefore, please ask for help from your instructor!

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources

Students facing difficulties completing the course or in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352 392-1575; <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>).

U	Matter	We	Care	umatter.ufl.edu	352-394-2273	(CARE)
Dean	of	Students	Office	dso.ufl.edu	352-392-1261	
Counseling	and	Wellness	Center	counseling.ufl.edu	352-392-1575	

Field & Fork Pantry - pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu 352-294-3601

Harassment

The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>.

Online Course Evaluation

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://gatorevals.aa.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://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Students should note that the schedule is a guideline and may change. However, they will be informed well in advance in case of such changes.

WEEK 1

What is Postcolonial 'American' Literature?

08/23 (W) -Introduction to AML 2410 (syllabus, assignment and attendance discussion, class expectations etc.)

08/25 (F)- Introduction to 'American' Literature and Postcolonialism.

WEEK 2

What is Postcolonial 'American' Literature? (continued)

08/28 (M) – Discussion on 'American' Literature and Postcolonialism.

08/30(W)- CLASS CANCELLED BY UF DUE TO HURRICANE IDALIA.

09/01 (F)- Discussion on 'American' Literature and Postcolonialism.

WEEK 3

"You meet Indians Everywhere": Storytelling, and the Native American Fiction

09/04 (M) – NO CLASS. Labor Day.

09/06 (W) – Introduction to the genre of Native American storytelling and Harry Robinson.

09/08 (F)- Robinson, “You think it’s a Stump, but that’s my Grandfather”, from *Nature Power: in the Spirit of an Okanagan Storyteller*.

WEEK 4

“Storyed voices”: Female Authored Native American Fictions

09/11 (M) – Introduction to Gloria Naylor, and “The Two” from *The Women of Brewster Place*, pp. 129-145.

09/13 (W) – Naylor, “The Two”, *The Women of Brewster Place*, pp. 146-173.

09/15 (F)- In-class Workshop on writing the draft of research paper (brainstorming ideas etc.).

WEEK 5

Spectral, Cultural Hauntings, and Ethnicity in American Postcolonial Literature

09/18 (M) – Introduction.

09/20 (W) –Toni Morrison and *Beloved*, chapters 1-8.

09/22 (F)- *Beloved*, chapters 9-15.

WEEK 6

Spectral, Cultural Hauntings, and Ethnicity in American Postcolonial Literature (Continued)

09/25 (M) – *Beloved*, chapters 16-21.

09/27 (W)- *Beloved*, chapters 22-28.

09/29 (F)- *Beloved* (concluding lecture).

WEEK 7

The Nonhuman in Native American Imagination

10/02 (M) – Introduction.

10/04 (W)- Linda Hogan, “One Mind” from *The Radiant Lives of Animals*.

10/06 (F) – NO CLASS. Homecoming Weekend.

WEEK 8

Slow Violence, Environment, and Capitalism

10/9 (M) – Introduction.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE BY 11:59 PM ON CANVAS.

10/11 (W)- Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, chapters 1-3.

10/13 (F)- Carson, *Silent Spring*, chapters 8-9.

WEEK 9

Slow Violence, Environment, and Capitalism (Continued)

10/16 (M) – Carson, *Silent Spring*, chapters 12-13.

10/18 (W)- Carson, *Silent Spring*, chapters 16 and 17.

10/20 (F)- In class workshop on writing the final paper/working on the draft.

WEEK 10

“The American Dream”: US Imperialism, Migration and Refugees

10/23 (M) – Introduction to “The American Dream”: US Imperialism, Migration, and Refugees.

RESEARCH DRAFT DUE BY 11:59 PM ON CANVAS.

10/25 (W)- Introduction to Aimee Phan.

10/27 (F) – Aimee Phan, “Emancipation” from *We should Never Meet*.

WEEK 11

“The American Dream”: US Imperialism, Migration and Refugees (Continued)

10/30 (M) - Introduction to Viet Than Nguyen.

11/01 (W)- Nguyen, “The Americans” from *The Refugees*.

11/03 (F) – Introduction to “Beyond the Borders”: ‘Other’ voices in Postcolonial Literature and the Comparative Framework”

WEEK 12

“Beyond the Borders”: ‘Other’ voices in Postcolonial Literature and the Comparative Framework

11/06 (M) – Introduction to Salman Rushdie.

11/08 (W)- Rushdie, “The Courter” from *East, West Stories*.

11/10 (R)- NO CLASS. Veteran’s Day.

WEEK 13

11/13 (M)- Ana Lydia Vega, “Cloud from the Caribbeans”.

11/15 (W)- Student Presentations.

11/17 (F)- Student Presentations.

WEEK 14

11/20 (M)- Student Presentations.

11/22 (W) - NO CLASS. Thanksgiving Holiday.

11/24 (F)- NO CLASS. Thanksgiving Holiday.

WEEK 15

11/27 (M)- Students work on the final paper.

11/29 (W)- Meeting with the students to discuss final paper.

12/01 (F)- Meeting with the students to discuss final paper.

WEEK 16

12/04 (M)- Students work on the final paper.

12/06 (W)- Students revise the final paper, GatorEval etc.

FINAL PAPER DUE BY 11:59 PM ON CANVAS.