

Survey of American Literature

AML 2070 Section 0590

Spring 2016, T 2-3 / R 3, MAT 0102

Kyle Bohunicky

kbohunicky@ufl.edu

Office: Turlington 4367

Office Hours: Thursday, period 2

Course Description:

AML 2070 provides a survey of American literature. This specific course will examine how depictions of identity, nationality, race, gender, war, sexuality, etc. in American literature have been deeply informed by concepts of environment, ecologies, waste, and nature. These categories, and the actual wildlife and wildernesses they refer to, provide American writers with a means to understand America as “home.” Moreover, they have also been mobilized to create and define communities, often violently and destructively excluding large groups of people as well as animals, plants, and other so-called “natural” subjects.

This survey course must therefore consider American literature as a product of and response to dramatic transformations in the environment and perceptions of nature. We will do so by exploring texts from a diverse set of authors who directly interrogate cultural constructions of race, gender, sexuality, and class, as well as topics such as economics, war, identity, politics, nationality, etc. This class will expand your notion of what literature does when situated within ecological and environmental contexts, will offer a more informed view of how American literature has transformed alongside the environment, and will convey how issues of the twentieth century are still pertinent and influential.

Student Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will have demonstrated their ability to:

- Understand the history, major theories, and debates in American literature
- Discuss the significance of environmental and ecological issues in American culture and literature
- The ability to think critically about the role of writing and culture to the production of "nature"
- Produce writing with a focused thesis, unity throughout the essay, and coherence between paragraphs and ideas and within the essay as a whole
- Display a command of grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, and accurate MLA citation and documentation of research
- Work collaboratively in an academic writing community, learning from and contributing to the writing of your classmates in addition to engaging in critical verbal discourse

- Understand and employ various technological resources in your critical reading, writing, and thinking practices, including the use of word processing to develop essays, e-mail to communicate professionally, and the Internet and library database resources for developing research skills

Required Texts

Elder, John and Robert Finch, eds. *The Norton Book of Nature Writing*. New York: W.W. Norton, 8th Edition. Print.

Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49*. Harper Perennial, 2006. Print.

Williams, Joseph M. and Joseph Bizup. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. 5th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2015. Print.

All other readings will be made available on E-Learning

Assignments

Assignments must be submitted on ELS before class on the day they are listed as due (see course reading schedule). Essays should be uploaded as Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx) to the appropriate assignment box. Title files with your last name, first name, and the title of the assignment. All assignments should be written following Modern Language Association (MLA) formatting guidelines. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner along with the appropriate citations and a works cited page.

No late assignments will be accepted, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Failure of technology (hard drive crashes, printer out of ink, etc.) is not an excuse. If Canvas is not functioning properly when you attempt to submit a paper, you must immediately email me and apprise me of the situation and bring a hard copy to class, which you may submit for no penalty.

- **Response Papers** (Five total, 100 points each) - 500 words each

Over the course of the semester, students will produce five written response papers that will address the ideas and texts in the class. Unless otherwise stated, responses must be about the texts we have previously discussed in class. Students' responses should make *significant* connections between past and current readings - surface level analyses and summaries will not suffice. Response due dates are listed on the syllabus (Minimum 500 words each; 500 points total)

- **Midterm: Rhetorical Analysis** (200 points total) — Minimum 1500 words

For this assignment, you will use the argumentative and rhetorical "tools" we have examined up to this point in class. You will choose one of the texts we have read and analyze the arguments that it makes about "nature." Once you have a good sense of how the argument is constructed and have determined whether that construction is or is not effective in making the argument,

write an analysis of the argument. Your task is not to argue with the argument, but to offer a persuasive analysis of how that argument is made.

• **Final: Synthesis Paper** (200 points) - Minimum 2000 words

In argumentative writing, *synthesis* is commonly understood as a counterpart to *analysis*. When writers analyze, they break something down into parts to view the relationship among those parts; synthesis writers, however, put those parts back together in some new way. In other words, synthesis is a way of seeing and coming to terms with complexities. This assignment asks you to synthesize two texts' ideas about nature and American identity.

• **Quizzes and Participation** (100 points)

Participation accounts for in-class discussion, workshops, in-class work and other related activities. Participation is a necessary component of your time in this class, and as such will factor into your grade. You are expected to arrive to class prepared, with homework done, articles/books read, and paper and writing tools at hand. You will work individually, in small groups and in class-wide discussion. I will expect each of you to actively participate each day, and your contributions to class discussion are documented. You are expected to add constructively to the conversation we have each day. You will treat the instructor and your fellow classmates with respect at all times, especially when you disagree with them. Anyone who breaks that rule will be asked to leave the classroom. ***We will have weekly quizzes, but I reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes if necessary***

This is a General Education course providing the student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see <http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx#learning>

Course Policies:

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed **three** unexcused absences. If you miss more than **three** classes during the semester, each additional absence will lower your overall grade by 100 points. If you miss more than **six** classes, you will **fail** the course. Exempt from this policy are **only** those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, family emergencies, and health issues for which you must provide appropriate documentation in advance of the absence.

Additionally, tardiness will not be tolerated. If you are tardy for **three** class periods, you will receive an unexcused absence.

Late work will not be accepted. Any assignment submitted after the deadline will lose 50 points per day.

Note: If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all class discussions and activities as well as any new developments, such as assignments and due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. You will not, however, be able to make up any in-class assignments. I will not approach you regarding absences and missing or late assignments; it is your responsibility to

speak to me and keep track of your own attendance and assignments. If you anticipate having a prolonged absence for any reason, please speak with me in advance to make appropriate arrangements.

Email Etiquette:

Many of you will need to write courteous, formal e-mails in your place of work, and this classroom is no different. As this is a writing classroom focused on rhetoric and communication, students are expected to be critical and sensitive writers in all their communication including e-mail. With that in mind, I will only respond to e-mails that demonstrate a formal tone and style. This means that your e-mails must display the following:

- Subject Line
- Greeting
- Reader-centered
- Edited, error-free, proofread
- If making a request (deadline extension, meeting, etc.), e-mail has been sent at least **72 hours** in advance
- Demonstrate that the student has consulted other documentation (course syllabus, student handbook, peers in the course) prior to writing

I reserve the right to ignore (and, depending on the situation, report) inconsiderate, colloquial, rude, accusatory, and poorly edited e-mails.

I will only respond to e-mails between the hours of 9 - 5, M-F.

Finally, I will not discuss the following over e-mail:

- Grade Disputes
- Edit/provide feedback on papers
- Course policy (refer to the course syllabus)

Grading Scale

A 4.0/93-100/930-1000	B- 2.67 / 80-82 / 800-829	D+ 1.33 / 67-69 / 670-699
A-3.67/90-92/900-929	C+ 2.33/77-79/770-799	D 1.0 / 63-66 / 630-669
B+ 3.33 / 87-89 / 870-899	C 2.0/73-76/730-769	D-0.67/60-62/600-629
B 3.0/83-86/830-869	C-1.67/70-72/700-729	E 0.00/0-59/0-599

Statement of student disability services: The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Statement on academic honesty: All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Class and Assignment Schedule

This schedule is only a guide and is subject to change. Unless otherwise indicated, assignments and readings are due the day they are listed on the syllabus, not the following day.

Date	Class Discussion	Readings/Homework
Jan 5th	Syllabus review	
Jan 7th	Assignment introduction	
Jan 12th	Defining "nature" and its uses	Read Wulf: http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/12/the-forgotten-father-of-environmentalism/421434/ ; Andersen: http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/11/nature-has-lost-its-meaning/417918/
Jan 14th	Writing effective summaries; MLA Citation; how to paraphrase	Response 1 Due
Jan 19th	Discuss Cree Tales	Read: http://www.jstor.org/stable/534678?seq=6#page_scan_tab_contents
Jan 21st	Discuss Silko	Read Silko "Landscape, History, and the Pueblo Imagination"

Jan 26th	Discuss Crèvecoeur	Read selections from <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> (Crèvecoeur)
Jan 28th	Writing instruction	Williams and Bizup: Chapters 1-3;
Feb 2nd	Discuss Bartram	Read selections from <i>Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida</i>
Feb 4th	Discuss writing nature	Read Dobrin and Weisser, Chapter 1: "Ecocomposition" (on canvas)
Feb 9th	Discuss the invention of "nature" and "wilderness"	Read Cronon: http://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Trouble with Wilderness Main.html
Feb 11th	What is rhetorical analysis? How do I analyze?	Carroll: Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis
Feb 16th	Discuss Melville	Read selections from <i>The Encantadas</i> : http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/melville_en/cover.html ;
Feb 18th	How do I analyze an argument?	Jones: Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?; Response 2 due
Feb 23rd	Writing instruction	Williams and Bizup: Chapters 4 and 5
Feb 25th	Midterm Peer Review	Midterm due Sunday at 5 PM
Mar 8th	Discuss Douglass and hooks	Read Frederick Douglass <i>The Heroic Slave</i> : http://web.archive.org/web/20081010142741/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DouHero.html ; Read hooks http://dyck.weebly.com/uploads/1/9/1/5/19153179/touchi_

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Mar 10th	Discuss Thoreau	Read selections from <i>Walden</i>
Mar 15h	Discuss Hawthorne	Read Rappaccini's Daughter (Hawthorne): http://www.columbia.edu/itc/english/fl124y-001/resources/Rappaccinis_Daughter.pdf ;
Mar 17th	Writing instruction	Sentence structure, punctuation
Mar 22nd	Discuss Austin	Read Mary Austin <i>The Land of Little Rain</i>
Mar 24th	Discuss Leopold	Read selections <i>A Sand Country Almanac</i> ; Response 3 Due
Mar 29th	Discuss Wright	Read selections from <i>Black Boy</i>
Mar 31st	How to synthesize	Discuss synthesis strategies Response 4 due
April 5th	No class, at CCCC	Read <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i>
April 7th	No class, at CCCC	
April 12th	Discuss Pynchon	Discuss <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i> ; Response 5 due
April 14th	Discuss Le Guin	Read Ursula K. Le Guin's "A Very Warm Mountain"
April 19th	Final Peer Review	Final due April 28th at 5 PM
April 28th	Final Due	