

## AML2070: Survey of American Literature

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T 2-3/R 3

MAT 118

### The American Family

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

On June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality. Many reactions, positive and negative alike, expressed the unwavering belief that this decision will impact the foundational unit of American society—the family. But what *is* the American family? And how has it changed over time?

While the debate over marriage equality proves that the definition of “the American family” is in contention, its importance in American culture is not. Thus, this survey of American literature will investigate representations of “family,” broadly defined, from the nineteenth century through the twenty-first. We will read, discuss, and analyze a broad range of texts, including but not limited to novels, short stories, poetry, and essays. Exploring these works using critical lenses, with a focus on gender, class, race, and sexuality, will allow us to better understand, and perhaps reconsider, how “the American family” is conceptualized in the broader cultural imagination.

In addition to developing critical reading skills, we will also write about a variety of texts. Close-readings and class discussions will allow students to communicate their interpretations and responses throughout the semester. Students will also construct essays that engage with the assigned readings in thoughtful, convincing, and effective ways. Ideally, students should emerge from this course with a greater understanding of the individual texts as well as their position within the larger cultural, historical, political, and personal contexts of American literature.

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

[https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general\\_education\\_requirement.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general_education_requirement.aspx)

#### GOALS AND OUTCOMES

By the end of AML2070, students will be able to:

- Read, write, and think critically about American literature, as well as texts beyond the scope of the course
- Discuss the historical and critical context of texts
- Communicate their ideas and analyses of texts
- Develop well-supported, persuasive, polished academic essays
- Establish and support significant historical, literary, and critical or theoretical claims
- Conduct formal research on literature and use secondary sources to support their arguments

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* ISBN: 0486419231

Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie* ISBN: 0064400026

Shirley Jackson, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* ISBN: 0143039970

Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor Was Divine* ISBN: 0385721811

These are the ISBNs for preferred editions, but you can purchase other versions. We will also read various poems, short stories, and excerpts, which will be accessible via Canvas.

Electronic copies on permitted electronic devices (see classroom policies) are allowed, but hard copies are preferred. **Failure to have the required reading, as well as notes and/or discussion questions, will count as an absence.**

## ASSIGNMENTS (Total Points Possible: 1000)

### Readings Responses (3 responses, 500 words each; 150points total)

Throughout the semester, students will write three short papers critically responding to the class readings. Each response should focus on one or two texts read in class. In these responses, students can close-read the text(s), situate it in its historical context, and/or offer a new perspective on the work or writer, as long as the argument demonstrates an engagement with the text in a critical fashion. Each response must follow the same academic writing style required of standard essays, including well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis or hypothesis, well-supported claims, and effective stylistic elements. The purpose is to facilitate dynamic reading experiences, critical thinking, and an interactive discourse community. Each response should be on a different text, but the ideas explored in these responses can be further developed in longer papers.

### Outlines (200 words each; 150 points total)

For each paper, students must turn in an outline detailing their argument prior to the paper's due date (see reading schedule for due dates). It should be a formal full-sentence outline, with a developed thesis statement and textual evidence. Outlines can be turned in early, but must be submitted as a hard copy in class.

### Close Readings Analysis (900 words; 150 points)

Students will choose one reading assigned and conduct a persuasive close-reading of part of that work. In this assignment, students will analyze the selection (a passage from a novel or short story or a poem) and develop an argument about the way in which the author's composition influences your thematic reading. This assignment is designed to assess analytical and critical skills, so no outside research should be conducted. More detailed instructions will be provided when the assignment is introduced.

### Critical Analysis (1200 words; 200 points)

Students will perform an extended critical analysis of one of the texts already studied in class. In this assignment, students will develop a thematic reading and then use that theme to analyze the text. The goal of this assignment is to examine a student's ability to formulate a specific and substantial critical argument that addresses a significant aspect of a text and justifies its claims through a systematic critique of two or three detailed textual examples. Topics must be discussed

with the instructor before you begin writing. More detailed instructions will be provided when the assignment is introduced.

*Final Paper: Researched Critical Analysis (1800 words; 250 points)*

In this assignment, students 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 or more literary texts through a particular theoretical, historical, or critical lens. Students will develop a topic of their own choosing, subject to instructor's approval. This assignment is an opportunity to develop unique, interesting arguments. The paper should incorporate both primary and secondary texts and offer evidence of the student's critical thinking and interpretive abilities. More detailed instructions will be provided when the assignment is introduced.

*Class Discussion Prompts (25 points total)*

Over the course of the semester, students are required to bring in class discussion prompts for a minimum of five classes. The prompt must include a *typed* insight (2-3 sentences) about the text and a discussion question. It must be brought to the class meeting when we will discuss that text and turned in at the end of the period.

*Participation (75 points)*

In order to develop an open, engaging community of critical thinkers, we must all actively participate in the learning process. Completing course assignments and attending class fulfills part of your commitment to the class. Students must also participate in class discussions and activities (including peer reviews, group work, and quizzes), as well as complete any out-of-class activities or homework assigned. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to in-class activities and discussion will lower your participation grade.

**Please note:** I am always available to discuss your papers with you during the writing process, if you contact me in a timely manner. When you have any questions or concerns about your work, please feel free to e-mail, visit during office hours, or schedule an appointment with me. You can also visit the Writing Studio in Tigert 302 for concerns regarding grammar, punctuation, or style. Visit their site at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/> for more information.

## **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 be failed. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts. 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.

**Assignments that do not meet the minimum word count will receive zero credit.**

As the instructor, it is my duty to evaluate and provide feedback on students' written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) Credit

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general.education.requirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing Requirement (WR)

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing.and.math.requirement.aspx>

**Please note:** a grade of "C-" **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

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

Grade Appeals

For this 2000-level course, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Department of English Program Assistant. Please note that grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

**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.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

### Assignment Formatting and Submission

All written assignments must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman and double-spaced with 1" margins on all sides. Format, citations, and documentation must follow MLA style. Format the page number in the top right of each page, and title your submissions. Be sure to staple papers before submitting hard copies. Unstapled papers will not be accepted.

All papers must be submitted as MS Word (.doc or .docx) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to Canvas. Peer-edited rough drafts must be turned in the day the final draft is due. Reading responses are submitted on Canvas *and* as a hard copy in class. Outlines and discussion prompts must be submitted as hard copies (typed), but *not* on Canvas. All assignments are due at the beginning of class or online at the assigned deadline. Late assignments **will not be accepted**

unless you have made specific arrangements with the instructor prior to the submission of the late work.

### Attendance

In AML2070, students are required to participate as active members of the learning community. Each student is allowed **three** absences. Each absence beyond the first three absences will lower your overall grade by 50 points (per absence). **If you miss more than seven periods, you will fail the course automatically.** Missing class on a double period counts as **two** absences. If you enter class after the official start of the period, you are late—which disrupts the entire class. **Three instances of tardiness count as one absence.** Entering the classroom more than 15 minutes after the class begins counts as an absence.

The University exempts from this policy **only** those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Inform me as early as possible in advance if you will miss class due to a university-approved reason (i.e. varsity athletics, etc.). Similarly, please inform me in advance if you will miss class to observe a religious holiday. If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other special dispensation approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please meet with me to discuss your requirements as early as possible.

**Please note:** If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

### Classroom Behavior

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 controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that all students demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from their own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

### Conferences

I encourage you to make an appointment to see me during my office hours, especially when you have questions about an assignment, need help with a particular writing problem, want extra feedback on a draft, or have questions about my comments on your work.

### Electronic Devices

No disruptions from cell phones of any kind will be tolerated. The instructor reserves the right to require those who break this rule to leave the classroom, which will count as a day's absence. In the event of a personal situation that requires your cell phone to be on, please notify the instructor before class.

You can use laptop computers and other portable electronic devices in class for the purposes of taking notes during discussion, referencing electronic texts, or for in-class presentations. Web browsing, emailing, chatting, etc. unrelated to class activities are, however, inappropriate and will not be tolerated. In the event of a violation of this policy, the instructor reserves the right to prohibit the use of **all** electronic devices in class by individual students and/or the class as a whole.

### Harassment

Every student in this class is expected to participate in a responsible and mature manner that enhances education. Any conduct that disrupts the learning process may lead to disciplinary action. Because this course requires much contact, collaboration, and dialogue among students, it is essential that each student work to create an environment of respect and tolerance.

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.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>

### Payer Maintenance Responsibilities

You 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 or a review of graded papers, it is your responsibility to have and to make available this material.

### Peer Review

On the dates marked for peer review, you must bring a **completed draft** of your work to class, and be prepared to critique that of your peers. Absences on peer review days will affect your participation grade, and neglecting to submit a full draft will reduce your grade on the final work. Missed peer reviews will cost the student ten points and failing to submit a draft will lower the final grade on the paper by ten points/one letter grade, at the instructor's discretion.

### Plagiarism

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student.honor.code.aspx>

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it 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:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. 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, 8 July 2011)

**Important Tip:** You should never copy and paste something from the Internet (or any work) without providing the exact location from which it came.

**All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course.** Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, ask for help!

*Students with Disabilities*

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. 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/>



### Schedule of Classes and Assignments

This schedule is subject to change. The online syllabus supersedes the paper copy. Unless otherwise indicated, assignments and readings are due the day they are listed on the syllabus.

\* indicates that the text(s) will be available through Canvas

Week	Date	Readings Due	Assignments Due
<b>Week 1</b>	T: 8/25	Course introduction and syllabus	
	R: 8/27	<b>“The” American Family</b> Stephanie Coontz, “The Way We Never Were: Defining the Family Crisis” [excerpt]*	
<b>Week 2</b>	T: 9/1	<b>Family Ties Under Slavery</b> William Lloyd Garrison, “To the Public” (1831)*; Harriet Beecher Stowe <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> [excerpt]*; and Frances E.W. Harper “The Slave Mother” (1854)* <i>Introduce Reading Responses</i>	
	R: 9/3	<i>Introduce Close Reading assignment</i> Writing workshop: How to close-read	
<b>Week 3</b>	T: 9/8	Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861) [excerpt]*	Response #1 Due
	R: 9/10	Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861) [excerpt]*	
<b>Week 4</b>	T: 9/15	<b>Domestic Fictions</b> Louisa May Alcott, <i>Little Women</i> (1868) [excerpt]* Writing Workshop: Outlining arguments	
	R: 9/17	Louisa May Alcott, <i>Little Women</i> (1868) [excerpt]*	Outline #1 due
<b>Week 5</b>	T: 9/22	<b>Marriage and Motherhood</b> Mary Wilkins Freeman, “The Revolt of ‘Mother’” (1891)* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wall-Paper” (1892)*	
	R: 9/24	Edith Wharton, “Soul’s Belated” (1899)* and “The Other Two” (1904)*	
<b>Week 6</b>	T: 9/29	Peer review Writing workshop: Editing and revising	Rough draft of Close Reading due
	R: 10/1	<i>Introduce Critical Analysis assignment</i>	Final draft of Close Reading Due
<b>Week 7</b>	T: 10/6	<b>Working Class Families</b> Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> (1906)	
	R: 10/8	Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> (1906)	
<b>Week 8</b>	T: 10/13	Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> (1906)	Response #2 Due
	R: 10/15	Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> (1906)	
<b>Week 9</b>	T: 10/20	<b>Families on the Frontier</b> Laura Ingalls Wilder, <i>Little House on the Prairie</i> (1935)	

	R: 10/22	Laura Ingalls Wilder, <i>Little House on the Prairie</i> (1935)	Outline #2 due
<b>Week 10</b>	T: 10/27	<b>The Idealized American Family</b> Elaine Tyler May, <i>Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era</i> , “Introduction”*  In-class viewing: <i>Leave It To Beaver</i> pilot episode, “It’s A Small World” (1957)	
	R: 10/29	<b>Beyond the Cleavers</b> Mario Suarez, <i>Chicano Sketches</i> [excerpt]*	
<b>Week 11</b>	T: 11/3	Peer review Writing workshop: Library resources and organizing your research	Rough draft of Critical Analysis Due
	R: 11/5	<i>Introduce Final Paper assignment</i>	Final draft of Critical Analysis Due
<b>Week 12</b>	T: 11/10	James Baldwin “Notes of a Native Son” (1955)* and John Cheever, “The Sorrows of Gin” (1959)*	
	R: 11/12	Shirley Jackson, <i>We Have Always Lived in the Castle</i> (1962)	
<b>Week 13</b>	T: 11/17	Shirley Jackson, <i>We Have Always Lived in the Castle</i> (1962)	
	R: 11/19	Leslie Marmon Silko, “Lullaby” (1981) and <i>Storyteller</i> (1981) [excerpt]*	Response #3 Due
<b>Week 14</b>	T: 11/24	<b>The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Looks Back</b> Junot Diaz, “Invierno” (2012)*	
	R: 11/26	NO CLASS—Thanksgiving	
<b>Week 15</b>	T: 12/1	Julie Otsuka, <i>When the Emperor Was Divine</i> (2002)	Outline #3 due
	R: 12/3	Julie Otsuka, <i>When the Emperor Was Divine</i> (2002)	
<b>Week 16</b>	T: 12/8	Julie Otsuka, <i>When the Emperor Was Divine</i> (2002) Peer Review	Rough draft of Final Paper Due

Final Paper due 12/11 via Canvas