English 2326: Introduction to American Literature

Instructor: Dr. Gabriela Serrano

Office: Academic Building 0019 A

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Tuesdays: 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
Thursdays: 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

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Course Description
In this course, we will examine American literature, history, and culture. We will evaluate different genres of American literature from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. We will also cover issues in American literature concerning psychology, nature, race, and gender. Understanding important themes in American culture will help us become critical readers, develop our analytical skills, and come to a better understanding of the social and political contexts that shape a country’s literature.

ASU Core Curriculum Objectives for Sophomore Literature and Related Course Assessments

Students in sophomore literature will practice the following core curriculum learning objectives in critical thinking, communication, social responsibility, and personal responsibility. Students will then demonstrate their capabilities in these objectives through reading quizzes, written analyses, reflections, or examinations.

- Critical thinking will be demonstrated in reading quizzes, written analyses, or examinations.
  - Students will gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information relevant to a question or issue by mastering a series of assigned literary works in terms of generic conventions and content.
- Communication will be demonstrated in reading quizzes, written analyses, or examinations.
  - Students will develop, interpret, and express ideas through effective written communication.
- Social responsibility will be demonstrated in written reflection on public reading or lecture.
  - Students will demonstrate ability to engage with locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally known literary artists and the texts they create, and to reflect upon the shared traditions of literary expression, the debates that help shape literature, and the conflicts, cultural differences, and shared experiences.
- Personal responsibility will be demonstrated in reading quizzes, written analyses, or examinations.
  - Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate choices, actions, and consequences by identifying, analyzing, and evaluating ethical decision-making in literary examples.
**Open Door Policy**
Students are welcomed and encouraged to visit me whenever they wish to discuss an exam, quiz, or any other problem as it relates to this class. If students cannot come during my office hours or may schedule an appointment, The easiest and best way to contact me outside of my office hours is to e-mail me (gserrano@angelo.edu). I read my e-mail on a daily basis during weekdays and will reply promptly.

**Semester Grade**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literary Analysis (3)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz Grades</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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**Exams**
Students will complete three exams over the course of the semester.
- Exam 1 will cover Race in American literature
- Exam 2 will cover Gender in American literature
- Exam 3 will cover Individuality in American literature

**Literary Analysis**
Students will complete three, one page responses over the short-stories and/or poems we will cover this semester. Students will be expected to read, evaluate, and respond to the text(s) critically to deepen their understanding of the text(s). I will post two prompts on Blackboard for each unit—Race, Gender, and the Individual—and students may choose from one of these two prompts to write about. **I will not accept late submissions.**

**Quiz Grades**
Quizzes will cover the assigned readings due for that day. Quizzes are unannounced and must be completed within the first five minutes of class. **If students are more than five minutes late, they may not take the quiz for that day. Students may not make up any quizzes,** but I will drop the lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester in case of illness, a family emergency, car trouble, etc. Additionally, **I will assign a grade of 0 on a student’s quiz if she/he leaves class early.** Students may not simply take their quizzes and walk out of class.

**Discussion Questions**
Discussion Questions cover the assigned readings and lectures due for the week. You do, however, have unlimited submissions for these. I will, however, drop the lowest Discussion Question grade in case of illness, a family emergency, car trouble etc. **I will not accept late submissions.**

**Use of Technology**
Assignments must be uploaded on Blackboard as WORD or PDF documents. **I will not accept excuses for any technical difficulties students may have with their assignments,** which include computers crashing, difficulty uploading papers, Blackboard shutting down, etc. Also, **students must have a competent knowledge of Blackboard.** I addition, students need to make sure to give themselves enough time after finishing their assignments to manage any of these technical difficulties. **I will not accept any assignments via email** because it is a violation of
your rights as students for me to discuss grades via email. Make sure to upload all assignments in the designated content area labeled “Assignments” on Blackboard.

“No Drama Clause”:
I will drop the lowest quiz and discussion question grade at the end of the semester, and I will drop one letter grade per day a paper is late in case of illness, a death in the family, car trouble, etc., but I do not want students to ask for special exceptions for such occurrences. Again, I drop the lowest daily and quiz grades and deduct 10 points per day a literary analysis is late in case of an emergency.

Departmental Policy on Academic Honesty
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook: http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf Failure to comply with the honor code will result in disciplinary action and a failing grade in this course.

I will assign a grade of “F” for the following violations:
I. Plagiarism “the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another’s work or idea into one’s own work offered for credit” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Chapter VI, Section 5.32)
II. Cheating - this includes copying material from another member of the class, having someone in or outside of class complete an assignment or exam for you.

Students with Special Needs
Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact ASU’s Disability Services: http://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/

Inclusion Statement
We will be addressing controversial topics related to underprivileged groups throughout the semester. I support a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honor all identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). Please let me if there is a particular name or pronouns by which you identify. Also, please let me know if anything I or your peers may say in class makes you feel excluded or marginalized. You may come see me in my office, leave me a note, and your concerns will remain anonymous.

Confidential Resources Available to Students:
Office of Title IX Compliance: 325-486-6357
University Health Clinic: 325-942-2171
University Counseling Center: 325-942-2173
ASU Crisis Helpline: 325-486-6345
Schedule of Readings and Exams
(Tentative and Subject to Change)

**Week One**
Jan 15  Course Introduction/Course Policies
       Lecture on the Harlem Renaissance

Jan. 17  Langston Hughes: “Harlem” (Dream Deferred)
        “Slave on the Block”

**Week Two**
Jan. 22  Sandra Cisneros: “The House on Mango Street”
        Gary Soto: “Mexicans Begin Jogging”

Jan. 24  Carmen Tafolla: "La Malice"
        Rudolfo Anaya: Selections from *Bless Me, Ultima*
        **Assignment (Due by Midnight 1/27)**
        Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Three**
Jan. 29  Emma Lazarus: “The New Colossus”
        Naomi Shahab Nye: “Jerusalem”

Jan. 31  Sook Ryul Ryu: “Poem by a Yellow Woman”
        Gene Luen Yang: selection from *American Born Chinese*
        **Assignment (Due by Midnight 2/3)**
        Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Four**
Feb. 5   Booker T. Washington: *Atlanta Compromise Speech*
        Ralph Ellison: “Battle Royal”

Feb. 7   Charles Chestnutt: "Po Sandy"
        Joel Chandler Harris: “The Wonderful Tar Baby Story”
        **Assignment (Due by Midnight 2/11)**
        Upload Literary Analysis

**Week Five**
Feb. 12  Flannery O’Connor: “Revelation”
        Review for Exam 1

Feb. 14  **Assignment (Due on Blackboard by end of class period)**
        Exam 1
**Week Six**
Feb. 20  Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Selection from *The Mistress of Spices*
Feb. 22  Writers Conference (No Class Meeting)
**Assignment (Due by Midnight on 2/24)**
Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Seven**
Feb. 25  Emily Dickinson: "Wild Nights"
         Frank Bidart: “Queer”
Feb. 27:  Selection from *October Mourning*
         Selection from *Middlesex*
**Assignment (Due by Midnight on 3/3)**
Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Eight**
Mar. 4   Theodore Roethke: “My Papa’s Waltz”
         Sylvia Plath: “Daddy”
Mar. 6   Adrienne Rich: “Living in Sin”
         Gregory Corso: “Marriage”
**No Assignments Due This Week**

*Spring Break March 11-15*

**Week Nine**
         Alysia Harris: “That Girl”
Mar. 21  Zora Neale Hurston: “Sweat”
         Rebecca Brown  “Forgiveness”
**Assignment (Due by Midnight 3/24)**
Upload Literary Analysis

**Week Ten**
Mar.26  Margaret Atwood and Christian Ward : “Freeforall”
         *Review for Exam II*
Mar. 28  **Assignment due on Blackboard by end of class period**
         *Exam II*
**Week Eleven**
Apr. 2  The Individual in American Literature
   Bob Dylan: "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue"
   Joyce Carol Oates: “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?”

Apr. 4  David Berman: "Self Portrait at 28"
       Sandra Cisneros: “Eleven"

**Assignment (Due by Midnight on 4/7)**
Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Twelve**
Apr. 9  Ernest Hemingway: “A Clean, Well-lighted Place"
       F. Scott Fitzgerald: “An Alcoholic Case”

Apr. 11  Emily Dickinson: “This is my letter to the World”
       J. D. Salinger: selection from *Catcher in the Rye*

**Assignment (Due by Midnight on 4/14)**
Upload Discussion Questions on Blackboard

**Week Thirteen**
Apr. 16  Emily Dickinson: “The Brain--is wider than the Sky--”
        Madeleine L’Engle: Selection from *A Wrinkle in Time*

Apr. 18  Walt Whitman: “A Noiseless, Patient Spider”
        William Carlos Williams: “The Red Wheelbarrow”

**No Assignments due this Week**

**Week Fourteen**
Apr. 23  Tim O’Brien: “The Things They Carried”
        Brian Turner: “The Hurt Locker”

Apr. 25:  William E. Stafford: "At the Bomb Testing Site"
        Kurt Vonnegut: selection from *Slaughterhouse Five*

**Assignment due (Due by Midnight on 4/28)**
Upload Literary Analysis

**Week Fifteen**
May 1  Robert Frost: “Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening”

May 3  *Review for Final Exam*
*No Assignments due this week*

**Week Sixteen**
May 7  *Final Exam due on Blackboard by 12:30 p.m.*