Survey of American Literature—English 2130-03—Spring 2013

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Office Hours: Mo. & We. 10:50 a.m.-12:20 p.m.; Tu. & Th. 8:30-9:30 a.m. and 1:50-2:50 p.m.; available by appointment and email

Course Description
On defining the creation of identity, American essayist, novelist, and playwright James Arthur Baldwin comments, “An identity would seem to be arrived at by the way in which the person faces and uses his experience.” Baldwin’s statement encompasses far-ranging ideas and introduces questions that have historically characterized American literature: How have Americans characterized their own identities at different points in time, and how have historical events, cultural phenomena, social environments, and personal experiences become meshed with and changed these identities? To what extent does the American landscape, either as a physical or symbolic space, attribute to this definition? Is the definition “American” even a valid identity? As we closely examine these questions by examining the various literary genres that span almost four centuries, we will focus on how language and writing has been used to construct and alter the meaning of “American identity.” In addition, we will also delve into the formation of identity from the perspectives of race, gender, and social class and examine how each has been used for this purpose.

This course is required for English majors.
Prerequisites: successful completion (grade of C or higher) of ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102.

Course Goals
• Students will develop the ability to recognize and identify significant achievements in American literature.
• Students will understand the relevant social, historical, and aesthetic contexts of these literary works.
• Students will appreciate the implications of theoretical and critical approaches to such literature.
• Students will develop enhanced cultural awareness and analytical skills.
• Students will demonstrate their command of academic English and of the tenets of sound composition by means of thesis-driven analytical prose.

Program Goals
• Oral and written communication will be characterized by clarity, critical analysis, logic, coherence, persuasion, precision, and rhetorical awareness (Core Curriculum learning outcomes I).
- Cultural and Social Perspectives: Cultural and social perspective will be characterized by cultural awareness and an understanding of the complexity and dynamic nature of social/political/economic systems; human and institutional behavior, values, and belief systems; historical and spatial relationship; and, flexibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance. (Core Curriculum learning outcomes III).

- Aesthetic Perspective: Aesthetic perspective will be characterized by critical appreciation of and ability to make informed aesthetic judgments about the arts of various cultures as media for human expression (Core Curriculum learning outcomes V).

- This course fulfills the Area C.2 requirement in the core for all students.

- Area C (Humanities/Arts) Learning Outcomes:
  1. To develop the ability to recognize and identify achievements in literary, fine and performing arts;
  2. To have an appreciation of the nature and achievements of the arts and humanities; and
  3. To develop the ability to apply, understand, and appreciate the application of aesthetics criteria to “real world” circumstances.

- This course fulfills an Area F requirement for English majors (all tracks) in the core.

- This course fulfills one of the core-level language arts requirements for Middle Grades Education majors.

- This course contributes to the program goal of equipping students with a foundation in literary history and the issues surrounding literary study in contemporary culture.

- This course broadens students' desire and ability to take pleasure in their encounter with literature.

Section Objectives
  1) To examine American literature in the context of American culture and society
  2) To develop the habits of reading a variety of literary forms with concentration and interest
  3) To understand the coherence and contradiction inherent in the story of American literature
  4) To sharpen and strengthen skills in critical thinking, writing, and speaking through class discussion, presentations, and writing assignments in various modes
  5) To develop and encourage independent thinking
  6) To experience pleasure in the act of examining texts and exchanging ideas and information with other members of a literary community

Required Texts


COURSE POLICIES
Rubric
For out-of-class essays, follow this link for the English Department’s Upper-Level Writing Assessment.

Plagiarism and Excessive Collaboration Policy
If a student violates this policy, he/she may receive an F for the assignment or an F for the course (at my discretion). For movie about plagiarism, click here.

Plagiarism & Academic Honesty:
The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. (See also Excessive Collaboration.) The University Policies for handling Academic Dishonesty are found in the following documents:

- The Faculty Handbook, sections 207 and 208.0401 (http://www.westga.edu/~vpaa/handrev/)
- Student Uncatalogue: "Rights and Responsibilities"; Appendix J. (http://www.westga.edu/handbook/)

Excessive Collaboration:
By the end of the term, students should demonstrate the ability to produce independent writing (writing without collaborative assistance of peers, writing tutors, or professionals in the field) that shows an acceptable level of competence. Although classroom activities and out-of-class assignments may highlight collaborative learning and collaborative research, excessive collaboration (collaboration that results in the loss of a student’s voice/style and original claims to course related work) is considered another form of academic dishonesty and therefore will not be permitted.

Special Needs and Disabilities
I will do my best to work with the university to provide all students with equal access to my classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. If you have a registered disability and require accommodation, please notify me with the applicable paperwork. If you have a disability that you have not yet registered, contact Disability Services in 272 Parker Hall at 678-839-6428. Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc.

Attendance Requirements
Your regular participation in this class is a vital part of its success. Each student is allotted up to four absences—no more. Upon the student’s fifth absence, he or she will have two options: 1) withdraw from the class, which will generate a W if done before March 4, 2013—or a WF if after that deadline; or 2) remain on the roll (still attending classes, if so desired) and receive
an F for the course/semester. Therefore, if you suspect that outside responsibilities might cause you to miss more than four classes, then you should consider taking the course at another time. Note: The English Department draws no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

Other Important Attendance Points:
- Tardies will also be counted as part of the attendance requirements. A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives to class after I do. Note: three tardies will equal one absence.
- Sleeping or disruptive behavior at any time during the class period will be treated as an absence.
- In case of absence, you are responsible for keeping up with all assignments, readings, and in-class work. I do not make lecture notes etc. available to students who missed class (so please get in touch with a fellow student).
- I can only accept late work if you discussed the issue with me ahead of time. (All exceptions and acceptance of excuses are completely at my discretion.)
- March 4, 2013 is the last day to withdraw from class with a W (without incurring a WF).

Disruptive Behavior
Students will be dismissed from any class meeting during which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, allowing cell phones to ring, rude actions or behavior, speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students, texting, checking email or surfing the web, and using personal audio or video devices. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the attendance requirements policy above.

Role of the Writing Center
The Writing Center assists all students in the development of their writing skills. Make an appointment with a UWC tutor (well in advance of the assignment due date) and focus on improving your writing. The tutors will not proofread or edit your work, but they will assist you in your endeavor to become a better writer. Become familiar with the Writing Center, check it out, and use it. Its reason for being, its mission, is to work with you and help you become a better writer regardless of your level of ability or proficiency. The Writing Center is located in the Parkman Room, TLC 1201. Or visit the Writing Center online: UWG Writing Center.

Library Instruction Sessions
Students enrolled in 1000-/2000-level courses, inexperienced researchers, and students needing refresher classes in basic research are strongly encouraged to sign-up for the basic library instruction sessions and online research sessions. Please visit the links below for further information and scheduling:
- Online Research: http://www.usg.edu/galileo/skills/
- Basic Library Instruction: http://www.westga.edu/~library/nav/stuinstruct.shtml

Department Paperless Policy
As of 2006, the English Department implemented a "paperless" policy in its classrooms. Therefore, most materials (handouts, assignment sheets, notes, etc.) will be made available online—if possible. Students may print these necessary course documents, including the full syllabus, on their home computers or in the computer labs for individual use.

**Severe Weather Guidelines for Department of English and Philosophy**

The University of West Georgia is committed to the personal safety of its students, faculty, and staff in the event of severe weather. University policy regarding severe weather and emergency closings is posted here:


Official announcements about class and/or examination cancellations will be made only by the President and/or the Department of Public Relations. Although it is not possible to develop policy to address every weather-related emergency, these guidelines are intended to provide some general direction about such situations.

For immediate severe weather situations, especially when classes are in session, faculty, staff, and students are advised to follow the emergency procedures identified below:

1. Direct occupants to remain in the building and to seek shelter immediately on the lowest level of the building in interior rooms (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls;
2. Instruct occupants to not leave the building;
3. Evacuate all offices, rooms or hallways with windows and glass or with exterior walls;
4. Provide assistance to persons with disabilities;
5. Accompany occupants to the nearest designated shelter area in the building;
6. Comply with departmental severe weather policies/procedures;
7. Wait for an “all clear” signal” before resuming activity;
8. Occupants will
   a. proceed to the nearest designated shelter area in the building by the closest route;
   b. move quickly but in an orderly manner so that all will arrive safely;
   c. will not attempt to vacate the premises, drive, or seek shelter in cars;
   d. take a seat in the shelter area;
   e. remain cooperative with those in charge; and
   f. wait for an “all clear” signal before resuming activity.

In the event that classes are cancelled or disrupted for less than one calendar week, each professor, at his or her discretion, will make adjustments as needed to cover material missed during those cancelled sessions. This may or may not involve the use of rescheduled or online classes. If the closures exceed a single calendar week, students should contact the Chair of the Department of English and Philosophy at 678-839-6512 or the professor of the class for updated information regarding changes to the schedule in the Department. It is the intention of the Department of English and Philosophy to handle every concern seriously and as effectively as possible.

**Paper Format**
All out-of-class essays must be submitted according to current MLA format standards. Please see A Writer's Resource and the UWC website for additional information.

Penalties for Late Work
Students are responsible for finding out material due date(s) with regard to missed work; if a student is absent on the day out-of-class work is due or if a student is present but does not turn in the work on the assigned due date, five points (1/2 of letter grade) will be deducted from the overall grade of the assignment for each calendar day (not class period) that the work is late. If a student finds it necessary to miss class on a day work is due, the material should be emailed to me the day work is due in order to avoid any penalty.

Important Points:
- Papers are late when they are not submitted to me by the beginning of the class period, unless otherwise stated in the prompt.
- All late papers will be penalized half of a letter grade per day late (= 5 points).
- Papers will no longer be accepted for grading past two weeks of the deadline (unless you make arrangements with me in advance—and you must have a legitimate medical reason.)
- Technological issues are never acceptable excuses for failing to turn papers in on time.
- If you arrive to class late and miss a quiz, or if you miss a quiz, workshop, or in-class assignment due to an absence, you cannot make it up.
- I do not accept assignments sent to me via email unless approved by me in advance.
- I do not accept any other late work.
- Failure to submit an essay will result in receiving an F for the course.

Extra Credit and Previous Work
With all of the above in mind, your best method for getting the best grade available to you should be dependent upon your doing all of the essays and work assigned to the best of your ability. Accordingly, remember the following:
- Do not ask for extra credit. There will be none.
- Any work completed for another course will not be accepted in this course.

Discussion of Work
I will not discuss an individual’s grade during a class session. Please visit me during my office hours or make an appointment to discuss your work—or other questions you have. For several reasons, I refuse to discuss any work until the day after I have handed back the assignment. This interval gives you the opportunity to look at my comments and to generate specific questions about improving your paper. On your graded papers, you will see my notes in the margins to help you—make sure you read what I’ve written before you come to see me!

Office Consultations
Students who seek help outside of class, either from me or the Writing Center, are usually the most successful. An office consultation, whether it are conducted during scheduled office hours or during a scheduled appointment, is a time for you to meet with me to discuss very specific
issues, (i.e., a specific essay, a specific in-class or out-of-class assignment, a specific grade, a specific concern as it relates to your writing, etc.) When you schedule an office consultation, you should come in prepared. Please do not come in, for example, with an essay and say you just want to “go over it.” In order for me to be able to give you the help you need, you need to be specific. For example, if you have an essay you are concerned about, write down exactly what concerns you, (i.e., thesis statement, paragraph development, comma splices, proper MLA format, etc.) This list will give us some guidelines during our consultation and will help to generate discussion. Be aware that an email asking questions about an essay cannot replace an actual meeting with me during office hours. It is very difficult to respond to your questions and your needs by only responding to an email, especially if your questions are general. I welcome any email correspondence you wish to have with me; however, this type of correspondence is best used only when you have a very specific question that doesn’t require an extended discussion.

Other Important Points:
- I will not proofread an essay for you; that step is part of your writing process.
- I will not review entire drafts that are emailed to me; instead, you must schedule an appointment during office hours to discuss specific issues with your draft.
- The official email communication method will be through campus e-mail (MyUWG) or through CourseDen D2L.
- You remain responsible for checking your MyUWG e-mail regularly.
- You are also not allowed to meet with me about an essay on the day it is due; thus all office consultations must occur prior to the essay due date.

Course Assessment
1. Daily Quizzes and Writing Responses: 10% (Quizzes, announced and unannounced, along with in-class and out-of-class writing responses will be given weekly; the assignments may take the form of short explications or brief analytical responses to questions on the text being discussed.)
2. Response Essays: 40% (Two 3- to 4-page essays, 20% each, dealing with analyses of chosen literary works and based on a range of topics from class discussion)
3. Mid-Term: 25% (The mid-term exam, which is cumulative, includes identifications, explication, and concise analyses of passages from texts we have read and discussed in class.)
4. Final: 25% (The final exam will be administered in the form of a take-home essay)

Note: Failure to submit an essay will result in a failing grade for the course.

Scoring and Grading
The following chart will be used when calculating your numerical grade at the end of the semester with regard to letter grades received on out-of-class papers (and I will, at times, split grades to indicate work that falls between two categories. For example, a B+/A- on an out-of-class essay translates numerically to an 89, while an A-/B+ translates to a 91; or for in-class essay, a 3/2 translates to a 82, while a 2/3 translates to a 78).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Out-of-class Writing Grade Equivalents</th>
<th>In-class Writing Grade Equivalents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ = 98</td>
<td>Writing Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A = 95</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 92</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ = 88</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>B = 85</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- = 92</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+ = 78</td>
<td>Writing Grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>C = 75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C- = 72</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+ = 68</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D = 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>D- = 62</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>F = 55</td>
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Communication and E-mail Policy and Etiquette
According to university policy and federal law (FERPA), I can only accept and answer emails you send me from either your official West Georgia email account (you can access this remotely through webmail or through “MyUWG”) or your CourseDen account (if applicable to this class). Also, you should follow email etiquette and observe basic rules of politeness and formality in email messages. These rules include
- any message must include an address line (e.g. “Dear Mr. McRae”)
- use polite and appropriate language, as well as reasonably edited prose (i.e. complete sentences, correct spelling, no text-messaging lingo, etc.)
- always sign off your email your name, followed by your class and section number.

Communication and Feedback Expectations for this Class
This chart outlines communication protocols for this class.

| Course Email | Contact me primarily via at rmcrae@westga.edu from your MyUWG account. This will allow us to maintain security and keep a credible record for correspondence. However, you may also email me through the CourseDen D2L email account in this course. Note: As per federal law, I cannot respond to emails from any other accounts or addresses. |
| My Response Time to You | For email: If you ask direct questions via email, I will get back with you within one business day (so response times will be longer on the weekend). For graded material: All assignments and quizzes will return to you within one week; essays will return between one and two weeks. |
| Emergencies | If you have an emergency, you can contact me via email. Please explain the nature of the emergency and its application to class. If the emergency is of a technical nature (i.e. can't log-in to CourseDen, etc.), please contact Distance Education's Student Support. |
| Communication in General | Online communication takes special consideration. In a professional environment, the use of acronyms and text-message abbreviations in |
| discussions and emails is unwise and unprofessional. Also, be careful what you say to someone on any discussion boards because everyone in the class will see it, and it cannot be retracted! Please abide by netiquette when talking to your classmates online. |

**Classroom Etiquette:**
I expect everyone to be ready to work at the beginning of class. This means in particular having all reading materials assigned for that day on hand and ready to use, as well as any tools for note-taking. You may use laptops, but you may not use wireless connections to surf the Internet or email. Please turn off or silence all cell-phones or other electronic communication devices before class. If you need to leave earlier for whatever reason, you need to let me know before the beginning of class. Sleeping during class will count as an absence for that day. You may bring drinks to class, but no food. **Most importantly, be respectful toward the opinions, ideas, and personal identity of all members of our class.**

**Course Schedule**
Click [here](#) for the dates for readings and assignments.