Syllabus--English 252W-02  
Dr. Ferguson  
Major American Authors  
Fall 2014

Students will read closely and write imaginatively about selected multi-cultural, multi-ethnic writings from the late-nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries, whose literary contributions have helped develop modern American thought. They will also:

- read and write about different American literary genres and theories,
- develop an awareness of critical literary analysis and close reading,
- discover historical and philosophical roots of American writing,
- and further sharpen writing skills.

Students are also required to lead class discussions, write and revise two course papers of at least 3 pages each, and take midterm and final exams.

Required Texts


Tentative Course Reading Schedule

Aug. 18 Introduction
20 Elizabeth Bishop: "The Fish," 2701-2703
27 Ralph Ellison: "Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke," pp. 100-112
29 James Baldwin: "Everybody's Protest Novel" [BLACKBOARD]

Sept. 1 LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)
3 Tennessee Williams: *Suddenly Last Summer*, pp. 2925-2959
5 Williams continued
10 Bienvenido N. Santos: "Scent of Apples," pp. 2787-2794
12 Gwendolyn Brooks: "the mother," p. 2877; SECOND DRAFT FIRST ESSAY DUE
15 Allen Ginsberg: *Howl*, pp. 2963-2974
17 N. Scott Momaday: from *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, pp. 3260-3268; FINAL DRAFT FIRST ESSAY DUE
19 Thomas Pynchon: "Entropy," pp. 3022
26 Kurt Vonnegut: "Harrison Bergeron," pp. 3059-3064
29 Anne Sexton: "Her Kind," "Housewife," "Young," pp. 3048-3050

3 Martin Luther King: "Letter from Birmingham Jail," pp. 3075-3088
8 King/Malcolm continued
10 MIDTERM EXAM
13 FALL BREAK
15 Linda Beatrice Brown: Belles of Liberty: Gender, Bennett College, in Greensboro, North Carolina
17 Brown continued
20 Brown continued
22 Larry Neal: "The Black Arts Movement" BLACKBOARD
24 Etheridge Knight: "The Idea of Ancestry, p. 3921
27 Alice Walker: "Everyday Use" BLACKBOARD
29 Maxine Hong Kingston: "No Name Woman," pp. 3348-3357
Nov. 3 Louis Valdez: Los Vendidos, pp. 3137-3144
5 Norman Mailer: from The Armies of the Night, pp. 3185-3196
7 Yusef Komunyakaa: "Fog Galleon," p. 3211; FIRST DRAFT OF SECOND
ESSAY DUE
10 David Foster Wallace: "The Devil Is a Busy Man, 3915-3917
12 Ann Beatie: "Janus," pp. 3671-3675; SECOND DRAFT OF SECOND ESSAY
DUE
14 Amiri Baraka: "Somebody Blew Up America" BLACKBOARD;
17 Audre Lorde: "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," pp. 3376-3378;
19 Toni Morrison: from A Mercy BLACKBOARD; FINAL DRAFT OF SECOND
ESSAY DUE
21 Ta-Nehisi Coates: "The Case for Reparations" BLACKBOARD
24 Coates continued JOURNALS (COLLECTED PRE-CLASS IDEAS) DUE
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Dec. 1 Ta-Nehisi Coates continued
8 FINAL EXAM: 12 NOON-3: PM

Evaluation:

The final course grade is determined by two three-page course essays that count for 20% each or 40%; a midterm exam that counts for 20%, class leadership (pre-class ideas/journal) that counts for 15%, and a final exam that counts for 25%. Students will write both non-graded and graded drafts of the required course papers, which must have a clear thesis that responds to a specific essay prompt. If after all graded drafts the essay receives less than "C," it must be revised; the final grade will be the highest of all drafts. While the topics of the course papers are generally assigned, you may suggest a subject for the essay, which could be approved. Late papers are dropped one whole letter grade. Make-up exams are rare, except for medical emergency, for which the student must provide acceptable written documentation. Students are also assigned to committees who lead class discussions of syllabus readings throughout the semester. This participation counts for 15% of the course grade. Several times during the semester, each student will bring informal written analyses (no less than two single-spaced pages) to in-person or online committee discussions during which the group decides on what themes, characters, imagery, or other issues to focus, when
leading class discussion of specific course readings. Students will collect all their individual writings into a journal throughout the semester and turn them in for a final grade at the end. The committee chair will collect and turn in all reports for only the first group presentation (as well as an one-page outline for all the other class discussions).

**ALL COURSE WORK MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME.** Grades are the following: A= 4.00; A-= 3.7; B+= 3.3; B= 3.00; B-= 2.7; C+= 2.3; C= 2.0; C-= 1.7; D+= 1.3; D= 1.0; D-= .7; F= 0; WF= 0.

Attendance:

Students with more than three unexcused absences are urged to drop the class. **Tardiness will not be tolerated**, and the classroom door will be closed promptly at 9 AM. Except for emergencies, please do not disturb the class after this time.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Copying the work of others and cheating on course assignments will **not be tolerated**. If you do this, you will receive a "F" for the work, get reported to the Dean of Students and risk expulsion from UNCG. (See the UNCG Honor Code). If you need help documenting your work, I will be glad to help.

Computers and Other Technology in the Classroom:

1. Turn off all cell phones before coming into the classroom.
2. Computers may be used during class (especially by students signed up at Disability Services) but sparingly (if at all) by everyone else.
3. Download **BLACKBOARD** assignments before coming to class.
4. No recording devices may ever be used during classes.

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