

Syllabus--English 252W-02  
Major American Authors

Professor Ferguson  
Fall 2008

Students will read closely and write imaginatively about selected writings from the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which have contributed to and helped develop modern America's multi-cultural, multi-ethnic literary tradition. They will also:

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

Students are required to write and revise two course papers of at least 3 pages each, keep a journal of responses to ongoing course readings, and take midterm and final exams.

#### Required Texts

*The Heath Anthology of American Literature, Concise Ed.*  
Paul Lauter et al, Eds. Houghton Mifflin, 2004  
*To Kill a Mockingbird.* Harper Lee. HarperCollins, 1960

#### Tentative Course Reading Schedule

- Aug. 25 Introduction  
27 Emily Dickinson: Selected poems: J.# 67, 211, 324, 501, 613, 1129  
29 Dickinson continued; John Milton Oskison: "The Problem of Old Harjo," pp. 1430-1435
- Sept 1 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY  
3 Oskison continued  
5 Charles W. Chesnutt: "'Baxter's Procrustes." BLACKBOARD  
8 Chesnutt continued  
10 Mark Twain: "A True Story," pp. 1365-1368  
12 Kate Chopin: "The Story of an Hour," pp. 1523-1525  
15 Zora Neale Hurston: "Sweat," pp. 2034-2042  
17 FIRST REVIEW OF JOURNALS DUE; *Corridos*, pp. 1435-1443  
19 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF JOURNALS; *Corridos* continued  
22 Henry James: "Daisy Miller: A Study," pp. 1456-149  
24 James continued; FIRST DRAFT OF FIRST COURSE ESSAY DUE  
26 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF FIRST DRAFT; Gertrude Bonin (Zitkala-Sa): from *School Days of an Indian Girl*, pp. 1686- 1696  
29 SECOND DRAFT OF FIRST COURSE ESSAY DUE; Standing Bear: "What I Am Going to Tell You Here Will Take Me Until Dark," pp. 1594-1596
- Oct. 1 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF SECOND DRAFT; Booker T. Washington: "The Atlanta Exposition Address," pp. 1739-1743  
3 FINAL DRAFT OF FIRST COURSE ESSAY DUE; W. E. B. DuBois: "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," pp. 1754-1762  
6 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF FINAL DRAFT OF FIRST ESSAY; Robert Frost:

- “Stopping by Woods,” pp. 1803-1804
- 8 T. S. Eliot: “The Burial of the Dead ” (from *The Wasteland*), pp. 1906-1909
- 10 Eliot continued
- 13 William Carlos Williams: “Danse Russe,” p. 1852
- 15 Langston Hughes: “The Weary Blues,” pp. 2008-2009
- 17 MIDTERM EXAM
- 20 FALL BREAK
- 22 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF MIDTERM EXAMS; F. Scott Fitzgerald:  
“Babylon Revisited,” pp. 1431-1457
- 24 Fitzgerald continued
- 27 William Faulkner: “A Rose for Emily,” BLACKBOARD; FIRST DRAFT OF  
SECOND COURSE ESSAY DUE
- 29 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF FIRST DRAFT OF SECOND COURSE  
ESSAY; Faulkner continued;
- 31 Ernest Hemingway: “Hills Like White Elephants,” pp. 1950-1954; SECOND  
DRAFT OF SECOND COURSE ESSAY DUE
- Nov. 3 RETURN/DISCUSSION SECOND DRAFT SECOND COURSE ESSAY;  
Gwendolyn Brooks: “the mother,” “We Real Cool,” pp. 2313-2315
- 5 Carlos Bulosan: *America Is in The Heart*, pp. 2191-2194; FINAL DRAFT OF  
SECOND COURSE ESSAY DUE
- 7 RETURN/DISCUSSION OF FINAL DRAFT OF SECOND ESSAY; Anzia  
Yeziarska: “America and I,” pp. 2066-2073
- 10 John Dos Passos: from *U. S. A*, pp. 2075-2085
- 12 Allen Ginsberg: “America,” pp. 2375-2377
- 14 Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- 17 Lee continued
- 19 Lee continued
- 21 Lee continued; FINAL JOURNAL REVIEW DUE
- 24 RETURN/DISCUSSION FINAL JOURNALS; Flannery O’Connor: “A Good Man  
Is Hard to Find,” pp. 2242-2252  
THANKSGIVING BREAK
- Dec. 1 O’Connor continued
- 3 Ishmael Reed: “Flight to Canada,” pp. 2627-2629
- 5 Alice Walker: “Laurel,” pp. 2506-2512
- 8 Gary Soto: “Mexicans Begin Jogging,” p. 2662
- 10 FINAL EXAM: 12 NOON-3:00 PM

### Evaluation

The final course grade is determined by two three-page essays that count for 40%; a journal that counts for 15%, a midterm exam that counts for 20%, and a final exam that counts for 25%. Students will prepare non-graded and graded drafts of these papers. If after all drafts, the essay receives less than “C,” it must be revised and the final grade will be the highest of all drafts. While the topic of the course paper is assigned, you may suggest a subject for the essay, which must be approved. The course paper must have a clear thesis that addresses a specific issue such as character, organization, or theme.

ALL COURSE WORK MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME. 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. 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; S=Satisfactory; U=Unsatisfactory.

#### 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 9:00 AM. Except for emergencies, please do not disturb the class after this time.

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