

ENG 3100 MULTI-ETHNIC AMERICAN LITERATURE
Spring 2014

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Course meets: Tu Th 2:30-3:45 pm
in 102 Business Admin.
Office hours: Tu Th 12:00-2:00 pm
and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine ethnic American literature since the early twentieth century. Focusing particularly on Asian American, African American, Native American, and Chicano and Latino literatures, the course examines the range of meanings contained within the phrase "multi-ethnic American literature." In addition to reading fiction, drama, and personal essays, we'll discuss the history of these different groups in the U.S. (through immigration law, territorial expansion, global politics, etc.), and also read critical theories of identity and representation, including work on symbolic ethnicity and whiteness.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To gain a sense of the different histories of various minority groups in the U.S.
- To recognize patterns in the nation's responses to immigration and changing demographic patterns in the U.S.
- To gain an appreciation for how these different histories make for distinct experiences and literary forms.
- To recognize that greater rights for one group did not always mean equal rights for all groups.
- To become better readers, writers, and critics of literature.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- James Baldwin, *Going to Meet the Man*
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*
- Eddie Huang, *Fresh Off the Boat*
- Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*
- Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*
- Richard Rodriguez, *The Hunger for Memory*
- Junot Diaz, *Drown*
- "Mixed Race in a Box" special issue of *Asian American Literature Review*

* Secondary or supplementary readings will be available on Canvas, or as handouts; secondary readings are marked with an asterisk (*). I will announce these readings in class and/or via email. Be sure to pay attention to these additions and revisions to the syllabus. You must bring hard copies of the assigned readings to class every week and be prepared to discuss them.

****Copies of many of the assigned readings are available on reserve at Jerome Library. It is VITAL that you invest in this course and in your education by doing the assigned reading by the scheduled date, and by bringing all assigned texts to class.**

EXPECTATIONS

Discussion and Participation: This is a discussion-based class and you should come to each session thoroughly prepared to contribute actively to discussion. In addition to reading and completing your assignments on time, you are required to participate daily with enthusiasm, engagement, and intelligence.

You must ALWAYS bring a copy of the readings to class (textbook, printed copy of readings on Canvas, etc.). If you do not have the readings with you, you will be marked absent. See policy on absences below.

Office Hours: I am happy to discuss papers and other issues in the course during office hours. This is your opportunity to receive one-on-one attention and feedback from me. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, please contact me so that we can arrange an alternative appointment time.

Absences: You are permitted three absences throughout the course of the semester, with no penalty. Use these for illness, participation in an athletic event, attendance at a family activity, religious observance, job interview, or other reasons. On days you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes and assignment information from a classmate. For each additional absence beyond the three permitted, your final grade will go down 5 percentage points. Your attendance and participation are required in class, just as an employee is expected to consistently perform his/her duties at work. Students who frequently arrive late to class will be counted as absent. **If you miss eight or more classes, you will automatically fail the course.** (If you have a medical condition or emergency that requires extensive absences, see me as early as possible to discuss your options.)

Outside Meetings: I am available during regular office hours, as well as for pre-arranged appointments to discuss questions about the class, about *any stage* of writing or revision, or about the literature in general. Please never hesitate to ask me to meet; talking one-on-one can be as important a part of the class experience as the classroom itself, and you do not have to have a fully formed idea or a completed draft of a paper before talking it over with me.

Plagiarism & Cheating: Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances, even if it is inadvertent. Cheating of any kind (including taking extra times on exams,) will not be tolerated. Please review the university's policy on plagiarism, and make sure you understand proper citation format (MLA style). Ignorance of the rules for proper citation is not a valid excuse. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, see me well in advance of deadlines for clarification.

I encourage you to use our email list for other class-related communication, such as local events or articles relevant to our class discussions. Be sure to check your e-mail regularly for messages related to readings and assignments.

Note about Disability Services:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. If you are a student with a documented disability, please contact Disability Services at 419 372-8495 in room 413 South Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Midterm Exam **10%**

This in-class exam may include key dates and events, critical terms and concepts, require identification of assigned texts and films, and essay questions. The exam is designed to assess your developing understanding of the relationship between American history and its diverse literatures.

2) Reading Response Essays 12.5% each x 4 = **50%** total

FOUR times throughout the semester (see schedule), students will submit thoughtful response essays (approximately 3-4 double-spaced pages) to the assigned readings. I will provide topics and/or prompts for these responses. These short essays must demonstrate your understanding of the readings: of key themes, formal strategies, and literary traditions. These essays should exhibit strong close reading skills in order to make analytical observations and craft an argument about (i.e., interpret) some aspect of the work.

You will have the opportunity to submit a THOROUGH REVISION of ONE of the previous reading responses, which will be due at the end of the semester, along with a one-page self-reflection essay articulating the changes you've made and how your understanding of American literature and/or ethnicity and race has/have developed over the term. This revision is optional, and will replace the previous grade. Revisions that are merely cosmetic (fixing errors I noted) rather than substantive will not improve the grade.

Creative options are allowed and encouraged for up to TWO of the reading response essays. See me for suggestions or to propose your own idea for an alternative topic or non-traditional format (creative writing, short film, performance, art piece, lesson plan, etc.). You must get my approval in advance for all creative options.

Formatting guidelines:

Each writing assignment should have an introduction and conclusion, and should articulate and sustain an argument over the length of the essay. Each essay should provide an analytical close reading of a text, craft an argument about the literature, employ literary theory and/or criticism (that which has been assigned for the course), and exhibit strong writing. Good writing includes analysis of the primary text, clear organization, smooth transitions between paragraphs, proper grammar, and appropriate MLA-style in-text citations and bibliography.

All responses and essays should be typed double-spaced, using Times, 12-point font, with one-inch margins and page numbers, and appropriate MLA-style in-text citations and works cited; works cited page is not counted in the page length. Failure to follow these formatting rules will result in failure on the assignment.

3) Final Group Project **10%**

In the final weeks of class, I will assign students to small groups, each of which will be responsible for a 10-minute presentation and class activity relating to material in “Mixed Race in a Box,” a special issue of the Asian American Literary Review. These presentations require cooperation among all group members to outline major themes within the assigned readings, to contextualize the material (such as bringing in historical information from lecture, theoretical concepts from earlier readings, and some additional research), and to lead their classmates in an activity to illustrate the complexity and heterogeneity of mixed race identity in the U.S. All groups will consult with me in advance to discuss their presentations.

Potential Group Project Topics:

- Digital Mixed Race
- Indigeneity & Mestizaje
- Migration
- Mixed Race Feminisms
- Transracial/Transnational Adoption
- War/Militarization

4) Participation **10%**

This is a discussion-based class that requires your ACTIVE participation to shape the direction and quality of our meetings. While I will offer some lecture material (such as on key terms or historical developments), most classes will be discussion-based, with me serving as a moderator. It is your responsibility to come to class with questions about the texts, as well as interpretations (from the tentative to the well-formulated), and to engage with enthusiasm in class discussions. Thus, each class member is responsible for the direction of the conversation in class, for keeping it lively, and for coming to class prepared. In order for this to occur, you must be prepared to take a stab at an idea, to change your mind, to engage with others, to build off each other’s ideas, and to disagree. We will be on investigating texts from a variety of angles, leaving room for diverse interpretations and interests. Because this is a small class, every person should make an effort to speak each class period in order to earn an AVERAGE participation grade (C). If you show up without your books (or copies of assigned Canvas readings), you may be asked to leave the classroom and counted as absent. This is not a course for passive observers!

5) Final Exam **20%**

The final exam will require you to synthesize what you have learned over the course of the semester. You will be asked to write essay questions incorporating key dates and events, critical terms, and analysis of the readings.

COMPLETE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE	January 14	DEFINING ETHNICITY & RACE
	Defining ethnicity and race	
	Introduction to relevant U.S. history	

January 16

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "On the Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race"*
 Werner Sollors, intro and first chapter from *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture**

WEEK TWO January 21 WHITENESS, ETHNICITY, OTHERNESS

Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (selections)*
 Herbert Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity"*
 Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege"*

January 23 ARAB AMERICAN LITERATURE

Sawsan Abdulrahim, "'Whiteness' and the Arab Immigrant Experience"*
 Mohja Kafh, "The Spiced Chicken Queen of Mickaweah, Iowa"*
 Susan Muaddi Dharraj, "The New World"*
 Kazim Ali, selected poems from *Bright Felon**

WEEK THREE January 28 AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (through page 124)

January 30

Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (through page 235)

WEEK FOUR February 4

Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (finish book)
 Toni Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken"*

February 6

James Baldwin, *Going to Meet the Man* (through page 141)
 James Baldwin, "White Racism or World Community?!"*

WEEK FIVE February 11

James Baldwin, *Going to Meet the Man* (finish book)
 James Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village" (from *Notes of a Native Son*)*
 Henry Louis Gates, Jr., intro to *The Signifying Monkey**

February 13 CHICANO & LATINO LITERATURE

Richard Rodriguez, *The Hunger for Memory* (through page 118)

Due SUNDAY, February 16th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: Reading Response 1

WEEK SIX February 18

Richard Rodriguez, *The Hunger for Memory* (finish book)
 Gloria Anzaldúa, excerpts from *Borderlands/La Frontera**

February 20

Guest Speaker: José González, Mexican American Studies (MAS) faculty in the Tucson Unified School District

Film: *Precious Knowledge*

WEEK SEVEN February 25

Junot Diaz, *Drown* (through 107)

February 27

Junot Diaz, *Drown* (finish book)

José David Saldívar, *The Dialectics of Our America**

WEEK EIGHT March 4**MIDTERM EXAM****March 6****ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE**

Executive Order 9066*

Gary Okihiro, “When and Where I Enter”*

Elaine Kim, “Images of Asians”*

In-Class Screening: *Rabbit in the Moon* (on Japanese Internment)

Due SUNDAY, March 9th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: Reading Response 2 (Chicano and Latino Literature)

WEEK NINE SPRING BREAK**WEEK TEN March 18 ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE**

Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (through page 109)

March 20

Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (finish book)

Lisa Lowe, “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity”*

WEEK ELEVEN March 25

Eddie Huang, *Fresh Off the Boat* (through page 182)

U.S. News and World Report, “Success Story of One Minority Group in U. S.”*

Time Magazine, “The Superiority Complex”*

March 27

Eddie Huang, *Fresh Off the Boat* (finish book)

WEEK TWELVE April 1 NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

Luther Standing Bear, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School*
 Zitkala-Să, "Impressions of an Indian Childhood"*
 Leslie Marmon Silko, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds"*

April 3

No class. Work with assigned group on Mixed Race Studies project proposal.

Due SUNDAY, APRIL 6th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: Reading Response 3 (Asian American Literature)

Due SUNDAY, APRIL 6th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: group proposal for mixed-race presentation/activity.

WEEK THIRTEEN April 8

Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* (through page 130)
 Philip J. Deloria, "I Want to Ride in Geronimo's Cadillac"*

April 10

Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* (finish book)

Due SUNDAY, APRIL 13th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: revised group proposal for mixed-race presentation/activity.

WEEK FOURTEEN April 15

Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (through page 138)
 AIM, "A Proclamation from the Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz Island, 1969"*
 AIM, "Trail of Broken Treaties"*

April 17

Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (finish book)
 Gerald Vizenor, introduction to *Manifest Manners**

WEEK FIFTEEN April 22 MIXED RACE STUDIES

"Mixed Race is a Pandora's Box" (Volume 1 of *AALR Special Issue*)

"Mixed Race" playing cards

Policymic article on National Geographic*

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins"*

DUE: Group presentations

April 24

"Mixed Race is a Black Box" (Volume 2 of *AALR Special Issue*)

"A Mixology/Indigeneity" poster

Michele Elam, selections from *The Souls of Mixed Folk**

DUE: Group presentations

Due SUNDAY, April 27th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: Reading Response 4

WEEK SIXTEEN **April 29**

“Mixed Race is an Inbox” (Volume 3 of *AALR Special Issue*)

DUE: Group presentations

May 1

Final Exam Review

Due SUNDAY, May 4th before MIDNIGHT via Canvas: OPTIONAL REVISION of one RR, with brief self-reflection paragraph at beginning, listing the major changes you made.

FINAL EXAM: During scheduled exam time.