

English 242: American Literature II

Dr. Michael Germana

Fall 2020

9:30-10:20 MWF (Synchronous Online Course)

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In lieu of office hours, one-on-one meetings will be conducted via Zoom.

Email me to set up an appointment.

Introduction:

If the first half of the American Literature survey dramatizes the rise of a new nation and the creation of a unique literary tradition, the second half shows how the Civil War led to new beginnings for America and American literature alike. In this course we will examine the cultural history of the United States from this “new beginning” to the present through the lens of American literature.

Required Materials:

To purchase from the WVU bookstore:

- Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
- Robert S. Levine, et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 9th Edition, Vols. C, D, & E
- Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit and Other Plays*

Online Resources:

- Links to additional readings will be posted on eCampus and/or available via eReserves

Course Objectives:

Students enrolled in this course will learn to:

- Identify genre conventions and analyze their effects
- Identify and analyze effects of complexity or ambiguity
- Locate texts in social, economic, political, and literary history
- Connect texts to other literary or cultural texts
- Define and employ applicable literary critical terms
- Compare and contrast texts that cross a diverse range of genres, perspectives, and historical moments
- Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts

GEC/GEF Objectives:

This course satisfies GEC Objectives 5 and 7 as well as GEF Objective 6: The Arts and Creativity

Assignments:

In addition to ten weekly reading responses and general class participation activities, coursework for the semester consists of four essay exams. **All assignments will be administered and submitted via eCampus.** More on these assignments below.

Grading System:

Exam One:	20%
Exam Two:	20%
Exam Three:	20%
Exam Four:	20%
Participation:	20%

The exams will consist of three or more short essay prompts. You will choose the two prompts you can most confidently answer and then compose your responses to them. Exams will be administered via eCampus. These will be timed exams, so you'll have to complete your answers and submit them during the allotted time. Each exam is worth 100 points.

All four exams will be graded on a 100-point scale with grade ranges as follows:

+	100-98	+	89-88	+	79-78	+	69-68		
A	97-92	B	87-82	C	77-72	D	67-62	F	59-0
-	91-90	-	81-80	-	71-70	-	61-60		

There will also be 10 short Reading Responses (~200 words apiece) that you will complete over the course of the semester. Each is worth a maximum of 10 points, and each will require you to draw some meaningful connections between the lecture material and the week's readings. The total number of points earned by semester's end will be your participation grade.

Each Reading Response assignment will be posted to eCampus at the beginning of the week it is due and may be submitted anytime until the start of class on Friday. Note that, in general, no Reading Response will be assigned if there is an exam scheduled that week (the lone exception is Reading Response Two, which is due the same week as Exam One—a coincidence necessitated by the compressed COVID-19 fall schedule). Like the exams, the Reading Responses will be administered and submitted via eCampus.

Attendance Policy:

Because participation counts for 20% of your grade and material for the exams and reading responses comes from lectures and/or class discussions, you must attend our virtual meetings

regularly. **In order to approximate the experience of a face-to-face class, our class will meet synchronously via Zoom at our regularly scheduled meeting times (MWF 9:30-10:20am).** Invitations to join each class meeting will be sent to your MIX accounts at least 24 hours in advance. Links to past lectures / discussions will be posted to eCampus whenever possible.

You should come to each virtual meeting prepared to discuss the reading due for the day. This means carefully reading the text(s) scheduled for each class meeting and being prepared to discuss two questions: 1) what do you think the author is trying to reveal to or demonstrate for their readers, and 2) how does the author construct their text(s) to accomplish this goal?

Plagiarism Statement:

Plagiarism is the (mis)representation of someone else's work as your own. It may be direct (e.g., not documenting a quoted source) or indirect (paraphrasing ideas, thoughts, etc. without due credit). In either case, neglecting to acknowledge sources for outside material is a serious offence and may result in failure for the assignment and possibly the course. Please see me if you are not sure about how to use or acknowledge certain materials.

Academic Integrity Statement:

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Intellectual Property Statement:

All course materials, including lectures, class notes, quizzes, exams, handouts, presentations, and other materials provided to students for this course are protected intellectual property. As such, the unauthorized purchase or sale of these materials may result in disciplinary sanctions under the Campus Student Code.

Inclusivity Statement:

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (304-293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

COVID-19 Statement:

WVU is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Should campus operations change because of health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible that this course will move to a fully online delivery format. If that occurs, students will be advised of technical and/or equipment requirements, including remote proctoring software.

In a face-to-face environment, our commitment to safety requires students, staff, and instructors to observe the social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines set by the University at all times. While in class, students will sit in assigned seats when applicable and wear the required PPE. Should a student forget to bring required PPE, PPE will be available in the building for students to acquire. Students who fail to comply will be dismissed from the classroom for the class period and may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for further sanctions.

If a student becomes sick or is required to quarantine during the semester, they should notify the instructor. The student should work with the instructor to develop a plan to receive the necessary course content, activities, and assessments to complete the course learning outcomes.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about the course or concerns you would like to share privately with me, please contact me via email at Michael.Germana@mail.wvu.edu. You are also invited—but not required—to follow me on Twitter at [@michael_germana](https://twitter.com/michael_germana). **When I tweet or re-tweet something relevant to this course, I will use the hashtag #ENGL242. You can and should do likewise if you would like to share something with the class that pertains to our readings and/or discussions.** You may also message me through Twitter at your convenience.

Course Calendar:

August:

Reconstruction Re-written:

- 26 W Introduction/s
- 28 F S. Weir Mitchell, "The Case of George Dedlow" (eCampus)
- 31 M Constance Fenimore Woolson, "Rodman the Keeper" (eCampus) + Reading Response
One assignment posted

September:

2 W Joel Chandler Harris, from *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings*: “Story of the War” + “Race Improvement” + “As To Education” (eCampus) + “The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story” (Vol. C, pp. 509-510) + “How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox” (Vol. C, pp. 510-511) + Excerpt from Introduction (eCampus)

4 F Charles Chesnutt, “Dave’s Neckliss” (eCampus) + “The Goophered Grapevine” (eCampus) + **Reading Response One due**

7 M **Labor Day Recess—Class Does Not Meet**

Immigration, Assimilation, and Resistance:

9 W Bret Harte, “Plain Language from Truthful James” (eCampus) + Zitkala Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin), from “Impressions of an Indian Childhood” (Vol. C, pp. 1127-1132) + from “The School Days of an Indian Girl” (Vol. C, pp. 1133-1140)

The Progressive Era, the Labor Movement, and the Dawn of Naturalism:

11 F Jacob Riis, Introduction to *How the Other Half Lives* + Chapter XI + illustrations (eCampus) + Upton Sinclair, Chapter 14 of *The Jungle* (eCampus) + Lewis Hine, Child Labor Photographs (eCampus)

14 M **Exam One** + Reading Response Two assignment posted

16 W Jack London, “To Build a Fire” (Vol. C, pp. 1113-1124)

18 F Stephen Crane, “The Open Boat” (Vol. C, pp. 1048-1064) + **Reading Response Two due**

First Wave Feminism:

21 M Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (Vol. C, pp. 844-855) + Reading Response Three assignment posted

23 W Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour” (Vol. C, pp. 542-544)

Two Views on Race Relations at the Turn of the Century:

25 F Booker T. Washington, from *Up From Slavery*: “The Atlanta Exposition Address” (Vol. C, pp. 716-724) + **Reading Response Three due**

28 M W. E. B. Du Bois, from *The Souls of Black Folk*: “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” (Vol. C, pp. 921-926) + “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others” (Vol. C, pp. 927-936) + Reading Response Four assignment posted

Modernism(s):

30 W Gertrude Stein, from *Tender Buttons*: “Objects” (Vol. D, pp. 190-200)

October:

2 F Robert Frost, “Mowing” (Vol. D, pp. 219-220) + “Mending Wall” (Vol. D, pp. 220-221) + “After Apple-Picking” (Vol. D, p. 228) + “The Road Not Taken” (Vol. D, p. 230) + “Nothing Gold Can Stay” (Vol. D, p. 233) + “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” (Vol. D, p. 233) + **Reading Response Four due**

5 M Jean Toomer, from *Cane*: “Blood-Burning Moon” (Vol. D, pp. 622-628) + Reading Response Five assignment posted

7 W Zora Neale Hurston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” (Vol. D, pp. 533-536) + Countee Cullen, “Yet Do I Marvel” (Vol. D, p. 854) + “Incident” (Vol. D, pp. 854-855) + “Heritage” (Vol. D, pp. 855-857)

9 F Langston Hughes, from “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (Vol. D, pp. 328-330) + “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (Vol. D, p. 835) + **Reading Response Five due**

12 M **Exam Two**

14 W William Faulkner, “That Evening Sun” (eCampus)

World War Two and Post-War America:

16 F Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit*, Act One

- 19 M Valdez, *Zoot Suit*, Act Two + Reading Response Six assignment posted
- 21 W Allen Ginsberg, "Howl" (Vol. E, pp. 487-494) + "Footnote to Howl" (Vol. E, p. 495)
The Civil Rights Movement:
- 23 F Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (eCampus) + Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet" (eCampus) + **Reading Response Six due**
- 26 M Gwendolyn Brooks, "the white troops had their orders but the Negroes looked like men" (Vol. E, p. 308) + "We Real Cool" (Vol. E, p. 309) + "The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmett Till" (Vol. E, p. 313) + "To the Diaspora" (Vol. E, pp. 315-316) + Reading Response Seven assignment posted
- 28 W Flannery O'Connor, "Everything That Rises Must Converge" (eCampus)
- 30 F Toni Morrison, "Recitatif" (Vol. E, pp. 607-620) + **Reading Response Seven due**

November:

2 M **Exam Three**

Second Wave Feminism, Multiculturalism, and Postmodernism:

- 4 W Maxine Hong Kingston, from *The Woman Warrior*: "No Name Woman" (Vol. E, pp. 798-807)
- 6 F Junot Díaz, "Drown" (Vol. E, pp. 1208-1216)
- 9 M George Saunders, "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline" (Vol. E, pp. 1153-1165) + Reading Response Eight assignment posted

Post-9/11 America:

- 11 W Deborah Eisenberg, "Twilight of the Superheroes" (eReserves)
- 13 F Kevin Brockmeier, "The Ceiling" (eReserves) + **Reading Response Eight due**
- 16 M Saidiya Hartman, "The End of White Supremacy, An American Romance" (eCampus) + Reading Response Nine assignment posted

All Together Now: Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*:

- 18 W Langston Hughes, "Dream Boogie" (eCampus) + Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Prologue-Chapter 1
- 20 F Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 2-3 + **Reading Response Nine due**
- 23 M Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 4-7

---Fall Recess---

- 30 M Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 8-17 + Reading Response Ten assignment posted

December:

- 2 W Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 18-24
- 4 F Ellison, *Invisible Man*, Chapters 25-Epilogue + **Reading Response Ten due** + course evaluations

Exam Four will be administered via eCampus on our last meeting date (December 4) and may be submitted any time before the conclusion of our scheduled final exam time slot (4:00pm on Tuesday, December 8). It is not a comprehensive final exam but, like its predecessors, covers only the readings and lecture materials since the previous exam.