

ENGL 220W-01 SPRING 2014 T/TH 1:40–2:55 p.m. 555 Fisher Hall

Survey of American Literature II 1865–the Present

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Office Hours: T/TH 12:00–1:30 and by appointment

Course Rationale and Objectives

This course will introduce students to American literature written from the end of the Civil War to the present. Our readings will be drawn from canonical and non-canonical works of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry, and while we will explore a variety of concerns, we will focus heavily on *change*—from changing notions of genre and aesthetics to changing conceptions of group and national identity. By engaging a group of representative texts within an historical framework, we will explore how the literature of the past one hundred fifty years has been shaped by and helped to shape American culture, society, history, economics, and politics. Writing assignments, class discussions, and group work will enable you to engage with literary texts in a critical and creative manner. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to meet the following objectives:

- Demonstrate the ability to ask questions of a text and discern what questions a text itself might be raising
- Apply interpretive skills to texts and groups of texts
- Investigate relationships between literary texts and their social, cultural, economic, and political contexts
- Write coherently and analytically about ideas
- Identify major formal and thematic trends in American literature
- Understand various ways of thinking about American literary history

Required Texts and Materials

- *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. 8th ed. Vols. C, D, and E. (ISBN: 9780393913101)
- *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* by Ben Fountain. (ISBN: 9780060885618)
- Additional readings and handouts posted on Blackboard (Bb)

The books are available in the campus bookstore and online—I don't care where you get them, if they're new or used, **just get them and bring them to class**. This is a literature course, and thus we'll be talking about literature, but how can we do this if we can't point to the verse on p. 649 or the paragraph at the bottom of p. 211? Bring the book. Some readings will be available on the course Bb site—you **must print out** these readings and **bring them in** so that you have them in front of you. Bring the book. Bring the printed readings. I can't say it enough.

Course Expectations

Attendance. Attendance is mandatory. You may miss **THREE** classes without it affecting your grade. These should be used for sickness, long-weekends, family emergencies, etc. A fourth missed class will lower your final grade by a full letter (for example, from A- to B-), and a fifth will do the same. You cannot pass this course if you miss more than five classes. If you contact me, I'll give you the assignment—but you will still be counted absent.

Note that I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. If you have a serious personal problem that will require an extensive absence, however, please inform me of these circumstances immediately. Athletes must discuss their scheduled absences with me as soon as possible. You are responsible for all work missed during your absences.

- **Co-Curricular Activities.** If you take part in DU athletics, another co-curricular activity, or ROTC, you must submit all assignments due during your absence prior to your absence; you are responsible for any course material that you miss.
- **Personal Issues.** If you experience any sort of difficulty that might inhibit you from satisfactorily meeting the requirements of this course (learning disabilities, prolonged illness, physical disability, ESL needs, etc.), please inform me immediately. I will assist you as best I can, but in order to do so, you must make me aware of the situation.

Timeliness. Class will begin promptly at 1:40 p.m.—be here on time. Being late for two classes equals an absence, and being more than 20 minutes late is the same as being absent. And please don't pack up your things at 2:52 p.m.—it drives your instructor batty. Class goes until 2:55 p.m., and we'll need every minute of that time for the business of the course.

Technology. In class, you won't need much beyond your texts, a pen/pencil, and a notebook or binder. If we need a computer, we'll use what's at the front of the classroom or I'll notify you ahead of time. Outside of class, you will need access to the internet and a word processing program.

- **Cell Phones.** Turn them off. It's only 75 minutes. I know you can do it!
- **Laptops, Tablets, and so on.** Leave them at home or in your bag. We won't need them, so there's no reason to unpack them. Any readings not in our anthology must be printed in advance of classtime—not accessed on an electronic device. No excuses.
- **Emails and Blackboard.** Outside of class I will send necessary updates, etc., via your Duquesne email account, so you will need to check it at least once daily. When emailing me, you can typically expect a response within 24 hours, often much sooner, though it may take longer on weekends or over breaks. Do note: I do not respond to emails sent after 8 p.m. until the following day. You will utilize the course Bb site to access specific readings, submit response paragraphs, post to the discussion board, and track your course progress. More information on this will follow.

Late Assignments. All assignments are to be submitted on the day and at the time that they are due. Late assignments will be penalized a full letter grade for every day they are late after the original deadline. If you are having difficulty completing an assignment, you must request an extension at least 24 hours in advance. Extensions will be granted at the instructor's discretion; therefore, do not rely upon an extension as a safety net.

Office Hours. I encourage you to meet with me throughout the semester to discuss any questions or concerns, essay ideas and drafts, or your progress in the course. If you are unable to meet during my regularly scheduled office hours (Tuesdays and Thursdays immediately preceding our class), feel free to contact me so we can schedule an alternate time.

Writing Center. The Writing Center offers tutoring sessions to assist you during the various stages of the writing process, from brainstorming through revision. They're helpful and free! It's located in 216 College Hall. Appointments can be made online at www.sites.duq.edu/writing-center/.

Academic Honesty and Freedom. This course will follow Duquesne University's Academic Honesty policy, which can be found in your student handbook. Representing another's work as your own in any form—intentionally or unintentionally—is considered plagiarism. Class penalties and University disciplinary action will follow from such offenses. So: do your own work. Every time. Believe me, it's your work, not someone else's, that I want to read anyway. If you are ever unsure about whether you have properly credited a source, please ask me **before** submitting the assignment.

Furthermore, you are entitled to academic freedom in the classroom (for further details, see the University's policy on academic freedom), **however**, derogatory remarks about any ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, sexual, or gender group will not be tolerated, nor will excessively aggressive or bullying tactics in the classroom. You are expected to comport yourself as adults and interact respectfully in all class-related dealings.

Course Requirements

Grading for this will follow the University's Standard Grading Scale:

100%-94%	A	86%-83%	B	76%-70%	C
93%-90%	A-	82%-80%	B-	69%-63%	D
89%-87%	B+	79%-77%	C+	62% & below	F

Your final course grade depends upon your achievement in the following areas:

Class Participation. 10%

Your active participation is crucial to your learning in this course. There are many ways to participate. Offering your thoughts in class discussion is the easiest, but you can also volunteer to read or share regularly in small groups. At the very minimum (that is, in order to earn a satisfactory participation grade, which is a C), you must obviously remain alert and attentive throughout the class period (no chatting, sleeping, texting, etc.); arrive to class prepared to ask and answer questions; take notes; and engage respectfully and thoughtfully with your peers and instructor. This includes bringing all necessary materials to class. Failure to complete homework assignments, including readings, on time will result in the steep reduction of your participation grade.

***Reading Quizzes.**

I reserve the right to administer unannounced reading comprehension quizzes throughout the semester. This is not my preferred method of encouraging class preparation, and I'd much

rather save our time and energy for discussing literature; if I determine from a lack of class participation, however, that people aren't doing their readings, I'm happy to oblige with frequent quizzes. Quiz grades will be factored into your participation grade. There will be no make-up quizzes, so your best bet is to be in class regularly. (Or, better yet, everyone should do his or her reading and we can avoid the issue altogether.)

Paragraph Responses. 10%

To demonstrate that you are thinking critically about readings as well as to give shape to our class discussions and provide you with valuable experience in crafting analytical paragraphs, you will turn in ten short responses on assigned days over the course of the term. These paragraphs should provide a thoughtful response to the discussion questions for that unit's/day's reading (available on Bb), demonstrating that you have engaged critically with the text. In order to receive full credit for these responses, you must fully respond to the question(s) and text at hand in a typed paragraph of 8-10 sentences (it's good practice to follow the PEAS model discussed in class). These are due via Bb an hour and a half before the start of class (in other words, by 12:10 p.m.) on the day we discuss the readings. Once that time has passed, so has your opportunity to get credit for the response.

Short Essays. 30% (15% each)

You will complete two short, formal essays that demonstrate your ability to think critically about American literature. These essays are to include only your analysis of the text, not the viewpoints of other critics in the field. You may use your notes, reading responses, and class discussion only (and your brain!); if you consult an outside source without my approval, I will consider it a form of plagiarism. Each essay will be a thesis-driven, 3-5 page critical argument; the first will be a close reading of one text on the syllabus, the second a comparison/contrast of two texts on the syllabus. More specific instructions and grading guidelines will follow.

Examinations. (35%)

Midterm (15%): The in-class midterm will consist of two parts: definitions of literary terms and movements and quote explications. The explications will focus on your ability to identify and interpret important quotes from the readings.

Final (20%): The first two parts of the in-class final will be identical in form to the midterm, but will cover material only from the second half of the semester. The third part will comprise two essays; the first will ask you to write about *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* in connection with course themes/ideas, and the second will require you to refer to readings from the course as a whole.

Final Project. (15%)

The current final project as I have envisioned it is a "mini-anthology" focused on a topic/theme (of your choosing) related to American literature. This could be anything from ethnicity, gender, or class to the city or the American south. As a class, however, we will discuss other final project assignment possibilities that allow you to both demonstrate your knowledge of and engagement with American literature of the past 150 years and interact with the topic in a way that you find particularly compelling and/or beneficial. Around mid-semester, you will turn in an informal proposal for your project. Specifics will follow.

Course Schedule

Below is the tentative schedule of readings and assignments. It is possible---and likely---that I will alter this schedule over the course of the semester, depending on the needs, interests, and progress of the class. You are responsible for any changes to the schedule that occur on a day you are absent. Therefore, be sure to email me or a class member if you miss class. All readings from the *Norton Anthology* are listed by author, title, and starting page number in parentheses. Biographical information accompanying each author's work should be read in addition to the listed selections. Works posted on Blackboard are designated with (Bb) following the title. You must print and bring these with you to class. All readings should be completed for the date on which they are listed.

Date	Class Topics and Reading/Assignments Due
Thursday, January 9	<i>Course Introduction & What Is/Are American Literature(s)?</i>
the late nineteenth century (readings from <i>Norton</i> <u>vol. C</u> unless otherwise noted)	
Tuesday, Jan. 14	<i>Late Nineteenth-Century Contexts & Close Reading</i> Read: Introduction (3) and Timeline (18); Close Reading handout (Bb) Due: Paragraph definition of your key term (via Bb by 12:10 p.m.)
Thursday, Jan. 16	<i>Post Civil-War Poetry and American Identity & Paragraphing</i> Read: Walt Whitman, <i>Song of Myself</i> (24); Emily Dickinson, poems #112, 340, 764, 1263 (94) Due: Post your key term def. to Bb discussion board (by 12:10 p.m.)
Tuesday, Jan. 21	<i>American Realism</i> Read: William Dean Howells, from "Henry James, Jr." (903); from "Novel Writing" (905); Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" (399) Due: R1a
Thursday, Jan. 23	<i>Women Realists/Regionalists</i> Read: Sarah Orne Jewett, "A White Heron" (526); Kate Chopin, "Desiree's Baby" (551); "The Story of An Hour" (555) Due: R1b
Tuesday, Jan. 28	<i>Naturalism & Constructing Thesis Statements</i> Read: Frank Norris, "A Deal in Wheat" (Bb) Due: R2a
Thursday, Jan. 30	<i>Post-Reconstruction African-American Identity</i> Read: Booker T. Washington, from <i>Up from Slavery</i> (675); W. E. B. DuBois, from <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> (885)

	Due: R2b
*Monday, February 3	*E-mail me your tentative LA1 thesis statement by 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 4	<i>Post-Reconstruction African-American Identity, cont'd & Thesis Workshop</i> Read: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "Learning to Read" (Bb); Joel Chandler Harris, all stories (519); Charles W. Chesnutt, "The Wife of His Youth" (706); Paul Lawrence Dunbar, "When Malindy Sings," (1029); "We Wear the Mask" (1033) Due: R3a; bring in a copy of your tentative LA1 thesis statement
Thursday, Feb. 6	<i>"Americanization" and the Move Toward Modernity</i> Read: "Debates over Americanization" (1132); Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1133); Zitkala Sa, from <i>School Days of an Indian Girl</i> (1093) Due: R3b
the early twentieth century (readings from <i>Norton vol. D</i> unless otherwise noted)	
Tuesday, Feb. 11	<i>Early Twentieth-Century Contexts and "Modern Times" Clips</i> Read: Introduction (3) and Timeline (21) Due: Literary Analysis 1
Thursday, Feb. 13	<i>Alienation and Literary Experimentation</i> Read: Ezra Pound, "In a Station of the Metro," "The River Merchant's Wife: a Letter" (318); H.D., "Oread" (352); "Helen" (355); William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheel Barrow" (309); "This Is Just to Say" (310) Due: Paragraph definition of your key term (posted to Bb discussion board by 12:10 p.m.)
Tuesday, Feb. 18	<i>Alienation and Literary Experimentation, cont'd</i> Read: Mina Loy, "Parturition" (296); "Virgins Plus Curtains" (Bb); Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (Bb) Due: R4a
Thursday, Feb. 20	<i>"The" Modernist Long Poem</i> Read: T. S. Eliot, <i>The Wasteland</i> (378) Due: R4b
Tuesday, Feb. 25	<i>Comparing and Contrasting & Catch-up Day</i>

	<p>Read: TBD</p> <p>Due: Midterm Review Sheet</p>
Thursday, Feb. 27	<p>Midterm Exam & Catch-up Day</p> <p>(midterm will take approx. 40–45 min.; be sure to bring your readings)</p>
Tuesday, March 4	<i>No Class—Happy Spring Break!</i>
Thursday, Mar. 6	<i>No Class—Happy Spring Break!</i>
Tuesday, Mar. 11	<p><i>Emerging American/Feminist Drama</i></p> <p>Read: Susan Glaspell, <i>Trifles</i> (253)</p> <p>Due: R5a</p>
Thursday, Mar. 13	<p><i>The Harlem Renaissance</i></p> <p>Read: Langston Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (871); “I, Too,” “The Weary Blues” (872); “Madam and Her Madam” (877); Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat” (Bb); Countee Cullen, “Heritage” (894)</p> <p>Due: R5b</p>
<p>the contemporary period: 1945–the present (readings from <i>Norton</i> vol. E unless otherwise noted)</p>	
Tuesday, Mar. 18	<p><i>Post-War Contexts & Comparing and Contrasting</i></p> <p>Read: Introduction (3) and Timeline (16)</p> <p>Due: Final Project Proposal (*counts as R6 for everyone)</p>
Thursday, Mar. 20	<p><i>(Some) Post-War Protest: the Beats</i></p> <p>Read: Allen Ginsburg, <i>Howl</i> (492); “Footnote to Howl” (500)</p> <p>Due: Informal close reading of lines from <i>Howl</i></p>
Tuesday, Mar. 25	<p><i>(More) Post-War Protest: the Feminists</i></p> <p>Read: Betty Friedan, from <i>The Feminist Mystique</i> (Bb); Sylvia Plath, “Daddy” (629); Adrienne Rich, “Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law” (568); “Diving Into the Wreck” (573); Audre Lorde, “Black Mother Woman” (690)</p> <p>Due: R7b</p>
Thursday, Mar. 27	<p><i>The Black Arts Movement and Beyond</i></p> <p>Read: Gwendolyn Brooks, from <i>A Street in Bronzeville</i> (323–25); “The White Troops Had” (325); “We Real Cool” (326); Amiri Baraka, all poems (670); Toni Morrison, “Recitatif” (609)</p> <p>Due: R7a</p>

*Saturday, Mar. 29	Due: Literary Analysis 2 (by 11:59 p.m. via Bb)
Tuesday, April 1	<p><i>Responses to Vietnam: "the first terrible postmodern war"</i></p> <p>Read: Robert Bly, "Counting Small-Boned Bodies," "Hatred of Men with Black Hair" (Bb); Denise Levertov, from <i>To Stay Alive</i> (Bb); Yusef Komunyakaa, "Tu Do Street," "Facing It" (1044); Tim O'Brien, "The Man I Killed" (Bb)</p> <p>Due: R8b</p>
*Wednesday, Apr. 2	Jim Daniels Reading—7:00 p.m., Power Center Ballroom
Thursday, Apr. 3	<p><i>Rethinking American Myth, Masculinity, and Drama</i></p> <p>Read: Sam Shepard, <i>True West</i> (870)</p> <p>Due: R8a</p>
Tuesday, Apr. 8	<p><i>From the Margins to the Center</i></p> <p>Read: Maxine Hong Kingston, from <i>The Woman Warrior</i> (793); Junot Diaz, "Drown" (1248); Sherman Alexie, selected poems (Bb)</p>
Thursday, Apr. 10	<p><i>Post-9/11 America at War(s)</i></p> <p>Read: <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (pp. 1-107)</p> <p>Due: R9a & R10a (group mini-projects – count as 2 paragraphs responses)</p>
Tuesday, Apr. 15	<p><i>Media and Consumerism in the 21st Century</i></p> <p>Read: <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (pp. 108-216)</p> <p>Due: R9b & R10b (group mini-projects – count as 2 paragraphs responses)</p>
Thursday, Apr. 17	<i>No Class—Happy Easter!</i>
Tuesday, Apr. 22	<p><i>American Identity at War</i></p> <p>Read: <i>Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk</i> (pp. 217-307)</p>
Thursday, Apr. 24	<p><i>Final Exam Review, Final Project Excerpts, & Course Wrap-Up</i></p> <p>Due: Final Project</p>
Wednesday, Apr. 30	Final Exam—11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.