

# AML 2070: Survey of American Literature

Section 4081  
MTWRF, 3 (11:00-12:15)  
NRN 0342

**Instructor:** Caleb Milligan  
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**Office Hours:** TIG 302;  
MR, 2 (9:30-10:45)

## Course Description

This course is an introduction to some of the major writers, issues, and forms found in the history of American literature. Due to the scope of American literature and the limitations of a semester survey, we will focus on literature written after the Civil War extending into the present day. We will approach our readings by situating them within their formal, historical, and ideological contexts, as we sample from the movements of realism, modernism, postmodernism, and global multiculturalism.

Throughout the semester, each text this course will cover will contribute to an overarching theme investigating issues of identity and mediation. Reading poetry, stories, and novels by authors spanning periods, races, genders, orientations, and regions will expose you to the many different ways that American literature has grappled with its own identity as a medium influenced by various proliferations of other media within their historical moments. You should thus be enlightened of the political, technological, and aesthetic power of great literary texts within the American tradition.

## Outcomes

By the end of AML 2070, you should be able to:

- practice a working knowledge of the history of American literature
- read a text critically and respond to it knowledgeably
- synthesize literary works and critical sources into your persuasive analyses
- hone your skill to revise substantively their critical writing
- improve your ability to correct errors of grammar, mechanics, and usage

## Required Texts

All required texts for this course will be available through the UF Bookstore, in the Reitz Union or online via [www.uf.bkstr.com](http://www.uf.bkstr.com).

*McTeague* - Frank Norris (ISBN: 0393970132)

*Nightwood* - Djuna Barnes (ISBN: 0811216715)

*The Bluest Eye* - Toni Morrison (ISBN: 0307278449)

*White Noise* - Don DeLillo (ISBN: 0140274987)

*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* - Junot Díaz (ISBN: 1594483299)

**\*access to additional texts will be made available via Sakai\***

## Assignments

### **(1000 total points possible)**

#### **150** Group Presentation

You will teach one class on the text of your choosing with your assigned group. Your presentation will consist of a critical introduction, a written handout with relevant information and analysis, and a class discussion that you will lead.

#### **200** Creative Writing Assignment

You will write a short story imitating the style of one of the authors we will be reading this semester. To do well on this assignment, it should be clear whom you are imitating with your creative writing. It must be at least **1250** words and be accompanied by a **250** word reflection letter on what you learned about that author by writing like them.

#### **300** Research Paper

You will write a research paper advancing a persuasive and original argument about one of the texts we will be reading this semester. You need to incorporate at least *five* scholarly sources into your argument to put your ideas into conversation with the critical thought out there. It must be at least **2000** words.

#### **250** Weekly Reading Responses

You will write one reading response per week for the first five weeks, prompted by assignments that I will give you to guide your composition. Though these are not complete papers, I expect you to write them with the same level of sophistication and polish you would a full essay. They must be at least **500** words, for a total of **2500** words.

#### **100** Participation

You must be an active and engaged part of each day's class to not only earn participation credit but to ensure that our course will be an academically fruitful experience. Participation will be gauged by group activities and larger class discussions. Unannounced reading quizzes will be introduced as part of this credit if I start to get the vibe that assignments are not being read. **To guarantee receipt of a full grade, you must contribute to class meaningfully at least once a class period.**

## Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

### Assessment Rubric

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

# Course Policies

## **Attendance**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Attendance is required. If you miss more than **five** classes during the semester, you will *fail the class*. I exempt from this policy only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me prior to the date that will be missed.

If you are absent for any reason, it is still your responsibility to remain aware of due dates and turn work in on time. You should contact fellow students to learn what you missed in class that day. In-class work cannot be made up.

If you enter class after roll has been called, you are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.

## **Classroom Behavior**

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Many of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

## **Class Work**

All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on their assigned deadlines via Sakai. I will not accept hard copies of your work. Late work will be docked ten points for every day it is late until it loses all credit.

In-class assignments will consist of group activities and larger classroom discussion. Be prepared for each class by doing the assigned reading and being ready to contribute to class in a meaningful way each day.

## **Students with Disabilities**

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

## Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eoo/sexharassment.htm>.

## Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

## Composition (C) and Humanities (H) Credit and Writing Requirement

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>.

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx>.

## Tentative Course Schedule

**6/29** Course Introduction

**6/30** “As I Walk These Broad Majestic Days” (1881), Walt Whitman

**7/1** “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892), Charlotte Perkins Gilman

**7/2** *McTeague* (1899), Frank Norris

**7/3** *McTeague* (1899), Frank Norris  
-First Reading Response Due

**7/6** *McTeague* (1899), Frank Norris

**7/7** “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (1915), T.S. Eliot

**7/8** “Blood Burning Moon” (1923), Jean Toomer

**7/9** *Nightwood* (1936), Djuna Barnes

**7/10** *Nightwood* (1936), Djuna Barnes

-Second Reading Response Due

**7/13** *Nightwood* (1936), Djuna Barnes

**7/14** “The Enormous Radio” (1948), John Cheever

**7/15** “Good Country People” (1955), Flannery O’Connor

**7/16** “Howl” (1956), Allen Ginsberg

**7/17** “Lady Lazarus” (1960), Sylvia Plath  
-Third Reading Response Due

**7/20** *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Toni Morrison  
-Creative Writing Assignment Due

**7/21** *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Toni Morrison

**7/22** *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Toni Morrison

**7/23** “Ellen West” (1977), Frank Bidart

**7/24** “In the Cemetery Where Al Jolson is Buried” (1983), Amy Hempel  
-Fourth Reading Response Due

**7/27** *White Noise* (1984), Don DeLillo

**7/28** *White Noise* (1984), Don DeLillo

**7/29** *White Noise* (1984), Don DeLillo

**7/30** “The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven” (1993), Sherman Alexie

**7/31** “The Shower Scene in Psycho” (1994), David Trinidad  
-Final Reading Response Due

**8/3** “This Blessed House” (2000), Jhumpa Lahiri

**8/4** *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), Junot Díaz

**8/5** *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), Junot Díaz

**8/6** *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), Junot Díaz

**8/7 Course Wrap-up**  
**-Research Paper Due**