

**AML 3041: 26HD America Goes to War! Politics, History, and Identity  
Fall 2015**

**Instructor: Najwa H. Al-Tabaa**

**Email: naltabaa@ufl.edu (use Canvas mail – preferred mode of communication)**

**Department of English Phone: 352.392.6650**

**Office: Turlington 4321**

**Office Hours: R7, F3-4, and by appointment**

**Class Meeting Time: T5-6, R6**

**Location: Weil 0279**

**Course Description:**

The aim of this course is to explore the development of American globalization through war and politics. We will begin by examining texts that depict the rise and fall of the old South and the aftermath of the Civil War and Reconstruction. We will move into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and examine the ways in which the nation attempts to make a claim for power on the global stage and the development of the Cold War and US imperialism. Finally, we will move into the post-9/11 contemporary to explore the threat of “terror” and the United States’ longest wars – Iraq and Afghanistan. We will explore the traumatic impact of war on the individual, collective, national, and historical levels. To help elaborate this point, Michael Rothberg, in his book on trauma studies, *Traumatic Realism*, argues that, “realism, modernism, and postmodernism can also be understood as persistent response to the demands of history. Like the demands themselves, these responses are also social; they provide frameworks for the representation and interpretation of history. In the representation of a historical event, in other words, a text’s “realist” component seeks strategies for referring to and documenting the world, its “modernist” side questions its ability to document history transparently; and its “postmodern” moment responds to the economic and political conditions of its emergence and public circulation” (9). It is through this lens that we will examine texts addressing the real, the documentation of the historical event (and literature’s ability to provide a “true” historical account), and the socio-economic impacts of war. While trauma is only one of the exigencies in which will examine modern warfare, tracing the historical and literary movements Rothberg outlines will help us put the traumatic moments in conversation with the historical event(s). We will look at theory, fiction, non-fiction, journalism, comics, and film.

**Course Goals:**

By the end of the semester you should have improved your ability to do the following:

- To Understand American Literature, Culture and History
- Develop literary analysis skills and engage with closely with primary sources and critical sources;
- To draw upon existing knowledge base and to think critically about the text(s);
- Synthesize ideas and materials from outside sources;
- Navigate the UF library research facilities and tools;

- Formulate clear and answerable thesis claims;
- Learn writing strategies for integrating source material into your own prose (quoted, paraphrased, and summarized material);
- Write analytical and argumentative papers appropriate to genres, rhetorical situations and larger discourse communities;
- Follow MLA formatting and style guidelines.

### **Required Texts:**

You may find these at the UF bookstore, [www.ufl.bkstr.com](http://www.ufl.bkstr.com) (in the Reitz Union). Additionally, the books are readily available on Amazon.com and at local bookstores.

*A Farewell to Arms* (Ernest Hemingway) ISBN: 978-0684801469

*Harlem Hellfighters* (Max Brooks) ISBN: 978-0307464972

*Native Son* (Richard Wright) ISBN: 978-0060837563

*Slaughterhouse-Five* (Kurt Vonnegut) ISBN: 978-0385333849

*Ceremony* (Leslie Marmon Silko) ISBN: 978-0-143104919

*Monkey Bridge* (Lan Cao) ISBN: 978-0140263619

*In the Shadow of No Towers* (Art Spiegelman) ISBN: 978-0375423079

Fire and Forget: Short Stories from the Long War (Ed. Roy Scranton and Matt Gallagher)  
ISBN: 9780306821769

Films (available through the UF Libraries or for rent on Amazon or iTunes for rent)

*The Thin Red Line* (Terrence Mallick)

*Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola)

*American Sniper* (Clint Eastwood)

\*In addition to the required text, see schedule for resources and course readings on e-learning/Canvas\*

### **Course Assignments:**

Activities:

Participation (attendance, in-class discussion, activities, and quizzes) 90 points

Weekly Discussion Board Postings (14 total, 10 points each, total: 140 points)

You must post a paragraph (about 250 words) each week conducting a close reading of the text for that week. **Due Thursdays by 9 am on e-learning/Canvas!**

Historical Source Presentation: 100 points

You will find an original historical source related to the course materials (photograph, newspaper article, interview, etc.). You will present your source to the class (2-3 minute presentation) and provide a short 500 word write up about the source. More information

will be provided on Canvas. Presentations will begin in week 3 and will go in alphabetical order.

### Trauma Comic Strip 20 points

You must physically create a comic strip that engage the themes of the course and write a brief paragraph describing your comic and reflecting on the creative process. More details will be provided on Canvas.

Essays:

### Close Reading Paper 1 (1000 words; 150 points)

For this paper you will conduct a close reading of one of the texts. More details will be provided on Canvas.

### Close Reading Paper 2 (1500-2000 words, 200 points)

For this paper you will conduct a close reading of one of the texts and engage 1-2 critical secondary sources about the text. More details will be provided on Canvas.

### Final Exam (Take Home) 300 points

Cumulative exam that will consist of close reading, short answers, and essay questions. More details will be available on Canvas.

## **General Grading Criteria for Papers:**

### “A” Paper

Ideas are clearly explained and supported. There is a strong focus and organization; thesis claims/ideas are maintained throughout the text. All supporting claims reinforce that larger trajectory of the argument. The paper critically engages the text(s) and provides thoughtful support and analysis. Ideas are developed and attention is give both to the themes of the text, rhetorical devices, and the larger themes of the course/prompts. The essay’s writing is clear, and MLA formatting and mechanics have no errors.

### “B” Paper

Ideas are mostly clearly explained and supported. Focus, organization, and the larger claims and ideas are strong; however, one or two points need further explaining/better focus. No floating quotes and all sources are introduced and properly supported. Ideas generally developed but could be expanded to further emphasize the main points. The essay’s writing is mainly clear, and MLA formatting and mechanics may have one or two errors.

### “C” Paper

Ideas and claims are somewhat supported. Some organization is found, but the larger claims need more support to validate them. There are floating quotes, underdeveloped ideas, and the writing, mechanics, and MLA formatting has significant errors, but is not unreadable.

#### “D” Paper

Ideas and claims are not supported. Organization is lacking and the argument is difficult to follow. Ideas are not developed and the text is not closely engaged. There are many mechanical and MLA formatting errors.

#### “E” Papers

Ideas and claims are not supported. Organization is lacking and there are many errors. Writing is unreadable. No citations.

**More Detailed Grading Criteria and Rubrics will be provided for each assignment on Canvas.**

#### **GRADING SCALE**

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000		C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939		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

#### **Attendance**

This is a discussion based, participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that you will build your skills incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Consequently, attendance is required. If you miss more than **six** periods during the semester, you will **fail** the entire course. The only exemptions from this policy are those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, jury service, and military duties. **Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your six allowed absences. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be deduced participation points, and 20 minutes or more will result in an absence.**

**\*\*\*If you are absent for any reason: You are required to submit by the next class period a 250-word response discussing that missed day’s reading. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point deduction from your overall participation grade. If you have to leave class early, it will result in a half absence, barring extenuating circumstances.\*\*\***

**\*\*\*If you have a legitimate absence, you may contact the Dean of Student's Office for an excuse. Only a formal excuse through their office will be accepted.\*\*\***

Excused absences are at the discretion of the instructor. If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Please do not come late to class or leave class early; arriving late or leaving early disrupts the entire class. Please make every effort to be on time and do not schedule things that conflict with class time. Additionally, missing a scheduled conference with the instructor will result in an absence. If you need to reschedule a conference, you must give ample warning, a minimum of one hour before the conference schedule through email.

**\*\*\*\*If you are absent from class, you are still responsible for submitting any assignment that may be due that day. \*\*\*\***

### **Preparation**

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to class discussion will impact your overall grade. Make sure you check Canvas and your email regularly – this is where assignments, course related materials and announcements will be posted.

Make sure you back up your work. Failure of technology is not an excuse for late papers.

If there is a word you do not know in a reading or other assignment, make sure you look it up. Also if there is a reference to a person or event and you do not know who or what it is, look it up. Part of being prepared for class is not just doing the reading, but making sure you grasp what you are reading. If you have questions about a specific reference or idea, bring it with you to class to discuss or post it on the Help/questions section of the discussion board.

Proofread, proofread, proofread! Before you turn in any assignment, whether it be a major assignment, a discussion board posting, or even an email, make sure you read over it to catch any grammatical mistakes. A great way to catch your grammar mistakes is to read your paper aloud. It is often easier to catch your grammatical mistakes when you hear them rather than looking over your paper with tired eyes.

### **Late Work**

Late submissions and assignments will not be accepted. Extreme circumstances and emergencies do occur, so extensions will be granted at the instructor's discretion on a case-by case-basis. If you feel that you require an extension, please contact the instructor in a timely manner – less than 24 hours is not sufficient. If you fail to submit an assignment by the deadline you will receive a zero for that assignment.

## **Mode of Submission**

All papers must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman (or equivalent), double-spaced, 1-inch margins, following MLA guidelines. All assignments will be submitted electronically through Sakai. It is your responsibility to make sure your documents are readable in all aspects for your instructor. Your final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. If you do not submit your paper to the appropriate place or save it in a way that can be opened by the instructor, you will not receive credit for the assignment. Please save your paper in the following format:

**NamePaper.docx** (or .doc, or .rtf. – you may use the Apple Pages equivalent to Word documents as well, or save your paper as a .pdf).

## **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:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcode/honorcode.php>

**Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code.** You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if the student fails to know and employ proper documentation techniques.

Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor for class group work, all work must be your own. Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

## **Graded Materials**

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers; it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

## **Classroom Behavior**

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

## **Statement on 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.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

## **Technology**

- **Laptops/Tablets:** You are welcome to bring laptops or tablets to class to take notes. However, if your device prevents you from paying attention in class, e.g. you are caught Facebooking or tweeting, shopping on line, or anything non-course related, you will be asked to put it away and will lose laptop privileges for the rest of the semester.
- **Cell Phones/MP3 players/Portable Electronic Devices, etc.:** Please keep your device put away and on silent at all times.

## **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/d>

## **Schedule (tentative, subject to change)**

### **Week 1 Staging the New American: After the Civil War and Reconstruction**

#### **Tuesday Aug. 24**

Course Introduction

Walt Whitman's Poems TBA

Brain Turner's Poems TBA

#### **Thursday Aug. 26**

Ambrose Bierce's "Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/375/375-h/375-h.htm>

Ambrose Bierce's "Chikamauga"

<http://www.online-literature.com/bierce/992/>

Fredrick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of a Slave*

< <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm> >

## **Week 2 The American Frontier Goes to War**

### **Tuesday Sept. 1**

*One of Ours* (Willa Cather) < <http://www.bartleby.com/1006/>>  
Book 1

### **Thursday Sept. 3**

*One of Ours* (Willa Cather) < <http://www.bartleby.com/1006/>>  
Book 2

## **Week 3 WWI and the New American Reality**

### **Tuesday Sept. 8**

*One of Ours* (Willa Cather) < <http://www.bartleby.com/1006/>>  
Book 3 and 4

### **Thursday Sept. 10**

*A Farewell to Arms* (Ernest Hemingway)  
Read up to Book 2

## **Week 4 The Great War**

### **Tuesday Sept. 15**

*A Farewell to Arms* Read up to Book 4

### **Thursday Sept. 17**

Finish *A Farewell to Arms*

## **Week 5 Race, War, and Comics**

### **Tuesday Sept. 22**

W.E.B. Dubois *The Souls of Black Folks*, selections  
<http://www.bartleby.com/114/>

*Harlem Hellfighters* (Max Brooks) up to page 157

### **Thursday Sept. 24**

Finish *Harlem Hellfighters*



## **Week 6 Race and the War at Home**

**Tuesday Sept. 29**

*Native Son* (Richard Wright) Book 1 “Fear”

**\*\*\*Paper 1 Due\*\*\***

**Thursday Oct. 1**

*Native Son* Book 2 Flight part 1 (TBA)

## **Week 7 Race and the War at Home Continued**

**Tuesday Oct. 6**

*Native Son* Finish Book 2 Flight and read Book 3 part 1 (TBA)

**Thursday Oct. 8**

*Native Son* Finish Book 3

## **Week 8 Historical Impact**

**Tuesday Oct. 13**

Finish *Native Son*

**Thursday Oct. 15**

Slaughterhouse-Five (Kurt Vonnegut)

Up to Chapter 4

## **Week 9 War Makes You Unstuck in Time**

Tuesday Oct. 20

Slaughterhouse-Five up to Chapter 8

Thursday Oct. 22

Finish Slaughterhouse-Five

## **Week 10 War and the Land**

Tuesday Oct. 27

*Ceremony* (Leslie Marmon Silko) up to page 105

Thursday Oct. 29

*Ceremony* up to page 154

## **Week 11 War and the Land Continued**

**Tuesday Nov. 3**

Finish *Ceremony*

**Thursday Nov. 5**

Watch the *Thin Red Line* (Terrence Mallick)

## **Week 12 Vietnam Stories**

**Tuesday Nov. 10**

Selections from Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* TBA

Selections from Michael Herr's *Dispatches* TBA

Selections from Karl Marlantes's *What It Is Like to Go to War* TBA

**Thursday Nov. 12**

Watch *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola)

**\*\*\*Paper 2 Due!\*\*\***

## **Week 13 Vietnam Aftermath**

**Tuesday Nov. 17**

Monkey Bridge (Lan Cao) up to Chapter 9

**Thursday Nov. 19**

Finish Monkey Bridge

## **Week 14 The War on Terror and 9/11**

**Tuesday Nov. 24**

*In the Shadow of No Towers* (Art Spiegelman)

**Thursday Nov. 26 Thanksgiving (no class)**

## **Week 15 Iraq and Afghanistan**

**Tuesday Dec. 1**

Selections from *Fire and Forget* (Eds. Roy Scanton and Matt Gallagher) TBA

**Thursday Dec. 3**

Selections from *Fire and Forget* TBA

## **Week 16 Iraq and Afghanistan Continued**

**Tuesday Dec. 8**

Selections from *Fire and Forget* TBA

*American Sniper* (Eastwood)

**Trauma Comic Due!**

Final Exam Assigned

**Final Exam due on E-learning/Canvas by Thursday Dec. 17 at 12pm**