

Syllabus: Course Policies / English 2329 / 8-week version

American Literature

Course Designer:

Dr. Peggy Kulesz
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Instructor:

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Texts and Materials:

- Course material will be available online via Blackboard (elearn.uta.edu).
- You should have access to and familiarity with PowerPoint and MS Word and be able to open and save files in pdf format.
- You should have daily access to a dependable computer system that works efficiently with the course learning environment.

Course Description:

In this course you will consider significant works of American literature with a focus on ideas and the ways in which they reflect cultural and aesthetic values. This course places an emphasis on critical methods of reading, writing, and thinking; at least three genres and six authors are considered. The course designer for American Literature is Dr. Peggy Kulesz, of the University of Texas at Arlington's English Department. The eight-week version of the course is quite demanding, covering essentially the same material and containing almost identical assignments as the fifteen-week course. That means you should anticipate putting as much, or probably more, work into this online eight-week course as you would into a face-to-face fifteen-week course. We recommend budgeting between 12 and 15 hours a week for this course if you want to succeed in it.

Course Goals:

- To encourage students to see that literary studies matter and to foster enjoyment of literature as students engage with ideas and beliefs in ways that extend beyond the classroom
- To help students recognize that literature does not occur as isolated literary events, but in complex dialogue within cultural and historical contexts
- To develop students' ability to read and write critically by applying their study of literary devices to literary analysis

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students should be able to demonstrate their understanding of and their ability to analyze literary texts both in writing and in online written discussion.
- Students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of a variety of literary terms and elements.
- Students should be able to identify a variety of literary elements within literary texts.

- Students should be able to demonstrate ability to utilize technology in a variety of forms.

Assignments and Grade Calculation:

Task	Percentages
Daily Assignments	30%
Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These brief quizzes are objective and serve to check your reading. These are timed and are to be taken independently without assistance from a book, online information, notes, or other people. 	10%
Lesson assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short lesson assignments are designed to provide you with resources to enhance your understanding of context, to prepare you to write the major essays, and to help you take exams successfully. 	10%
Discussion posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to receive full credit, your discussion post should address the lesson prompt. Your comments must be thoughtful and based on your careful analysis of the text but also demonstrate that you are aware of what others on the Discussion Board have written. 	10%
Essays	50%
• Guided Topic Essay	15%
• Poetry Analysis	15%
• Visual Essay	20%
Exams	20%
• Short Story Exam	10%
• Poetry Exam	10%
TOTAL	100%

Scale for final course grades:

90 to 100 percent	A
80 to 89 percent	B
70 to 79 percent	C

60 to 69 percent	D
0 to 59 percent	F

At the end of the semester, final averages will be rounded up from the hundredths decimal place such that, for example, a 79.54 becomes a B and an 89.72 becomes an A, but a 69.44 remains a D. A grade of “A” on an assignment is reserved for excellent work that exceeds expectations. We do maintain very high standards for writing assignments. Even so, students typically do very well in this course; when students wind up receiving a C, D, or F at the end of the semester, it is usually because they didn’t turn in all of their work or didn’t turn it in on time.

Submission Policy:

You must complete all assignments and quizzes by the due dates. No late work is accepted. All due dates for the assignments and quizzes are listed in the course schedule. We strongly recommend that you print out a copy of the course schedule at the very beginning of the semester and that you keep it on hand throughout the course. Do not rely on Blackboard to tell you when assignments are due.

You must submit your assignments by uploading them on Blackboard. Neither your coach nor your instructor will accept work over e-mail. Assignments incorrectly posted or submitted to the wrong location in Blackboard will not receive credit. As such, please be mindful that you are submitting your work to the correct location and that you have carefully reviewed the directions for submitting assignments in Blackboard. An online tutorial can be found at http://ondemand.blackboard.com/r91/movies/bb91_student_submit_assignment.htm

College students are expected to work independently and to complete assignments on time. It is important to look ahead in order to understand when major assignments are due. Most successful students mark due dates on a planner or calendar.

All course readings, videos, web links, and audios in the “Readings” folder are required reading/viewing for all students. Most lessons include a quiz that not only assesses understanding and comprehension of the literary texts, but also poses questions based on material found in the culture and context readings.

Course Faculty Structure:

You will be interacting with a number of individuals in this course. Those individuals are:

- Your instructor, Dr. Kathryn Warren, who is responsible for the overall running of the course. She can answer your questions on course content and will be offering Virtual Office Hours nearly every week. Please see the Announcements section for information about how to access those.
- The lead coach, who is responsible for sending weekly reminder e-mails to every student registered for the course.
- Your individual coach, who is responsible for grading your work and fielding your logistical questions. You will receive a welcome e-mail from your coach before the class begins. Write down your coach’s e-mail address and keep it in a safe place. Your coach is your go-to person for questions about your grades and assignment and submission requirements. Your coach will

grade your assignments within a week of the due date. Please do not e-mail your coach to inquire about grades before a week has passed from the due date (not from when you turned the assignment in).

- The course developer, Dr. Peggy Kulesz, is a presence in this course because she is the one who put it together. She is not an active part of our course, but we do have her to thank for selecting the readings and designing the assignments. So, while you're not actually interacting with her, I wanted you to know who she is.

For more information on these individuals, to access their contact information, and to learn who your coach is (in case you forgot), please see the "Start Here" tab in Blackboard.

Participation:

You should read or view all the material found in the "Readings" folder and complete all assignments carefully and thoughtfully. As you read, think critically about the material in order to generate ideas and questions from your analysis. It is expected that students in this course will actively and appropriately engage in online discussions and participate online in collaborative learning situations.

E-Culture Policy:

The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University e-mail address as an official means of communication with students. Through the use of e-mail, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information designed to facilitate student success. In particular, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through e-mail. All students are assigned an e-mail account, and information about activating and using it is available at www.uta.edu/email. New students (first semester at UTA) are able to activate their e-mail account 24 hours after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington. Students are responsible for checking their e-mail regularly. As instructors often need to communicate with students after the last scheduled class day, students should continue to check their UTA email accounts and visit the course website until final grades for the course are posted. As instructors, we are prohibited from corresponding with students via any e-mail address except for a MavMail address. That means we cannot reply to messages sent from a personal e-mail account, so please be sure to write to us from your MavMail address always.

Academic Integrity:

Your work is to be your own, and it is to be prepared originally for this course. It is considered academic dishonesty to present work done by someone else and to claim it as your own. It is also inappropriate to hand in a paper or portions of a paper written for another class, including high school and college courses you have taken or in which you are currently enrolled. Any borrowed information (from books, websites, or other sources) should include the correct documentation to identify it as originating elsewhere. Academic dishonesty of any type (plagiarism, cheating, preparing work for others, etc.) is unacceptable, even if you do it accidentally. All instances of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to UTA policy and procedures, and I will send a copy of questionable work to the Office of Student Conduct to be kept on file. I will award zeroes on assignments that are plagiarized and reserve the right to give an F for the entire course to any student who engages in any type of academic dishonesty.

It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

“Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.” (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

Be sure to read the handout on plagiarism under the “Course Resources” tab for further information and explanation. Once you’ve done that, please contact your coach or instructor if you have any questions whatsoever about academic integrity. Please take academic integrity very seriously. Every semester we have multiple cases of plagiarism, and we have a zero-tolerance policy toward it.

When Things Go Wrong:

Sometime during the course of our eight weeks together, you will undoubtedly encounter some kind of problem—a broken link, a Discussion Board you can’t access, a grade column that isn’t appearing. When that happens, don’t get stressed out. If an issue occurs on our end (something to do with Blackboard, course design, or a UTA tech issue), we will fix it and will never penalize students. If it is an issue with your own computer or you just simply can’t get some assignment completed, remain calm. Send a clear, respectful e-mail to your coach alerting him or her to the issue. Then trust your coach to address the issue. Though most issues are resolved within 24 hours, don’t expect instant answers. Below are some common technical issues that may arise along with suggestions for how to deal with them.

Broken Links: The dynamic nature of the internet means that a course link that worked on Monday morning may not work by Monday afternoon. If you have tried a link in two browsers and can’t get it to display, e-mail your instructor, who will work on getting it fixed.

Videos Removed: Sometimes YouTube videos are removed from YouTube without any warning. If you have tried to watch an assigned video with no success, contact your instructor, who will make a decision on either replacing the video or substituting some other element.

Assignment, Quiz, or Exam Not Available: If a course item you are assigned is not available, take the following steps. First, check the due dates to make sure you have not missed the time period for availability. (Assignments only remain available up to their due dates.) If this checks out correctly, notify your coach or instructor, who will work on making the item available.

Computer Crashes, Page Closes, Electricity Goes Out, etc.: If the problem is a system issue, we will not penalize students and will make course content available to you when the Blackboard or electrical issues are resolved. But, if the technical issue you’re having is not a global one affecting the Blackboard system or the electrical grid where you live and

work, then *we do not accept these as excuses for missing work*. If you believe your situation is unusual, please contact your coach. He/she will investigate and make a decision about the issue. Be advised that we do drop your lowest quiz grade, so if your computer crashes during a quiz, it's not the end of the world. Remember that quizzes and exams are timed and will often shut down if there is no activity in the quiz. If you open another window or move out of the test environment, this may cause your quiz or exam to close. If you hit the back button or the re-load arrow, you will also cause the quiz or exam to close.

Technical Support:

Need technical assistance related to course access issues? E-mail cdesupport@uta.edu or call 817-272-5727. If you need technical assistance related to Net ID issues, please contact the help desk at helpdesk@uta.edu or at 817-272-2208.

Course Communication Policies and E-mail Etiquette:

One of the disadvantages of an online class is that we never get to meet each other; our only contact is on Discussion Boards and over e-mail. Our impressions of each other are formed purely by writing. This means you should take great care with how you write to your classmates, your coach, and your instructor, who should in turn take great care with how they write to you. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind over the next eight weeks.

1. **Communication is key to your success in this course.** It is important that you make important issues known to your coach and that you ask questions. If you miss work, then communicate with your instructor about your overall progress in the course. He/she will give you the best advice on how to proceed. If you're having trouble, let someone know.
2. **If you have a question about an assignment or a policy, consult the syllabus, the assignment prompt, and the course resources *before* e-mailing your coach.** Usually, the answer you're looking for is there. We are more than happy to answer your questions, but we greatly appreciate it if you make an effort to find the answer first.
3. **When you compose an e-mail, send it to a specific person.** So, when you use Blackboard's e-mail function to ask questions, be sure to send your e-mail to a specific person (e.g., your coach or the instructor) instead of hitting the button that allows you to send the e-mail to all instructors. It's easier for all involved if you write to the person who can best answer your question. Also, when contacting us, make sure to put your course and section number in the subject line. We have a lot of students, so when you identify yourself and your course in the subject line, it makes it easier for us to know who you are.
4. **Think of composing your e-mail as a rhetorical act; the tone and presentation of your e-mail has an effect on the person reading it.** For starters, please make sure your e-mail includes a salutation (e.g., "Dear Dianne") and a closing (e.g., "Thank you, Alberto"). Then, make sure your e-mail is courteous. Your professor and coaches are your guides and mentors, not customer service representatives who process complaints. They want to work with you in a collaborative manner. Demanding "service" or "action" from them is not in keeping with the educational model and will not foster a spirit of cooperation. Make sure your e-mails are respectful and carefully constructed and be as specific as possible with your questions.
5. **In this course, as with any other UTA course, your communication with other students, coaches, and faculty should be professional.** When communicating with your peers, coaches, and instructor, discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, ideology, political affiliation, veteran status, age, physical handicap, or marital status *will not be tolerated*. Keep in mind that instructors and

coaches reserve the right to manage a positive learning environment and thus will not tolerate inappropriate conduct in the course. All UTA students are responsible for behaving in a manner consistent with UTA's Standard Code of Conduct. Students violating these codes will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

6. **For our part, we commit to being courteous and professional in our e-mails to you.**
7. **Check your MavMail at least once a day.** Reading your MavMail regularly is a required part of the course; it isn't optional. Important course announcements and additional class resources will often be sent to your UT-Arlington e-mail address. Get into the habit of checking course announcements regularly as well.
8. **E-mailed assignments are not accepted.** It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the course software and learn how to submit assignments. If you think this might be a problem for you, check out the submission process early and ask your coach any questions you have about it (don't wait until the day before something's due).

Americans with Disabilities Act:

The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in Room 102 of University Hall, or call them at 817-272-3364.

The Writing Center:

The Writing Center, Room 411 in the Central Library, offers guidance to UT-Arlington students on writing assignments. Even as a Distance Education student, you may register and schedule appointments online at <http://uta.mywconline.com>. If you live outside the DFW area and cannot come to campus (or simply prefer not to), then when you make your appointment you will choose an online-enabled session.

Writing Center consultants assist students with writing development, from understanding an assignment and brainstorming ideas or revising an early draft, to polishing a final document. However, the Writing Center is not a document editing service; consultants will not identify or correct every grammar or spelling error, nor will they rewrite student assignments. They focus on improving writing skills and helping students become better editors of their own writing, which includes learning to identify and correct their own grammar, punctuation and editing errors.

In addition to one-on-one consultations, the Writing Center will offer grammar workshops periodically throughout the semester. During these workshops students will focus on identifying and correcting one of the most common grammar errors and then will participate in a Consultant-led revising and editing session. For more information on these sessions, please see the Writing Center calendar at <http://www.uta.edu/owl>.

Student Support Services Available:

The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally-funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Drop Policy:

If you choose to withdraw from the course for any reason, you must follow University procedures. It is your responsibility to execute these procedures correctly and within the deadlines. I cannot and will not drop anyone for any reason from this course. However, I may strongly recommend that you drop if you are significantly behind on completing the required assignments.

Course Schedule:

The course schedule for this semester is available in a separate document in the Syllabus folder.