**American Mix TapeENGL 2329.002, Spring 2016**

**The University of Texas at Arlington**

Meets MWF, 1-1:50, COBA 253

Instructor: Dr. Kathryn Warren

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Office hours: Carlisle Hall 206, M/F, 3-4:30, and by appointment

**Course Description:**

A mix tape takes songs off of the albums on which they first appeared and rearranges them so that something new emerges from the juxtaposition, and great songs are the building blocks of a great mix. In this course we’ll work our way through a mix tape of American literature, studying texts that are widely considered to be among the “greatest hits” of the American canon[[1]](#footnote-1). We’ll read cultural touchstones that have been reimagined for new generations, as F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* has; listen to the voices of literary celebrities who exploded convention to create something utterly original, the way Walt Whitman did; and contend with thinkers who questioned the social systems of their day, as did Henry David Thoreau and Frederick Douglass.

Our aim isn’t to reconstruct a history of American literature, but rather to listen to voices from the American past and consider not only how they were responding to their historical moment, but also how they speak to us in the present. Our reading schedule is organized by genre, moving from short stories to autobiography to poetry, and finishing with the novel. One course unit, “Literary Resonances,” pairs texts from different historical moments as illustrations of how writers across centuries respond to the same concerns—or, in some cases, how they respond directly to one another.

The class will be run as a discussion, and commitment to a shared project of exploration and deep thinking will be insisted upon. Three short essays will allow you to practice the skills of close reading and analysis, while a midterm and final will test your ability to distinguish among the authors and analyze a specific passage. The final writing assignment, the Signature Assignment (assigned in every section of sophomore lit), asks that you relate the reading to a social issue, thus underscoring the relation between the literature we read and the world we live in.

**Course Objectives under the Core Curriculum:**

This course satisfies the University of Texas at Arlington core curriculum requirements in Language, Philosophy, and Culture. The required objectives of these courses are the development of students’ critical thinking, communication skills, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. Many elements of this course foster development of these objectives, which are explicitly addressed in the Signature Assignment (the last assignment in the course; see the prompt below). The Departmental guidelines for sophomore literature can be found here: <https://www.uta.edu/english/docs/sophlit.pdf>.

**Course Goals:**

1. To encourage students to see that literary studies matter and to foster enjoyment of literature
2. To help students recognize that literature is in dialogue with complex cultural and historical contexts
3. To develop students’ ability to read critically
4. To develop students’ skills of writing and expression, particularly with respect to analysis of literary texts

**Materials:**

Nina Baym and Robert Levine, Eds., *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Shorter Eighth

Edition, ISBN 978-0-393-91885-4

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby,* Simon and Schuster, ISBN 9780743273565

A MavMail account that you check daily

Hard copies of any additional course reading

**Grading Scale:**

I grade holistically, which means that there are not specific point values assigned to different elements in your writing. The grades I assign indicate how well you meet the expectations of an assignment, which are explained in detail on every prompt.

90-100=A, for work that exceeds expectations.

80-89= B, for work that meets expectations well.

70-79=C, for work that meets the expectations of an assignment competently.

60-69=D, for work that fails to meet the minimum requirements of an assignment.

59 and below=F, for work that is either incomplete or has flouted the requirements.

**Assignments and Grade Calculation:**

Short Essays (3): 35%

Tracing a Theme

The Rhetorical “I”

Literary Resonance

Midterm: 15%

Signature Assignment: 15%

Final exam: 15%

Reading Quizzes: 10%

Participation: 10%

* All essays may be revised (with conditions explained on the prompt). The prompts will be posted on Blackboard well before the due dates.
* You can’t make up reading quizzes, but quizzes you miss because of an excused absence are excused.
* A substantial portion of both exams will be identification/close readings. These questions ask you to name the work and author of a particular passage and offer a close reading of the passage that underscores its thematic significance to the work as a whole. The best way to prepare for the exams is to keep up with the readings, mark passages that we discuss, pay attention to the differences in the authors’ styles, and take good notes during class. The exams do not require that you memorize passages, but rather that you learn to recognize the authors’ distinctive traits. The final will not be cumulative.
* Make-up exams may be given at my discretion, but only under the most unusual circumstances. I require documentation to offer a make-up exam.

**Participation and Discussion:**

You must participate actively in class because the study of literature can’t happen in a vacuum. This is not a class, as perhaps biology or calculus might be, where you sit back and ingest knowledge, facts, and information passively. Rather, you’ll be acquiring skills in critical thinking and analysis, and our classroom is the place where you’ll practice these skills.

While I will lecture on occasion, for the most part this class is discussion-based, which means that we all play a significant role in its success. It is incumbent upon each of us to come to class with something to say about the text under discussion: an observation, a question, an opinion. Because I expect each of you to come to class ready to contribute, you should not only *complete* the required reading or assignment, but *think about it*. Daily quizzes will help you keep up with the reading.

Participation, which consists of in-class contributions (i.e., speaking up), group work, and attention to your classmates and to me, comprises 10% of your final grade. At the end of the semester, your participation grade will be based on the quality (not necessarily the frequency) of your in-class contributions, taking into account the following: whether you pose your own questions and answer mine; whether you respond to your classmates’ remarks; the quality of your engagement during group work; your attentiveness to me and to your classmates when we speak; and your adherence to standards of classroom etiquette. The participation score will be applied retroactively to every day you were present, and you will receive a zero for the days you are absent (excused absences exempted). If you have any questions during the semester about where you stand participation-wise, please ask me. I will provide a midterm participation score to let you know how you’re doing.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| End-of-semester participation evaluation |  |
| 9-10 (A level) | Actively participates during nearly every class in a way that demonstrates thorough preparation. Arrives on time and pays attention. A score of 10 is reserved for students whose contributions proved indispensable to the functioning of the class. |
| 8.5 (B level) | Actively participates during many classes in a way that demonstrates thorough preparation. Arrives on time and pays attention. |
| 7.5 (C level) | May participate occasionally, showing preparation, or may participate frequently without being prepared. Arrives on time and pays attention. |
| 6.5 (D level) | Habitually dozes off in class or spends time on a device of some sort; tends to arrive late, leave early, or otherwise disrupt class. |

**Attendance and Tardiness:**

At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the professor for this course, have established an attendance policy, explained below.

Regular class attendance is expected, and any absence is strongly discouraged. I record two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences will not impact your participation grade, but unexcused absences will.

I excuse absences under the following circumstances:

1. Military duty (documentation required)
2. Official university business (e.g., participation in a sporting event; documentation required)
3. Illness, *at my discretion* (doctor’s note required). Please note that I will not excuse your absence for a regularly scheduled doctor’s appointment. There is a limit of 4 absences due to illness. Should your health interfere markedly with your performance in the course, come talk to me.
4. Religious holidays (let me know ahead of time)

In some circumstances, I may excuse other kinds of absences, *with documentation*.

All students will be allowed one absence without penalty to the participation grade. This is a safeguard to cover for emergencies, illnesses that do not require a visit to the doctor, weekend trips, etc. **If you record seven unexcused absences you will automatically fail the course.** To summarize,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 unexcused absence | No adverse impact on your grade |
| 2-6 unexcused absences | Every unexcused absence hurts your participation grade |
| 7 unexcused absences | You fail the course |

Punctuality is essential. Coming to class late disrupts the rhythm of the class, and it is disrespectful to me and to your classmates. By missing the first few minutes of class, you miss important announcements. Arriving after class has begun will have an adverse effect on your participation grade, and egregious (15 minutes +) lateness (or leaving early) will be counted as an absence.

**Submission Requirements and Late Work:**

You will turn in all of your formal assignments on Blackboard (elearn.uta.edu). It is your responsibility to make sure that your submission goes through, which means going back after you have uploaded your assignment to double check that it is there. Computer problems are not a valid excuse for late or missing work. If you are having trouble uploading an assignment from your home computer, go to the library and upload it from there. Plan ahead.

I do accept late work, with the following two conditions: 1) late work will lose a letter grade (10 points) for each calendar day (*not* class day) it is late, and 2) I will no longer accept a paper when it is 6 days late.

Extensions are negotiable. If you anticipate needing more time for an assignment, you must get in touch with me at least two days before the assignment is due. Together we will arrive at a later due date. I will hold you to that new due date and deduct points if you miss it. Do not e-mail me the day before something is due to ask for an extension; I will refuse.Plan ahead. I reserve the right to refuse extensions.

Unless we have made a special arrangement, do notsend me essays by e-mail. I will not accept them. It’s fine, however, if you e-mail me an assignment as a backup.

**Formatting and Citation:**

All writing assignments should be Word Documents that are double spaced, with 1-inch margins, in 12-pt. font. Follow MLA style.

**Academic Integrity:**

All UTA students are expected to adhere to the University’s Honor Code, which reads as follows:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

The University’s policy is that faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

My policy is to hold students to the highest standards of academic honesty, and I have zero tolerance for violations of academic integrity. Plagiarism of any kind will result in strict penalties, including the possibility of failing the course. You will be turning in all of your assignments via SafeAssign, a program available via Blackboard that checks your work against work on the web and a database of student work, thereby flagging potential instances of plagiarism.

*What is plagiarism?*

Plagiarism is presenting another person’s ideas or words as one’s own. Plagiarism occurs when a writer quotes, paraphrases, or summarizes another person’s work without crediting his/her sources. Plagiarism occurs whether the text quoted is a book, article, website, Wikipedia, a reader’s guide like Cliffs Notes or Sparks Notes, another student’s paper, or any other source. Submitting a paper you got credit for in another class, also known as “self-plagiarism,” is also a violation of academic integrity and will result in the same penalty. *An entire essay is considered fraudulent even if only a single sentence is plagiarized.*Also, please note that plagiarism has nothing to do with intent. If you do not properly credit your sources, you have plagiarized, whether or not you meant to.

*How can I avoid plagiarism?*

1. Develop your own opinions and ideas whenever you write papers or exams. Resist the temptation to look to online reading guides, analyses, or summaries for inspiration; it’s way too easy for the language you read and ideas you’re exposed to to seep into your own writing.
2. As you work on your research paper, take good notes, being sure to keep your ideas about the primary text and the ideas of your interlocutors (i.e., your sources) separate.
3. Whenever you refer to another person’s ideas or words, use proper citation to give them credit. This can mean either paraphrasing an author’s ideas and indicating that you are doing so in your prose (e.g., writing, “As Brook Thomas has argued,” and following that opener with a statement of his argument in your own words) or citing a source directly via quotation (e.g., “As Brook Thomas writes, ‘xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx’”). Because most English classes will require you to use MLA citation guidelines, the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* is a recommended text for this course.
4. Do not turn in work for this class that you have submitted, or will submit, in another class.

*What are the consequences of plagiarism?*

If I suspect you of plagiarism, I will contact you so that we can discuss my concerns. You will then have the opportunity to either accept or deny responsibility for plagiarism. If you deny responsibility, your case will be handled by the Office of Student Conduct, and you will receive an Incomplete in our course until the investigation is complete. Students who commit plagiarism will most likely receive a reduced grade, possibly a zero, for the fraudulent assignment. (I assess the academic penalty on a case-by-case basis.) Without exception, I will report the incident to the Office of Student Conduct, whether or not the student accepts responsibility for the alleged plagiarism. Disciplinary probation for a year is a common penalty for plagiarism issued by the Office of Student Conduct.

If you have any questions about these policies or about what constitutes plagiarism and/or collusion, ask me. Be sure to visit the website for the Office of Student Conduct for clarification on any of the above:

http://www.uta.edu/studentaffairs/conduct/academicintegrity.html

**Etiquette:**

The way you comport yourself during the semester has a substantial effect on your ethos, or credibility. Please take the following etiquette guidelines into account:

1. No laptops, smart phones, tablets, or e-readers in class. The latest research indicates that despite our belief that we are good at multitasking, learning suffers significantly when it is interrupted by digital media. The use of any electronic device during class will result in a zero participation grade for that day. Check out these two articles if you’re interested in the research:

[http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/04/140424102837.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/04/140424102837.htm" \t "_blank)

[http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom](http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom" \t "_blank)

1. Visit me during office hours, make an appointment outside of office hours, or e-mail me for questions and help. I check my e-mail several times a day, but I cease to do so at night and do so considerably less frequently over the weekend. Please seek help ahead of time.
2. Please be sure your e-mails have both a salutation and a closing.

**Writing Center:**

If you’re serious about your writing, you should take advantage of the Writing Center, located in Room 411 of the Central Library. The Writing Center offers guidance to UT-Arlington students on writing assignments. Students must register with the Writing Center before making appointments and should bring a printed copy of their assignment sheet, any instructor or peer comments, and their draft to the appointment. Hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mondays-Thursdays, 9 am to 3 pm Fridays, and 12 to 5 pm Saturdays and Sundays. Walk-in “Quick Hits” sessions are available during all open hours Mon-Thurs. Register and make appointments online at [http://uta.mywconline.com](http://uta.mywconline.com/).  
  
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 neither identify every error nor 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.

**Syllabus and Schedule Changes:**

I’ve tried to make this document as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies and/or assignments. I reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. You will be informed of any changes in writing.

**The Syllabus as a Contract:**

You may have noticed that much of what’s written above begins with the pronoun “you.” I have made very clear what is expected of each of you in the course. This syllabus is more than a list of what *you* need to do, though; it’s also a contract, a list of obligations and responsibilities that each of us takes on at the beginning of the semester. By reading this syllabus and deciding to stick with the course, you are consenting to the policies outlined above and promising to uphold your end of the bargain. I am promising a few things, too. As your instructor, I will:

1. Always start class on time, as I know your time is valuable.
2. Always end class on time, as I know you have places to be.
3. Grade your work within a week of it being turned in.
4. Hold office hours every week and advise you well ahead of time of any changes to them.
5. Be respectful of your opinions and open to your questions.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**Drop Policy:**

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Electronic Communication:**

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

**Student Support Services:**

UT-Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

**Disability Accommodations:**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: the Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD), [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability), or calling 817-272-3364. They may also contact Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS), [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/), or call 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at 817-272-3364.

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**Title IX:**

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php). For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Student Feedback Surveys:**

At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT-Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

**Final Review Week:**

A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:**

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which are the stairwells at both ends of the hall outside our door. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Emergency Phone Numbers**:

In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911. The non-emergency number is 817-272-3381.

**Working Course Schedule**—subject to revision

Please read the headnotes for each author in addition to the assigned texts. Complete the day’s reading *before* our class meeting. Selections not in the Norton are available on Blackboard.

Wed., Jan. 20: Introduction to the course policies

Fri., Jan. 22: Introduction to each other and to the course

🡪 Assign Signature Assignment (read prompt [syllabus Appendix C])

SHORT STORIES

Mon., Jan. 25: Henry James, “Daisy Miller,” pp. 1511-29

Wed., Jan. 27: Henry James, “Daisy Miller,” pp. 1529-49

Fri., Jan. 29: Flannery O’Connor, “Good Country People,” pp. 2524-37

Mon., Feb. 1: Continue discussing “Good Country People”

🡪Assign first essay (read prompt on Blackboard)

Wed., Feb. 3: Stephen Crane, “The Blue Hotel,” pp. 1784-1803

Fri., Feb. 5: Continue discussing “The Blue Hotel”

Mon., Feb. 8: Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” pp. 1102-28

Wed., Feb. 10: Continue discussing “Bartleby, the Scrivener”

Fri., Feb. 12: Edith Wharton, “Roman Fever,” pp. 1696-1705

Mon., Feb. 15: 🡪Assign second essay (read prompt on Blackboard)

Continue discussing “Roman Fever”

**Essay 1 due on Blackboard by 11:59 pm**

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Wed., Feb. 17: Frederick Douglass, “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,” pp. 938-59

Fri., Feb. 19:Frederick Douglass, “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,” pp. 959-90

Mon., Feb. 22: Frederick Douglass, “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,” pp. 990-1002, and “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” pp. 1002-05

Wed., Feb. 24: Henry David Thoreau, *Walden,* pp. 858-break on 864; break on 866-break on 872; break on 896-900

Fri., Feb. 26: Henry David Thoreau, *Walden,* pp. 901-16; pp. 926-34

Mon., Feb. 29: Kathryn Schulz, “Pond Scum” (Bb)

POETRY

Wed., Mar. 2: Emily Dickinson, “This was a Poet, “I heard a Fly buzz—when I died,

“Much Madness is divinest Sense” (pp. 1205-06, 1207-09)

**Essay 2 due on Blackboard by 11:59 pm**

Fri., Mar. 4: Elizabeth Bishop, “The Fish,” “In the Waiting Room” (pp. 2289-90, 2294-6)

Mon., Mar. 7: Robert Frost, “Mending Wall,” “The Road Not Taken” (pp. 1913-14, 1919-20)

Wed., Mar. 9: Lucille Clifton, “the lost baby poem,” “homage to my hips,” “wishes for sons” (pp. 2663-65)

Fri., Mar. 11: Midterm

SPRING BREAK

Mon., Mar. 21: Return midterm

🡪Assign third essay (read prompt on Blackboard)

LITERARY RESONANCES

Wed., Mar. 23: Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself,” Sections 1-8, Section 15

Fri., Mar. 25: Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself,” Sections 16, 20-24, 27-33

Mon., Mar. 28: Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself,” Sections 44-52

Wed., Mar. 30: Allen Ginsberg, “Howl” and “A Supermarket in California,” pp. 2540-2549

Fri., Apr. 1: Continue discussing Whitman and Ginsberg

Mon., Apr. 4: Anne Bradstreet, “The Author to Her Book,” “Before the Birth of One of

Her Children,” “To My Dear and Loving Husband,” “A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment” (pp. 119-21)

Wed., Apr. 6: John Berryman, “Homage to Mistress Bradstreet,” stanzas 1-39 (stanzas 1-

16 available at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/177880>, stanzas 16-39 in Norton, pp. 2386-91)

Fri., Apr. 8: Continue discussing Bradstreet and Berryman

Mon., Apr. 11: Cabeza de Vaca’s *Relation,* pp. 29-35

Wed., Apr. 13: Julia Alvarez, “The Mother” (from *Yo!*), pp. 2754-61

Fri., Apr. 15: Rhetorical Grammar, Day 1 (no reading)

Mon., Apr. 18: Rhetorical Grammar, Day 2 (no reading)

**Essay 3 due on Blackboard by 11:59 pm**

Wed., Apr. 20: 🡪Go over Signature Assignment (review prompt on Blackboard)

NOVEL

Fri., Apr. 22: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby,* Chapters 1-2

4 pm, Symposium on American Literature with ENGL 3340 (extra credit!), details TBA

Mon., Apr. 25: *Gatsby,* Chapters 3-4

Wed., Apr. 27: *Gatsby,* Chapters 5-6

Fri., Apr. 29: *Gatsby*, Chapter 7

**Signature Assignment proposal due on Blackboard by 11:59 pm**

Mon., May 2: *Gatsby*, Chapters 8-9

Wed., May 4: Buffer day

Fri., May 6: Student Feedback Surveys, discuss final exam

**Signature Assignment due on Blackboard by 11:59 pm**

Final Exam: Monday, May 9, 11-1:30

**Unmixed**

Appendix A: Chronological List of the Literature in Our Course

By Publication Date

Cabeza de Vaca, *Relation* 1542

Anne Bradstreet poems 1678

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life* 1845

Douglass, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” 1852

Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener” 1853

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* 1854

Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” 1855

Emily Dickinson poems 1862-3

Henry James, “Daisy Miller” 1878-79

Stephen Crane, “The Blue Hotel” 1898

Robert Frost poems 1914, 1916

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 1925

Edith Wharton, “Roman Fever” 1934

Elizabeth Bishop, “The Fish” 1946

John Berryman, “Homage to Mistress Bradstreet” 1953

Flannery O’Connor, “Good Country People” 1955

Allen Ginsberg poems 1956

Lucille Clifton, “the lost baby poem” 1972

Elizabeth Bishop, “In the Waiting Room” 1976

Lucille Clifton, “homage to my hips” 1980

Lucille Clifton , “wishes for sons” 1991

Julia Alvarez, *Yo!* 1997

Appendix B: List of Authors by Date of Birth

Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca ca. 1490-1558

Anne Bradstreet ca. 1612-1672

Henry David Thoreau 1817-1862

Frederick Douglass 1818-1895

Walt Whitman 1819-1892

Herman Melville 1819-1891

Emily Dickinson 1830-1886

Henry James 1843-1916

Edith Wharton 1862-1937

Stephen Crane 1871-1900

Robert Frost 1874-1963

F. Scott Fitzgerald 1896-1940

Elizabeth Bishop 1911-1979

John Berryman 1914-1972

Flannery O’Connor 1925-1964

Allen Ginsberg 1926-1997

Lucille Clifton 1936-

Julia Alvarez 1950-

Appendix C: The Signature Assignment

**Due dates and submission guidelines:**

Proposal due on Blackboard by midnight on April 29; the proposal is worth 10 points on your final paper (i.e., if you do not submit the outline, the highest grade you can get on your paper is a 90%). See Blackboard’s Announcements section for details on the outline as the due date approaches.

The final paper is due on Blackboard by midnight on May 6.

**Revision:**

You are welcome to submit a revision no later than 1 week after receiving comments from me. No late revisions will be accepted, and revisions should be substantially different from the original draft, not only addressing my comments but going beyond them in order to improve the paper significantly. Revisions must be accompanied by a paragraph explaining the changes you made and the steps you took in your writing process in order to revise; revisions will be accepted only if the first submission was a complete, good faith effort at the assignment. I reserve the right not to grade revisions for credit if the changes have been minor. Late point deductions on the first submission apply to the grade for the revision.

**Overview:**

The signature assignment addresses all four of the course objectives under the University’s core curriculum. **Personal responsibility**: This essay includes the integration of outside sources; it, therefore, requires students to demonstrate personal responsibility as they use the words and ideas of other writers in an accurate and ethical manner. Citing sources properly isn’t just a matter of mechanics. It’s a question of personal responsibility (with real consequences for students) that overlaps with students’ responsibility to the academic community of which they are a part. The construction of a clearly articulated thesis statement supported by a careful analysis of textual evidence demonstrates **critical thinking** and **communication skills**. The development of a well-organized essay that demonstrates the correct use of grammar and other writing mechanics and demonstrates an awareness of the how to appeal convincingly to an audience further addresses the communication objective. The critical analysis of the way the selected text engages a significant issue of social responsibility addresses the **social responsibility** outcome.

**General Requirements:**

Write a well-organized, effectively developed, 3-7-page analysis of one of the course texts. The paper should critically analyze the way the text engages a significant issue of social responsibility. Students should anchor the paper’s argument with a clearly articulated thesis statement and use careful analysis of textual evidence to support their claims.

The key to this assignment is thinking about the work of literature you choose to write on *as an argument—*that is to say, a text that engages with issues of pressing importance. Some theories of literature hold that literature exists for its own sake, separate from politics, history, and worldly concerns. *That is not the perspective this assignment adopts.* Instead, I want you to think about literature as providing vibrant commentary on the state of affairs in a turbulent world. Of course, an argument made by literature is different from other kinds of argument. Where an op-ed columnist might make an argument based on statistics, facts, and other kinds of hard evidence, a writer uses narrative, metaphor, character, imagery, and tone. In this assignment you’ll be looking at both kinds of argument side by side.

**Audience:**

Imagine that you are writing a long-form cultural think piece in a national newspaper like the *New York Times*. Your readers are well-educated, worldly people who already have some interest in the topic you’re addressing. Do not assume your readers have read the literary text you’re writing about or the sources you’re incorporating. A casual but professional tone is appropriate.

**Possible Areas of Focus:**

As your focus, choose a social, political, or historical problem addressed by one of our primary texts. The issue you choose can be historical or contemporary; you can also bring a historical issue (e.g., the struggle for emancipation or women’s rights) into conversation with a similar issue we face in the present. Possible topics in our course include, but are not limited to: social class, economic inequality, consumerism, or the pitfalls of capitalism; the #blacklivesmatter movement and/or police brutality; gender inequality in one of many forms (e.g., representations of women in popular culture, sexual double standards, rape on college campuses); debates over reproductive rights and/or parenthood; the American myth of self-invention; immigration, assimilation, and hybridity; LGBT civil rights.

**Responsible Integration of Sources:**

Students must properly integrate material from two secondary sources into their analysis in a way that gives credit to the authors whose ideas and language they are incorporating. This is not a research paper or a summary of the work of literature, but a paper in which you draw on secondary sources to communicate an interpretive argument about your chosen text through the lens of social responsibility.

**Secondary Sources:**

Students may use their secondary sources in one or more of three ways: as interlocutors in a conversation about their chosen social issue, to indicate the relevance of the issue in the present day, or to provide historical or cultural context. I suggest going with general-audience sources instead of scholarly sources.

Here is a list of credible sources:

* National newspapers (e.g., *New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today, Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star Telegram*)
* Print magazines (e.g., *The Atlantic, Harper’s, New Yorker, Time, Newsweek*)
* Online magazines (e.g., *Slate, Salon*)
* Scholarly articles (e.g., academic articles published in peer-reviewed journals; you can find citations for these articles by using the MLA International Bibliography database, JSTOR, or Project Muse—all of which UTA’s library gives you access to online)
* Scholarly books or book chapters (it’s a good bet a book is scholarly if it’s published by an academic press, such as Duke University Press; if you’re not sure, ask your instructor)
* Historical documents (e.g., old newspaper articles, letters, speeches, journal entries) from academic databases (see the History subject guide on the library website for ideas)

Students interested in using a source that isn’t listed here should check with me.

**A General Outline to Follow:**

The challenge with this essay will be transitioning between your analysis of the literature and your engagement with the secondary sources. You may structure your paper any number of ways, but make sure that you execute the following moves:

1. Draw the reader in with an intriguing introduction that establishes the importance and interest of the issue you’ll be focusing on. One surefire way to do that is to start with what someone else has said about the topic at hand. In your intro, be sure to say what text you’ll be writing about and what issue you’ll be investigating.
2. State your thesis clearly at or near the end of your introduction.
3. Undertake your analysis by moving through a series of connected claims grounded in evidence from the literary text. This step will constitute the bulk of your paper.
4. Contextualize your analysis, making it relevant to the present day (or a particular historical moment), by engaging closely with two secondary sources. You may treat those secondary sources as background, as interlocutors, or as works of literature themselves.
5. Conclude. Do not just restate your argument. Indicate why your argument matters to twenty-first century citizens of the world.

**Minimum Requirements:**

Your essay should be a Word document that is double spaced, with 1-inch margins, in 12-pt., Times New Roman (or some other easily readable) font. Follow the MLA’s recommendations for formatting, citation, and style.

In order to receive a passing grade on the signature assignment, students are expected to

1. write an essay that is at least 3 pages long, but no more than 7 (-5 points if this condition is not met)
2. foreground literary analysis in their essay
3. integrate two appropriate secondary sources (-5 points if this condition is not met)
4. have a thesis
5. have a title (-5 points if this condition is not met)
6. incorporate evidence (i.e., quotations) from the literary text
7. have a Works Cited page (-5 points if this condition is not met)

The rubric I will use to grade the Signature Assignment can be found on Blackboard.

1. I don’t consider our syllabus to be any kind of definitive statement on the greatest works of American literature, and neither should you. I am sure you could easily point out some glaring canonical omissions, and of course there is plenty of great American literature that isn’t canonical at all. But there’s only so much we can cover in a semester. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)