20\textsuperscript{th}-and 21\textsuperscript{st}-CENTURY LITERATURE AND WRITING:
NARRATIVES OF MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Senior Capstone
ENGL 4351.001
Spring 2013

Dr. Elisabeth Mermann
Office: FC 292
Phone: 825-5990
Office Hours: MW 11-12; T 4:30-5:30
elisabeth.mermann-jozwiak@tamucc.edu

On the final goal of education:
“I can teach myself now.”
Montserrat Fontes, Corpus Christi, January 9, 1999.

“Migration is part of the human condition.”
James Clifford

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The capstone course should be a culminating experience that provides an opportunity for students to review and build on their learning in the English program. You will assemble a portfolio of the best work that you’ve done while in college and conclude the course (and the program) with a project that demonstrates your ability to work independently.

The thematic focus of this capstone course is the widespread and sustained movement of peoples in the 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} centuries. We will examine U.S. migration and immigration experiences in a variety of cultural and literary texts. Our analysis will revolve around the following questions: how have these experiences been reflected in the writings by men and women whose cultural and ethnic origins are in Europe, Asia, and the Americas? What are the prevailing narrative paradigms authors use to represent them? How do writers of prose fiction, poetry, and autobiographies present the figures of the refugee, the exile, or the nomad? What issues of language, assimilation, acculturation, Americanization, dislocation do migrants/immigrants face? The goals of this section are to encourage you to see U.S. American literature in context, to foster critical cultural literacy, and to enjoy reading literature.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the semester, you will be able to
• apply professional standards in argumentation, research, and documentation;
• evaluate various uses of genre and textuality;
• create an independent research project by applying the skills of literary/cultural analysis.

CAPSTONE GOALS
Over the course of the semester, you will
• Explore course readings and issues with your peers in open and engaged discussions;
• Expand and share your knowledge of literature, contexts, and genres in relation to our thematic focus;
• Organize and reflect upon a portfolio of your college writings in three different discourse genres;
• Engage in sustained research that you will share with your classmates and use to develop your own independent project.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance
Active participation in class discussion and attendance are crucial for your success in this class. You can miss two classes without penalty. For every subsequent class you miss, two points may be deducted from your final grade.

Daily writing and responses to presentations (10 pts)

Poetry Presentation (10 pts) Since the instructor-selected readings in this course focus predominantly on narrative, students will present poetry related to the issues of migration/immigration to the class on Tuesdays (10 minutes per group). Your task is to select a poem, bring copies to class, and present the work to the class, including your research on the author (briefly) and on the poem itself. Groups must meet with me at least one week before the presentation. This will help me get to know you better and to give you as much guidance for the project as you’d like/need. On the day of the presentation, groups must turn in a paper that lists all members’ names and each person’s contribution to the project. It must also include a list of works you’ve used in your research. In the body of the paper, briefly discuss the relevance of the poem to the course materials/discussions.

Four short essays, one on each of the prose pieces (20 pts) The main purpose of this assignment is to practice writing short, concise arguments about a text that are supported with concrete textual references. All essays must have a title, a clear introduction announcing your topic and thesis, and paragraphs in which you support your argument with detail from the text. All quotes must follow MLA style and be cited as follows: "..." (Antin 39). Papers should be about one page typed, double-spaced, and carefully proofread. Unproofread papers will be returned ungraded. Essays are graded on a point scale--5 points (A); 4 points (B); etc.

Migration narrative (15 pts) This project asks you to personalize the readings by reflecting on an aspect of your own/your family’s migration (literal or metaphorical) or immigration. Where did you/your family originate? Where/When did you move from place to place? What were the factors that prompted the move? How did it affect the individuals in your family? Then write a narrative that addresses the question of how individuals experience the new environment (the people and the place). Note: you might have to do some research, perhaps through interviews with family members, to gather information.

The format: for this assignment, you may choose a genre that seems to you to be most effective in expressing what you wish to say. Examples may include, but are not limited to, letters, short story, poetry, and personal essay. Please make an informed choice of the genre and be sure to select the material you write about carefully to make for a well-focused narrative. The final submission should be about 5 pages in length and must be accompanied by a reflective cover letter that provides a rationale for the choices you’ve made.
**Research project: Literary/Cultural Analysis**, consisting of research journal (10 pts), presentation of research (10 pts), and polished paper (20 pts). The purpose of this project, which is meant to represent the culmination of what you’ve learned during your years as an English major, is for you to research a topic related to migration and immigration and to prepare a formal paper that integrates social, historical, political, with cultural/artistic/literary aspects. Your paper will be assessed by how well you demonstrate the skills essential for English majors: of literary/rhetorical analysis and argumentation, as well as research and documentation. Papers must draw on at least 15 scholarly journal articles or book chapters and may include carefully selected web sites. Papers should be 12-15 pages in length, following MLA citation and documentation format.

**Research topics:** Begin with your own interests: what do you wish to find out about issues relating to migration/immigration? What literary and/or cultural texts might give you insight into the issues? In-class readings, as well as your personal migration/immigration narratives may have generated points of interest. Consider the broad variety of topics that may be possible:

- How has the art of a certain group of immigrants begun to cross borders?
- What cultural practices have immigrants brought into the U.S.? (How) Have they been modified?
- How is immigration represented in popular culture? Consider movies such as *El Norte*, *In America*, or *Maria Full of Grace*.
- What are some of the stories, folklore, or music that arise from (im)migrant communities?
- Any aspect of the literature of migration and immigration.

**The Process:**
1. On Feb 28 you will turn in your research question, together with a brief explanation. Address the following questions: what you wish to find out? How will you go about doing so?
2. You will keep a RESEARCH JOURNAL for the remainder of this class, portions of which must be turned in each Thursday. The purpose of the journal is for you to keep track of and to evaluate your research. It should contain all the information that you need to complete your project. Use the journal each week as a space to keep track of your findings, to jot down ideas, to brainstorm, and to write for the purpose of learning/exploring. In addition, I will look for at least two pages of writing for each assignment, as noted below:
   - Week 1: Your research question will count for the first journal entry.
   - Week 2: Research proposal: what will your paper focus on? Identify, define, and describe key concepts/issues/problems. What is your hypothesis (be sure to address the literary/cultural element)?
   - Week 3: Based on your initial research, what are “the facts” relating to your topic?
   - Week 4: Evaluate your secondary (scholarly) sources: Locate at least five initial sources that relate to your project and evaluate each one: what did you learn from reading them? How do they contribute to your understanding of your topic? What are their research credentials?
   - Week 5: Write an article review: Select one article from among your scholarly sources and write a review which addresses the following issues: What is the author’s bottom-line argument and thesis? What evidence does the author use to support her/his claim? How do you assess the article? What’s useful, and what’s not?
   - Week 6: Analyze the literary/cultural text you’re working with. What does it show?
   - Week 7: Clarify your thesis: what do you wish to argue about the literary/cultural element of your choice? What evidence will you use to support your argument?
Week 8: Analyze your material: in this important step, you are to assess and interpret your findings. Balance conflicting positions. Examine biases or perspectives, rhetorical devices, etc. What are the results of your findings?

Week 9: Write a complete annotated bibliography for your project. Pay careful attention to MLA documentation style.

Week 10: Write a cover letter that addresses the learning that is reflected in your research journal. What are the strengths/weaknesses of your project?

3. Each student will give a 10-minute multi-media presentation of his/her findings during the last three weeks of the semester. I will meet with each student individually to work on revising the presentation into the final paper draft.

**Capstone portfolio** (15 pts). This assignment will be graded on completeness, and the quality and pertinence of the reflective letter/essay. Please use the final page of this syllabus as your cover sheet.

**LATE POLICY**
Late work will not be accepted unless an extension has been arranged ahead of the due date.

**GRADING**
- 99-110 pts A
- 88-98 pts B
- 77-87 pts C
- 66-76 pts D

**ACADEMIC ADVISING**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

**NOTICE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number
of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Mary Antin, *The Promised Land*
Junot Díaz, *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*
Yussef El Guindi, *Back of the Throat* (recommended)
Mohja Kahf, *E-mails from Scheherazad*
Joseph O’Neill, *Netherland*

Additional texts are available on IslandOnline. Please note that you must bring copies of all reading materials to class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment Due</th>
<th>Writing Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R 1-24</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 1-29</td>
<td>Newspaper narratives; Le, “The Boat”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1-31</td>
<td>Antin (I-VI)</td>
<td>Short Essay #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2-5</td>
<td>Antin (VII-X); Daniels (CR 212-14; 223-32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 2-7</td>
<td>Antin (XI-XIX); Riis, “How the Other Half Lives”</td>
<td>Migration narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2-12</td>
<td>Antin (XIX-XX)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 2-14</td>
<td>O’Neill (to 93)</td>
<td>Short Essay #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 2-19</td>
<td>O’Neill (94-131)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 2-21</td>
<td>O’Neill (131-200); Bourne, “Transnational America”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment Due</th>
<th>Writing Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 2-26</td>
<td>Fadiman (chapters 1-8)</td>
<td>Short Essay #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 2-28</td>
<td>Fadiman (9-11)</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3-5</td>
<td>Fadiman (12-16); Rosello, “Immigration and Hospitality”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 3-7</td>
<td>Fadiman (17-end)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3-1</td>
<td>Lahiri, “When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine” and Yamamoto, “The Legend of Miss Sasagawara”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 3-3</td>
<td>Paredes, “Ichiro Kikuchi” and Viramontes, “The Cariboo Café”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 3-19</td>
<td>Kahf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**South-North Migrations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R 3-21</th>
<th>Letters and Oral Histories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 3-26</td>
<td>Lopez, Simply María</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 3-28</td>
<td>Díaz (to 113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4-2</td>
<td>Díaz (114-165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 4-4</td>
<td>Díaz (167-275); Rodriguez, “Should We Have a National Language?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4-9</td>
<td>Díaz (276-end)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short Essay #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Journal 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Presentations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R 4-11</th>
<th>Class Conferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 4-16</td>
<td>Begin Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 4-18</td>
<td>Capstone Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4-23</td>
<td>Research Journal 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 4-25</td>
<td>Complete Research Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 4-30</td>
<td>Potluck at the Mermann-Jozwiaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 5-2</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 5-7</td>
<td>Final Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIBRARY RESOURCES

Bruce-Novoa, Juan, Retrospace
Daniels, Roger, Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life
Danquah, Meri Nana-Ama, Becoming American: Personal Essays by First-Generation Immigrant Women
Ellis, Pearl Idelia, Americanization through Homemaking
Griffin, Sarah Jasmine, Who Set You Flowin’: The African American Migration Narrative
Hart, Dianne Walta, Undocumented in L.A.: An Immigrant’s Story
Herrera-Sobek, Northward Bound: Corridos, Songs by Immigrants
Hutner, Gordon, Immigrant Voices: Twenty-Four Narratives on Becoming an American
Lisa Lowe, Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics
Ma, Sheng-Mei, Immigrant Subjectivities in Asian American and Asian Diaspora Literatures
Martinez, Ruben, Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail
Kain, Geoffrey, Ideas of Home: Literature of Asian Migration
Knippling, Alpana Sharma, New Immigrant Literatures in the U.S.
Paul, Heike, Mapping Migration: Women’s Writing and the American Immigrant Experience from the 1850’s to the 1990’s
Rushdie, Salman, Imaginary Homelands
Siems, Larry, Between the Lines: Letters between Undocumented Mexicans

NPR: Hidden Kitchens; America Eats–WPA project
PBS: P.O.V. Borders project: http://www.pbs.org/pov/borders
International Organization for Migration
Journal of American Ethnic History
CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO

Throughout the semester we’ve discussed fiction and non-fiction genres (newspaper narratives, novels, memoir, (auto-)biography, short stories, plays, oral histories, letters). In addition, you have written in different genres (literary analysis, descriptive narrative, and research project). Your task for this assignment is to choose four pieces you have written over the course of your career as an English major and write a critical reflection of them. Your portfolio is due on Tuesday, April 18. Whatever portfolio binding you use, make it simple and flat (so when stacked the portfolios won’t topple over).

Your portfolio must contain:

1. Four writings that you have done for classes in college. Clean copies (without teacher commentary/grade) are preferred. The pieces should display or exemplify a different discourse genre, with one a literary analysis, and one a research paper that requires documentation. Each submission should come from a different course. Choices can include lab reports, technical writing samples, historical research papers, creative writing, etc.

2. Introductory essay or letter, between three and four pages long, discussing and analyzing your use and understanding of genre as illustrated by the pieces in your portfolio. The objective of your introductory essay is to demonstrate your understanding of the differences, functions, audiences, and rhetorical purposes of the genres you chose. Notice: the bulk of your portfolio grade in this class will be based on this essay.

3. Data sheet--please submit this page with the information below filled out.

Name: __________________________

Class (circle one) First-year Sophomore Junior Senior
Short Title Genre-type Course/ Level Semester/ year Institution
1. ____________________  __________________  __________  __________  __________
2. ____________________  __________________  __________  __________  __________
3. ____________________  __________________  __________  __________  __________
4. ____________________  __________________  __________  __________  __________