English 2335.005—Themes and Genres in the Americas: Migration, Movement, and the Imagination

Spring 2014
MWF 8:00-8:50 a.m.
Location: Bay Hall 205

Instructor: Dr. Dale Pattison
Office: Faculty Center 255
Office Hours: MWF 9:00-9:50; 11:00-11:50 and by appointment
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Course Description

Using migration and movement across borders as its thematic focus, this course examines literatures of the Americas, seeking to demonstrate how literary and cultural imaginaries drive cultural movement. From South America to Central America to the Caribbean and to the North, dictatorial regimes and oppressive political projects have inspired people, for better or for worse, to imagine the U.S. as a land of opportunity and political freedom. The novels, films, and essays under investigation in this class will give voice to the experience of movement and migration, posing questions about citizenship, belonging, and the problems of assimilating to an alien culture. Furthermore, this class will weave together a diverse range of literature that spans across the Americas, aiming to identify cross-currents in the social and political contexts that inspire cultural diaspora. Incorporating this analytical lens to examine literature of the Americas (rather than the more traditional approach to American literature) will allow students to understand the U.S. within a broader arena of trans-cultural discourse.

Course Objectives

1. To examine the connections between literary works and their social, historical, and cultural contexts by reading texts by authors from a range of cultures and nationalities.
2. To explore the distinctive characteristics of relevant literary periods, genres, and writers.
3. To understand and use basic literary terms and concepts.
4. To develop analytic skills by close reading, class discussion, and writing.
5. To use writing as a tool for learning.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete ENGL 2335 will be able to:

1. Recognize the connections between literary works and their social, historical, and cultural contexts
2. Respond critically to literary works.
Course Texts (Hard Copies Required. No E-Books)

Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban*
Gabriel García Márquez, *Of Love and Other Demons*
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses*
Héctor Tobar, *The Tattooed Soldier*

Course Grading

The course will be structured on a 1000-point scale. The scores you receive on your assignments, exams, blackboard postings, and participation will be totaled at the end of the semester, and your final grade will be calculated based on this score. The points will be distributed as follows:

- Writing Assignment #1: 200 points
- Writing Assignment #2: 300 points
- Blackboard Postings: 100 points (25 points each)
- Participation: 100 points
- Exam 1: 150 points
- Exam 2: 150 points

Participation will be calculated based on class attendance and participation in class discussions. Students will be expected to bring their text to class every day, having read the assignment due for that day.

Class Policies

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual or academic dishonesty. Violations of academic honesty will be processed under the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases 13.02.99.C3.01 (see http://ses.tamucc.edu/grievances.html and the Student Code of Conduct http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu//assets/2013-2014StudentHandbook.pdf). All cases of academic misconduct are recorded in the student's file. Consequences are determined by the faculty member and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel. It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes

- using the work of another as your own,
- downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- using resource materials without correct documentation,
- using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation, or
- turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. English 1301 and 1302 courses and the Writing Center at CASA will review rules of academic citation. Information academic
citation is available at the Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) and/or from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Grade Appeals Process:** Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

**Policy on class attendance:** Students are allowed a maximum of six (6) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed six absences will be penalized 50 points on their final grade for every absence over the limit.

- **Note:** Students who participate in university-sanctioned activities should meet with me during the first week of classes.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please be aware that you are allowed 6 drops in your entire undergraduate career, so these decisions must be made carefully.

**If I am absent:** If I need to cancel class because my car broke down, or if I am ill, etc., I will try to get someone to post a sign. I also will try to email you all before class. However, if you come to class and I am not here by the time 15 minutes has elapsed (from when class is to start), please assume that class is canceled.

**Late Writing Projects and Exams:** All papers are due on the date listed on the syllabus. Students submitting their papers after this time will lose one letter grade for every class period that the paper is late. Students must submit their assignments via the link provided on Blackboard. Students who are absent for the midterm or final exam will receive a zero for the exam. Makeup exams will not be given.

**Electronic Devices:** Laptops and cellphones will not be permitted in class. Any student found using one of these devices will be counted absent for that day.

**Resources**

1. **Writing Center:** The Writing Center of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi provides free help for students at any stage of the writing process. Writing Center consultants are trained to work with writers one-on-one to help them find ideas, organize their thoughts,
cite sources, and succeed at all aspects of the writing task. The Writing Center works closely with faculty across campus to understand the writing projects they assign and to help students meet the expectations of those assignments. The Writing Center is located in the Center for Academic Student Achievement in CASA 112 (formerly Glasscock Center). Both drop-in and scheduled appointments are available. For more information see http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php.

2. 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 116. You can also visit their website at http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/ and contact them via e-mail at disability.services@tamucc.edu. 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.

3. Academic Advising: It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

Procedures for Posting to Blackboard

For those of you new to this system, Blackboard is an interactive forum that facilitates communication in the form of discussion boards, course documents, email, etc. For this class, I will post our writing assignment sheets, supplemental course readings, and any other items of interest to our course page. As noted above, you will be expected to contribute a minimum of four times to the discussion board, which I facilitate and monitor throughout the semester. Your posting should contain between 200 and 400 words and should critically engage the texts, following the prompt I set up for each posting. I want you to cite the text as often as possible—at least twice in each posting—in order to support your claims.

Blackboard 9.1: To log into Blackboard, go to: http://bb9.tamucc.edu. You must have a NET ID (also known as an Active Directory account) to log in. For instructions on how to get this account and more information about using Blackboard, go to: http://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html. If you need additional help at any time to access, download, or print course materials on Blackboard, please contact the Island Online (IOL) Help Desk by telephone at (361) 825-2825 or by email at iolsupport@tamucc.edu.
Reminder to English Majors

As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

Course Calendar (Subject to Change)

Unit One—Imagining the Americas

Week 1: (January 22-24)
   Wednesday
   Introduction
   Syllabus Overview
   Friday
   Jorge Luis Borges, “The South” (Blackboard)

Week 2: (January 27-31)
   Monday
   Wednesday
   Pablo Neruda, Selected Poems (Blackboard)
   Friday
   Gabriel García Márquez, Of Love and Other Demons (Chapters 1-2)

Week 3: (February 3-7)
   Monday
   Gabriel García Márquez, Of Love and Other Demons (Chapters 3-5)
   BLACKBOARD POSTING #1 DUE
   Wednesday
   Héctor Tobar, The Tattooed Soldier (1-80)
   Friday
   Héctor Tobar, The Tattooed Soldier (81-134)

Unit Two—Transnational Migrations

Week 4: (February 10-14)
   Monday
   Héctor Tobar, The Tattooed Soldier (135-202)
Wednesday
Héctor Tobar, *The Tattooed Soldier* (202-252)
MLA Tutorial

Friday
Héctor Tobar, *The Tattooed Soldier* (252-Finish)
BLACKBOARD POSTING #2 DUE

Week 5: (February 17-21)
Monday
*Sin Nombre* (dir. Cary Fukunaga)
Wednesday
*Sin Nombre* (dir. Cary Fukunaga) (cont.)
Friday
*Sin Nombre* (dir. Cary Fukunaga) (cont.)
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE**

Week 6: (February 24-28)
Monday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (1-75)
Wednesday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (75-118)
Friday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (118-165)

Week 7: (March 3-7)
Monday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (166-210)
Wednesday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (211-261)
Friday
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (264-335)

Week 8: (March 10-14)
**SPRING BREAK**

Unit 3—Circular Migrations

Week 9: (March 17-21)
Monday
**MIDTERM EXAM**
Wednesday
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (1-55)
Friday
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (57-101)
Week 10: (March 24-28)
Monday
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (105-166)
Wednesday
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (167-209)
Friday
Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban* (211-244)
BLACKBOARD POSTING #3 DUE

Week 11: (March 31-April 4)
Monday
*Before Night Falls* (dir. Julian Schnabel)
Wednesday
*Before Night Falls* (dir. Julian Schnabel)
Friday
*Before Night Falls* (dir. Julian Schnabel)

Unit Four—Border Crossings

Week 12: (April 7-11)
Monday
Gloria Anzaldúa, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness,” “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (Blackboard)
Wednesday
Sandra Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek” (Blackboard)
BLACKBOARD POSTING #4 DUE
Friday
Tutorial on Research Databases

Week 13: (April 14-18)
Monday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (1-59)
Wednesday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (59-117)
Friday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (117-151)

Week 14: (April 21-25)
Monday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (151-202)
Wednesday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (202-241)
Friday
Cormac McCarthy, *All the Pretty Horses* (241-Finish)
Week 15: (April 28-May 2)
  Monday
   *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada* (dir. Guillermo Arriaga)
  Wednesday
   *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada* (dir. Guillermo Arriaga) (cont.)
  Friday
   *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada* (dir. Guillermo Arriaga) (cont.)

Week 16: (May 5)
  Monday
   **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE**

**THE FINAL EXAM WILL BE GIVEN ON THE DAY & TIME SCHEDULED BY THE UNIVERSITY.**