Course Description

This course gives a broad overview of American literature from 1945 to the present, examining fiction, poetry, drama, and graphic novels alongside the major sociopolitical trends and movements of the period. Dramatic shifts in economics, politics, and philosophical inquiry in the postwar years engendered new ways of understanding the world in which we live, and this course asks students to contextualize these issues within and alongside literature. Postmodernism, the dominant philosophical movement emerging from this period, will provide the chief analytical lens for examining these texts, and one of the goals of the course is furnish students with a deep understanding of postmodernism and its literary offshoots. More than just developing this critical position, students will grapple with the debates surrounding the major literary texts of the past several decades, attuned to the ways in which postmodernism shapes our understandings of race, class, gender, and the practice of everyday life.

Required Texts

West, Nathanael. The Day of the Locust.
Morrison, Toni. Jazz.
Pynchon, Thomas. The Crying of Lot 49.
Silko, Leslie Marmon. Ceremony.
Vonnegut, Kurt. Slaughterhouse-Five.

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 postmodernism and to gain a deep understanding of postmodern critical theory
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 3356 will be able to:
1. Recognize the connections between literary works and their social, historical, and cultural contexts;
2. Respond critically to literary works.
3. Participate in debates that are grounded in postmodern critical theory

Course Grading

The course will be structured on a 1000-point scale. The scores you receive on your assignments, exams, blackboard postings, draft workshops, 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: 200 points
- Final Exam: 300 points
- Blackboard Discussions: 200 points (50 points each)
- Participation: 100 points

Participation will be calculated based on class attendance, participation in class discussions, and preparedness for class discussions. Reading quizzes may be factored into this grade as well. If a student is absent for a class period, he/she is not participating. 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
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in automatic failure of the course and possible expulsion from the university.

Grade Appeals
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. 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 four (4) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed four absences will be penalized fifty points on their final grade for every absence over the limit.

- If you are unable to attend class, you do not need to email me to explain the circumstances. You should contact another student in class and copy his/her notes.

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 or wise. 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.

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: 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.

Blackboard Grade Center: You will see grades for assignments, exams, and blackboard discussion postings appear on Blackboard during the semester. While these scores may be useful in tracking your grade throughout the semester, they should NOT be used to calculate your final grade. Several point categories will not appear on Blackboard (such as Participation and Reading Quizzes), and only I will have access to these scores. If you are ever concerned about your grade, visit me in my office and we can discuss the issue in person.

Statement of Academic Continuity: In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Classroom/Professional Behavior: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a
breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Resources

**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](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](http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac) 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.

**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.

**Disabilities Accommodations:** 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.

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.

**Blackboard 9.1:** To log into Blackboard, go to: [http://bb9.tamucc.edu](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](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.
Course Calendar

Week 1: (June 1-4)
Monday
Introduction
Syllabus Overview
Adrienne Rich, Selected Poems (2651-2664)
Sylvia Plath, Selected Poems (2700-2711)
Tuesday
Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*

Wednesday
Allen Ginsberg, “Howl” (2576-2584)
John Cheever, “The Swimmer” (2250-2257)
Blackboard Posting #1 DUE 1 p.m.
Thursday
Nathanael West, *The Day of the Locust*

Week 2: (June 8-11)
Monday
Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (1-79)
Blackboard Posting #2 DUE 1 p.m.
Tuesday
Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (80-Finish)
Wednesday
Flannery O'Connor, “Good Country People” (2529-2543)
Thursday
Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (Chapters 1-4)

Week 3: (June 15-18)
Monday
Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (Chapters 5-Finish)
**Writing Assignment #1 Due**
Tuesday
Toni Morrison, *Jazz*
Wednesday
Toni Morrison, *Jazz*
Blackboard Posting #3 Due 1 p.m.
Thursday
Toni Morrison, *Jazz*

Week 4: (June 22-25)
Monday
Gloria Anzaldúa, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness,” “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (2936-2955)
Sandra Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek” (3164-3171)
Tuesday
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1-86)

**Wednesday**
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (86-180)

**Blackboard Posting #4 Due 1 p.m.**

**Thursday**
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (180-Finish)

**Week 5: (June 29-July 2)**

**Monday**
Raymond Carver, “Cathedral” (2828-2838)
John Updike, “Separating” (2713-2720)

**Tuesday**
Peer Review Workshop

**Wednesday**
Selections from “Writing in a Time of Terror” (3205-3219)

**Thursday**

**Last Day of Class**
**Final Exam**
**Writing Assignment #2 Due 1 p.m.**