English 4306.001  
Major American Authors: Faulkner to Morrison  
Fall 2014  
TR 11-12:15 P.M.  
CI-112

Instructor: Dr. Dale Pattison  
Office: Faculty Center 255  
Office Hours: W 12:30-1:30; T/TH 12:30-2:30 and by appointment  
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Course Description

William Faulkner and Toni Morrison are two of the most prominent voices in twentieth-century American literature and are often, appropriately, taught and read alongside one another. By examining the thematic and stylistic similarities and differences in their work, readers may identify and probe the two authors’ shared lineage of literary experimentation and influence. The relationship between these writers and their work is more than just coincidental, as Morrison, herself, frequently remarks on the profound influence Faulkner has had on her writing. This course traces Faulkner’s literary legacy, identifying Morrison as the successor to his radical stylistic experiments and his complex (and at times problematic) treatment of racial dynamics in the South. More than just discussing the relationship between these writers, this course uses Faulkner and Morrison to navigate the movement from modernism to postmodernism in American literature. Indeed, through their experimentation with narrative form, Faulkner and Morrison did more than merely position themselves within their respective literary periods; they defined these periods. Finally, examining these two writers, students will gain a deep understanding of how the novel as a form evolved over the course of the twentieth century.

Course Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>William Faulkner</th>
<th>Toni Morrison</th>
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| *The Sound and the Fury*  
*Light in August*  
*Absalom, Absalom!* | *Jazz*  
*Beloved*  
*Song of Solomon* |

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: 300 points  
Writing Assignment #2: 400 points  
Blackboard Postings: 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. Students will be expected to bring their text to class every day, having read the assignment due for that day.

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 cultural backgrounds.
2. To explore the distinctive characteristics of modernism, postmodernism, and the novel as a form.
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 4306 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. Communicate their ideas through cogent critical analysis of the course texts.

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.tamu.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 one letter grade 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.
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

UNIT ONE—WILLIAM FAULKNER

WEEK 1—September 2nd, 4th
Class Introduction; Syllabus Overview; Reading Assignments
In-Class Discussion/Activity

WEEK 2—September 9th, 11th
William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*

WEEK 3—September 16th, 18th
William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*
Blackboard Posting #1 Due Thursday 11:00 a.m.

WEEK 4—September 23rd, 25th
William Faulkner, *Light in August*

WEEK 5—September 30th, October 2nd
William Faulkner, *Light in August*

WEEK 6—October 7th, 9th
William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*
Blackboard Posting #2 Due Thursday 11:00 a.m.

WEEK 7—October 14th, 16th
William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!*
**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE THURSDAY 11:00 a.m.**

UNIT TWO—TONI MORRISON

WEEK 8—October 21st, 23rd
Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*

WEEK 9—October 28th, October 30th
Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*
Blackboard Posting #3 Due Thursday 11:00 a.m.

WEEK 10—November 4th, 6th
Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

WEEK 11—November 11th, 13th
Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

WEEK 12—November 18th, 20th
Toni Morrison, *Jazz*

Blackboard Posting #4 Due Tuesday 11:00 a.m.

**WEEK 13—November 25th.**
Toni Morrison, *Jazz*

**WEEK 14: December 2nd**
LAST DAY OF CLASS

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE 11:00 a.m.**