English 3355.002: American Literature: Late 19th and Early 20th Century

Course Meeting Time: TR 11-12:15  
Course Location: BH 207  
Instructor: Kevin Concannon  
Office: Faculty Center 282  
Office Hours: TR: 10:00-11:00; M: 10:00-12:00, W: 10:00-11:00 and by appointment  
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Spring 2016

Course Description: This course is designed to provide an overview of American literature from the Civil War to World War II. While the class is predominately organized in terms of this chronological framework, as we begin reading works about the Civil War and the Reconstruction and close the semester by reading literature of the 1930s and 1940s, each week is also organized thematically, making it difficult to maintain this timeline. We will often move forward and back in time, as well as look to complicate the often East Coast bias to American literature and explore the literature of the Midwest and the Southwest.

Required Texts:

Nella Larsen. *Passing*  
Paul Lauter (ed.) *The Heath Anthology of Literature* Volume 2 or Volume C (any edition should be acceptable. If you are not sure, please check with me before buying it)  
Américo Paredes. *George Washington Gómez*  
Mark Twain. *Pudd’nhead Wilson*

Course Requirements:

Class Participation: 10 points (5%)  
Midterm and Final Exam: 50 points each (50%)  
Collaborative Teaching Activity: 15 points (7.5%)  
2 Short Analytical Essays: 10 points each (10%)  
Research Essay: 20 points (10%)  
Newspaper Assignment: 15 points (7.5%)  
Class Work/Quizzes: 20 points (10%)

1. Attendance: Much of this class will be conducted as a mixture of discussion and lecture, so you should come to class every day and be prepared to talk about the assigned readings. You may miss two classes without penalty. After that, three points will be deducted from your final grade for every class you miss.  
2. Midterm and Final Exam (SLO #1, #3, #4): The exams will include essay questions and identifications of quotes/terms taken from the readings and class discussion. The final exam will not be cumulative but will include an essay question that addresses the readings throughout the semester.  
3. Collaborative Teaching Activity (SLO #1, #2, #4): Working with one other student in the class, you both will spend a total of 10-15 minutes discussing/analyzing an assigned class reading. Your presentation should make clear the historical context of the work as well as explain or identify important terms, themes or ideas. Please do not read from a prepared essay or from a PowerPoint presentation (though PowerPoint can be used). You should encourage class involvement by asking questions, providing handouts etc. Please feel free to meet with me before your presentation.
4. Analytical Essays (SLO #1, #3, #4, #5): The essays should be 2 pages in length and should use the MLA format. You should keep your use of secondary sources to a minimum (or not at all).

5. Research Essay (SLO #1, #3, #4, #5): This essay of 6-8 pages is due near the end of the semester and will allow you the opportunity to expand on one of the short essays you wrote earlier in the semester or to analyze one of the other texts in class. You must incorporate secondary sources in this essay and follow the MLA format.

6. Newspaper Assignment (SLO #3): In this assignment, you want to write a newspaper editorial or a cycle of poems that creates a call to action. You want to encourage your readers to change their opinion about an event (or a way of thinking) that occurred, or was occurring, in the late 19th or early 20th Century. You will also include a reflection letter that will explain the research you have done and the rhetorical choices you have made.

7. Class Work (SLO #1 and #4): There will be occasional in-class assignments that will be handed in for a grade. The assignments cannot be made up, but there will be opportunities in class for extra credit.

Course Evaluation:

180-200: A
160-179: B
140-159: C
120-139: D
119 and below: F

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to analyze the meaning of an “American” literature from a multicultural perspective in order to understand the changing makeup of national identity.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate presentation skills and the ability to lead class discussion.
3. Students will be able to write critically and creatively in order to explore literature.
4. Students will be able to analyze literature within a larger social, historical and cultural context.
5. Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of MLA citation.

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.

Technology in the Classroom:

You may use computers and e-readers in this class. If their use becomes disruptive to others in the class, however, you will be asked to turn them off.

Late Assignments:

Please contact me by e-mail if an emergency arises and you cannot attend class. I will not accept late assignments unless you have made previous arrangements (or if it states in the syllabus that a late
assignment will not be accepted). An “Incomplete” will be given at my discretion only and must involve
exceptional circumstances. To qualify for consideration, you must have satisfactorily completed two-
thirds of the course requirements.

**Academic Integrity/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 a failing grade.

**Dropping a Class:**

I hope 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.

**Classroom/professional behavior:**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of
the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from
repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal
government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to
all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability.
Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Grade Appeal Process:**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student
Grade Appeal Procedures (available at
[http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02_99_C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02_99_C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf)). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the
College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance
and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**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.

**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.

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.

**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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit System. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Course Schedule**

*Minor changes might be made during the semester

**Unless otherwise stated, the readings presented below are required. Occasionally we may not cover one of the readings listed in class; even so, these readings may still appear on the midterm or final.

**Week 1: Introductions and Class Overview (January 19)**

**Week 2: Critical Views of the Civil War/Politics of the Reconstruction (Jan. 24/26)**
*Readings: Stephen Crane “A Mystery of Heroism” (handout), Ambrose Bierce “Chickamauga” (625-629), and Booker T. Washington from *Up From Slavery* (handout).

**Week 3: Politics of the Reconstruction con’t (Jan. 31/Feb. 2)**

**Week 4: Realism (Feb. 7/9)**

**Analytical Essay due: Feb. 7**
Week 5: Realism con’t (Feb. 14/16)
*Readings: “Daisy Miller” con’t and begin reading Mark Twain *Pudd’nhead Wilson* (novel).

Week 6: Twain con’t (Feb. 21/March 2)
*Readings: Finish reading *Pudd’nhead Wilson*
Analytical Essay due: March 2

Week 7: Naturalism (March 7/9)
*Readings: Stephen Crane “The Open Boat” (1211-1229), Frank Norris “Fantaisie Printanière” (593-600)
Midterm: March 9

Week 8: Spring Break: March 13-17

Week 9: Regional Fiction and Beyond (March 21/23)
*Readings: Sarah Orne Jewett “A White Heron” (344-352), Mary E. Wilkins Freeman “A New England Nun” (385-394), and Pauline Hopkins “A Dash for Liberty” (handout)

Week 10: Manifest Destinies (March 28/30)
*Readings: Newspaper selections: Rafael Serra, Luisa Capetillo and Sara Estela Ramirez (955-961; handout) and “Plan de San Diego” (963; handout), “Gregorio Cortez” and “Jacinto Treviño” (538-545), Paredes, *George Washington Gómez* (novel)

Speaker Series: Dr. Karl Jacoby Presentation (Extra Credit)

Week 11: US-Mexico Border (April 4/6)
*Readings: Paredes, *George Washington Gómez*

Week 12: Immigration and Modern US (April 11/13)
*Readings: *George Washington Gomez* con’t and Mary Antin from *The Promised Land* (945-952)
Newspaper Assignment due: April 11

Week 13: The Harlem Renaissance (April 18/20)
*Readings: Alain Locke “The New Negro” (handout), Claude McKay “If We Must Die” (handout) and Countee Cullen “Yet Do I Marvel” (handout). Begin reading Nella Larsen’s *Passing* (novella)

Week 14: Larsen con’t. (April 25/27)
*Readings: Finish reading *Passing*

Research Essay due: April 25

Week 15: Final Exam May 2