ENGL–4351.001 Senior Capstone:  
The Multiethnic Press and Its Imaginary Worlds.

Dr. Sarah H. Salter  
Sarah.Salter@tamucc.edu  
Office: Faculty Center 256  
Office Hours: Mon/Wed 3-5.30pm  
Tues. 10-11am & by appointment

“It had always seemed to him that newspapers, as he knew them,  
were totally unrelated to literature as he had always dreamed of it. . .”  
-Edith Wharton.

Course Description.  
This senior capstone will use texts written about or published in historical periodicals to explore the overlap of material and imaginative multiethnic history in the United States. As advanced English majors, students will use historical periodicals—and texts about them—to analyze issues of form, medium/genre, audience, purpose, context, aesthetic marketplace, community building, and social activism.  
Authors include Frederick Douglass, Martin Delany, Fanny Fern, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mexicana journalists including Catalina Dulché Escalante and Andrea Villareal, and others.

Learning Outcomes.  
Student Goals for the Capstone Class:  
• Apply context-specific standards in argumentation, research and documentation  
• Evaluate various uses of genre  
• Create an independent research project by applying the skills of textual and cultural analysis

English Department Goals for the Capstone Class:  
• Explore course readings and issues with peers  
• Expand and share knowledge of literature, contexts and genres  
• Organize and reflect upon a writing portfolio in four different genres  
• Engage in sustained research for an individual argumentation and research project.

Required Texts  
Assignments. All points part of a 1000 total for the course
Capstone Portfolio: 15%
Reading Journal: 15% (6 @ 2.5%) 
Editorial Essay: 20%
Periodicals and Pedagogy Project (Major Research Project): 50% 
  Summary and Selection (Brainstorming Phase): 15%
  Context and Formal Analysis (Directed Analysis Phase): 15%
Final Presentation: 20%

Assignments: Brief Overview
Capstone Portfolio. This assignment will be graded on its completeness, and the quality and pertinence of the reflective letter/essay.

Reading Journal. Your reading journal encourages your engagement over time with various texts in our course. Each entry will pose a question or identify an interpretive “problem” in the text and then attempt to work through that problem as you read. The journal entry format develops and rewards active reading.

Editorial Essay. In this assignment, you will inhabit the voice of a newspaper editor in order to present a position, explore an issue, or propose an intervention.

Periodicals and Pedagogy Project. The major project for Senior Capstone SP2020 is a periodical-based research project that includes several stages. In your Final Presentation, you will present a single historical periodical that you argue is an important and valuable teaching tool for students, scholars, or other intellectual communities. In the earlier phases (Summary/Selection and Context/Form), you will move from an overview of several periodicals to a deeper dive with the periodical of your choice.

Specific Course Policies.
Class Participation. Success in literary and cultural criticism requires good communication and productive interaction, so attending class and contributing usefully to discussion are important parts of the final grade in this class. It will be difficult, if not utterly impossible, to retain the important aspects of class discussion without some textual marking and active reading practices, so bring the appropriate text to class every day and be ready to write in it. Students who are routinely without hard copies (either bound books or, when appropriate, printouts) will lose participation points. While you need not contribute to class discussion on every single day we meet, every student should arrive to class prepared by having done the reading and considered a question or two about the text. Asking informed and productive question is as important as answering them!
During the course of the semester, I will give unannounced reading quizzes and require assorted extra activities, such as mini-presentations on passages of text or work with secondary critical material. All such activities will count toward the class participation grade.

If you cannot afford the texts in this course, please see me and we can address questions of textbook access together. If you anticipate participation being for you a source of anxiety, please speak with me about some strategies we can employ together.

Course Readings. Studying American literature in a serious way means getting to enjoy the pleasures of beautiful writing and the insights of sophisticated minds. It also means confronting violent histories, especially histories of race, sex, and labor. Our readings include accounts of physical abuses, rapes, and other harms, as well as literally dozens of instances of racist epithets. We will talk openly about how hard it can be to read this work, but all assigned readings are required. Also important is your willingness to engage thoughtfully, generously, and sympathetically with your peers in this learning community. Please see Professor Salter to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your own participation in this course.

Class Attendance. Students are allowed a maximum of three (3) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed 3 absences will be penalized .05 points on their final grade for every absence over the limit. Additionally:

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

For more detail, consult TAMU-CC’s “General Academic Policies and Regulations.” http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=177

Communication. As members of a learning community, everyone is expected to be up-to-date and responsible for any changes or additions to the course schedule. I will be using your TAMU-CC email, through Blackboard, to send messages about readings, assignments, and assorted matters to the class throughout the semester. It is imperative to check email regularly and stay aware of what is happening in and outside of the classroom. I will also take my communication responsibility to you seriously: if I have not responded to an email within 24 hours, do not hesitate to follow up. Be advised that emails sent after 10pm will not be read until the following day.

Technology. There will often be required supplementary readings posted to Blackboard; these should be printed out on hard copy, or students can bring a digital reading device, such as a Kindle, to class. The use of laptops in class has been found to lower course grades for the students who use them (see this article, one of several: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/05/16/why-smart-kids-shouldnt-use-laptops-in-class/)

Thus, laptops and tablets will not be considered appropriate digital reading device for class; students using laptops, tablets, or cell phones during class will be considered absent for the day.

Work Policies. All late work will lose 1/3 of a letter grade each day for as long as the assignment continues to be overdue. Students must complete all major assignments (as listed in the syllabus) in order to pass the course.
**General Educational Policies.**

**Basic Needs Statement.** Insufficient basic needs—food, a safe living space—can affect your performance in classes and make your university experience more challenging. If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or you lack a safe and stable place to live, you might consider several resources on campus.

- Contact the Division of Student Engagement and Success for support. Specifically, the office of Student Assistance provides consultations, resource management, and institutional support for “extenuating circumstances.” Their website is here: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html). The Student Assistance Coordinator is Kristeen Gonzalez. UC318, M-F 8AM-5PM. 361-825-2612
- If you do not have access to or cannot afford sufficient food, be aware that “Izzy’s Food Pantry” provides on-campus access to food. Find more information here: [http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/](http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/)
- If you feel comfortable doing so, please talk with me and/or your other professors. We may be able to assist.

**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.

**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.

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct.** TAMU-CC identifies “Academic Misconduct” as “engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.” Specifically, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the act of using someone else’s words and ideas without attribution. The TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct defines Plagiarism as “Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge.

*Examples:*
- Using another’s work from print, web or other sources without acknowledging the source.
- Quoting from a source without citation.
- Using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgement of the source.
- Using a past assignment the student has completed as a portion of a new assignments, without providing citation. Please note that without instructor permission, this is also considered a multiple submission violation.

We will discuss MLA citation style and the appropriate use of academic sources and conventions throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions about academic misconduct and academic integrity at anytime. If you are discovered plagiarizing you will automatically receive an "F" for the paper, or depending on the severity, for the class, and will be reported to the appropriate officials for further disciplinary action. See the TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct for more detail. http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html

**Dropping a Class.** Although I hope we will learn together for the course of this semester, sometimes a student must drop a course. Please see me if you are considering doing so. 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. April 10 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**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.

**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.

**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
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. 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 College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Campus Carry. Beginning August 1, 2016, it is legal in the State of Texas for “a handgun license holder to carry a concealed handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education.” As a state institution of higher learning, Texas A&M–Corpus Christi must recognize and abide by the Campus Carry law, which limits concealed carry to those over the age of 21 who hold the appropriate permit. By law, employees of TAMUCC cannot restrict permit holders, under the appropriate circumstances, from carrying a firearm on campus (with the exception of university restricted zones, which are clearly marked). I hope that you will consider participating in our learning community’s safe-space mentality in the classroom and my office. If you have concerns about this law and its effect on your learning experience, you can speak to your professor, a representative of the office of Student Engagement and Success, an employee of Campus Security, or a member of the ICARE community. For more information about this policy, please consult the TAMUCC website at http://campuscarry.tamucc.edu/ and http://www.tamus.edu/campus-carry-rules/

Proposed Schedule.  
NB: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule as necessary

Week 1  

Week 2  
M. 1/28 “An Narrative of the Interesting Origins and (Somewhat) Surprising Developments in African American Print Culture”  
W. 1/30 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom

Week 3  
M. 2/4 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom  
W. 2/6 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom  
Capstone Portfolio due

Week 4  
M. 2/11 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom  
W. 2/13 Douglass, from The North Star

Week 5  
M. 2/18 Delany, Blake
W. 2/20 Delany, *Blake*
Reading Journal due: 3 entries/6

Week 6
M. 2/25 Delany, *Blake*
W. 2/27 Editorships

Week 7
W. 3/5 Poe, “How to Write a Blackwood Article” and “A Predicament”
Editorial Essay due

~SPRING BREAK. March 9-13~

Week 9
M. 3/17 Fern, *Ruth Hall*
W. 3/19 Fern, *Ruth Hall*

Week 10
M. 3/24 Gruesz, from *Ambassadors of Culture*
W. 3/26 Coronado, from *A World Not to Come*
Summary & Selection due

Week 11
M. 3/31 Assorted female journalists, from *Mestiza Rhetorics*
W. 4/2 Assorted female journalists, from *Mestiza Rhetorics*

Week 12
M. 4/7 from Mitchell, *Living with Lynching*
W. 4/9 Ida B. Wells, Assorted

Week 13
W. 4/16 “Chronicling White America”
Context & Form Analysis due

Week 14
M 4/21 from Blue Pencils and Hidden Hands
W. 4/23 from Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the 19thC West

Week 15
M. 4/28
W. 4/30 Course Conclusion
Final Presentation due

Periodical Presentations: Finals Week