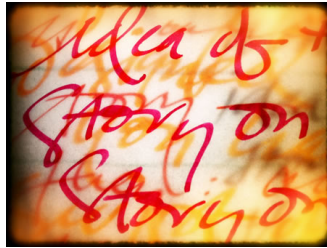


ENGL 185: The Dangers of a Single Story Fall 2015



Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Mirja Lobnik
Email: mlobnik@emory.edu
Office: Language Hall 107
Office Hours: M/W/F 10:45-11:45 and by appointment

Sections

9A – M/W/F 9:30-10:35, Tarbutton Green
12B – M/W/F 12:00-1:05, Seney Hall 310
2A – M/W/F 2:30-3:35, Seney Hall 310

Course Description

In recent years, storytelling has (re)burst onto the scene in ways that challenge us to explore the intersections between history, literary studies, and the sciences. Inviting you to read and write across different genres and media, this course examines the human drive to give observations and experiences a meaningful narrative shape. You will read and view material with an eye and ear to the manner in which different markers such as race, gender, and ethnicity shape one's sense of self, community, and place, and, by extension, the stories we tell. In our analyses, we will examine our role as readers, learn what it means to read critically, and explore the possibilities of listening as an essential mode of reading, writing, and knowing. Course materials will include two novels, poetry, creative non-fiction, and a documentary. Class work will involve contributions to class discussions, two literary analyses, a research project, a reflective essay, along with lower-stakes writing assignments such as reading responses and in-class writing. The course is designed to help you hone close reading, listening, and verbal skills, gain confidence in generating questions, formulating responses, and crafting arguments, and understand how effective communication balances multiple modes of expression.

Student Learning Outcomes

- *Critical Reading*
 - Consider stylistic and formal qualities of texts (e.g. tropes, diction, syntax, and structure), but also ideology, philosophy, historical context, and material conditions of texts.
 - Engage with both what the author says and how the author says it.
 - Make connections between texts and your own knowledge and experiences.
 - Develop critical ability and vocabulary necessary to “read” cultural texts that include not only literature but also other media such as art and film.
- *Critical Writing*
 - Argument: Craft a purposeful stance on an issue, persuasively organize ideas, and support claims with evidence in order to engage in ongoing intellectual conversations.
 - Process: Plan, draft, revise, edit. Offer and receive feedback on work in progress.
- *Research*: Find and use evidence in support of a stance and in rebuttal to counterarguments using library and other credible resources, and document your sources.
- *Oral expression*: Articulate ideas clearly and persuasively.

Instructor's Research Interests

Comparative American Studies; Global Anglophone Literature; Indigenous Literatures; Ecocriticism; Sound Studies; Memory Studies; Multimodal Composition.

Instructor's Teaching Philosophy

In my courses, I strive to provide you with an overall conceptual framework, while encouraging you to think independently and creatively. I put strong emphasis on dialogue, collaboration, and multimodal pedagogies that integrate different composing modalities such as speech, music, sound, and image, to help you become critical thinkers and effective communicators. One of my main goals as a teacher of literature and composition is to "fine tune your ears" to the oral dimensions of writing that show us not only how texts are structured but also how they are experienced and received.

Staying in Touch

Email is an integral part of class communication. While the syllabus serves as a main guide for class preparation, I will send more detailed explanations or instructions via email. You are therefore required to regularly check your Emory email account for course announcements and updates. Should you rely on an alternate email service, it is your responsibility to forward those Emory emails accordingly. When emailing me, please keep the following guidelines in mind: use an appropriate subject line for your message, always start your message with an appropriate greeting such as "Dear Professor Lobnik" or "Dr. Lobnik," use a professional and respectful tone, sign your name, and proofread your message before sending. I respond to email within 24 hours of receipt. Generally, I do not respond to email over the weekend.

Required Materials and Resources

The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse, Louise Erdrich: available at the bookstore.

American Experience: We Shall Remain (episode 1: "After the Mayflower"): available on Amazon Prime Videos, YouTube, and on reserve in the library.

Other readings are available as PDFs on Blackboard under "Course Documents." The title of each PDF includes the author's last name and short title of the overall piece, which matches the information listed in the schedule below. Other course materials, including the latest version of the syllabus, detailed assignment prompts, and links to relevant web sites will also be available on Blackboard.

You are expected to bring a copy of the required readings or writing assignment to each class (you may be asked to print out PDF files listed on the syllabus). If you repeatedly come to class without easily accessible readings, I reserve the right to lower your participation grade by 10 points.

Note about Sensitive Material

Please note that this course contains some material that is sexually explicit, politically controversial, and religiously sensitive. In addition, there may be readings and videos that include graphic language or violence. The purpose of the course is to engage intellectually with these matters in an academic framework of scholarly inquiry. While you are encouraged to respect the diverse sensibilities in the classroom, discussions may be frank. If such content may be a concern for you, you may wish to consider registering for another course.

Digital Tools

We will be using a number of digital tools to complete work for this course such as Blackboard. In the event I don't specify a particular tool for a particular project, deciding which tool(s) to use and acquiring proficiency with it/them will be your responsibility.

Additional Required Materials

Laptop Computers: You are required to bring your laptops to class, but keep them closed and/or put away until I ask you to open them. In past classes, laptops have been too much of a distraction for too many students. We will use them for in-class exercises and group activities, but not every day. If you are in the habit of using your laptop to take notes, you will have to make other arrangements in my class. Students who persist in using their laptops, their smart-phones, or similar devices with internet capabilities without the instructor's authorization will be counted absent.

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint/Prezi: You must compose all written portions of assignments in Microsoft Word, and create the drafts for your audio essay in Microsoft PowerPoint or Prezi.

A flash drive, Dropbox, or another storage device for saving documents.

Major Assignments

Throughout the semester you will have reading assignments, in-class writing activities, and formal deadlines for artifacts.

READING RESPONSES

- You will write 10 reading responses in this course.
- There are 14 opportunities to complete a response, but you need to submit only 10 responses.
- I will provide a detailed handout for this assignment on the second day of class.

LITERARY ANALYSES

- You will compose two 4-5 page essays (1000-1250 words) that develop a well-supported argument in response to Edward Abbey's "Down the River" and Louise Erdrich's *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*.
- The essays have to be well-structured, advance claims, and present clear arguments in support of those claims.
- The assignment is designed to help you learn how to articulate a clear thesis, organize your thoughts logically, and support ideas with textual evidence.
- The assignment requires you to decide what parts of a text are worthy of deeper study and to integrate ideas from at least one secondary source (a journal article or book chapter that discusses Abbey's/Erdrich's text) in a cohesive fashion.
- You are required to take one of the two essays to the Writing Center. You should attach the Writing Center tutor's comment sheet to your final draft.
- Papers should be double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and typed in 12-point Times New Roman font.
- You will submit a first draft which will be read and critiqued by one of your peers in class on the due date.
- I will provide detailed handouts for these assignments well in advance of the due date (see syllabus).

RESEARCH PROJECT

- During the second half of the course, you will research a topic of your choosing related to the assigned readings.
- Using selected audio podcasts as a guide, you will produce a 2:50 and 3:00 minute long audio podcast that offers a mix of compelling analysis and insightful commentary on how your research relates to ideas and concepts that surfaced in the assigned readings.
- The assignment requires you to select both a narrow focus that will allow you to present a compelling argument in a short span of time and a format that best communicates the message you seek to convey.
- You will also be asked to incorporate research from at least 2 secondary sources (e.g., articles, books, etc.) to help support your claims.
- In addition to your audio file, the project involves two components due at various points in the second half of the semester: a podcast proposal; an in-class presentation of your project (you are required to use an application such as PowerPoint or Prezi that allows you to include quotations and/or audio as evidence for your claims).
- I will provide a detailed handout for this assignment well in advance of the due date (see syllabus).

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

- You will compose a 3-4 page essay (750-1000 words) that makes an argument about your work this semester, discussing readings/viewings and assignments.
- I will provide a detailed handout for this assignment well in advance of the due date (see syllabus).

PARTICIPATION

The participation component of your grade will ultimately be determined by regular and meaningful contributions to class discussions. In other words: Get involved. Question. Probe. Share relevant ideas and observations. Refer to relevant articles, books, and websites. Offer your own experiences. Make connections between what we are discussing in class and what you hear elsewhere (in other classes, on websites, in news media, etc.). Active, productive participation is worth 15% of your grade, but it will also make the class more interesting and enjoyable. Feel free to ask me how I think you are doing. I expect everyone to contribute to class discussion at least once per class. I realize this is easy for some and harder for others. Progress is taken into consideration when deciding grades.

Here is a rough breakdown of how participation is calculated:

A (100-90 points):

- Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g. readings, course material, discussions, experiences etc.).
- Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material; for example, puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.
- Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material, and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate etc.
- Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement both in class discussions and group projects.
- Demonstrates "active" listening via eye contact, nodding, smiling, and taking notes.

B (89-80 points):

- Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.
- Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) to class.
- Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.
- Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement both in class discussions and group projects.
- Demonstrates "active" listening via eye contact, nodding, smiling, raising eyebrows, and taking notes.

C (79-70 points):

- Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.
- Offers straightforward information (e.g. straight from the case or reading), without elaboration, or does so very infrequently (perhaps once a class).
- Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.
- Demonstrates sporadic involvement.
- Unprepared for peer review or group meetings.
- Occasionally sleeps in class.
- Might use phone or laptop for purposes not related to class.

D (69-60 points):

- Disruptive (e.g. talking while I am talking, sleeping, or engaging in any other form of distracting behavior).
- Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.

F (59-0 points):

- Disruptive (e.g. talking while I am talking, sleeping, or engaging in any other form of distracting behavior).
- Rarely pays attention.
- Fails to collaborate with group members on group projects.

Oxford College Writing Center

You are required to take assigned essays to the Writing Center. You may do so at any stage in the writing process, but the Writing Center director and I strongly advise you not to wait until the day before the essay is due. You could go for help to get started, to organize and develop your ideas in a rough draft, or to learn to recognize and correct errors in grammar and punctuation in a revised draft.

Fall 2015 hours are Sunday-Thursday, 3-11 pm. The center is located on the second floor of the library. To make an appointment, visit: <http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/centers-institutes-programs/writing-center/> When you go to your appointment, make sure that, in addition to your draft, you have a copy of your assignment with you, as well as the book(s) you are using in that assignment. Ask the tutor for assistance on specific issues—s/he is not there (and is not allowed) to proofread your work but to guide you towards a clearer expression of your ideas.

Grading

You must complete every stage of a project in order to receive a satisfactory (C or better) grade on that project. Failure to complete any stage (draft, peer review, etc.) of a project will result in an incomplete project and an unsatisfactory grade (D or F) on that assignment. All assignments must be handed in for a grade in the class.

Grades

Your grade in the course will be based on a 100-point system. The point-breakdown for projects is as follows:

Literary Analyses	30
Research Project	20
Reading Responses	20
Reflective Essay	20
Class Participation	10

The grading scale is as follows: A 100-92; A- 91-90; B+ 89-88; B 87-82; B- 81- 80; C+ 79-78; C 77-72; C- 71-70; D+ 69-68, D 67-60, F 59 and below.

Note about Attendance

I expect you to attend every class. If you are a student who is likely to miss many classes or to be tardy on a regular basis, this class will not be a good choice for you. For those students who are eager to engage in critical analysis, to perform independent research, to think creatively, and to share work and collaborate with peers in a workshop setting, this class will most likely be an excellent fit. Successful work will display a strong grasp on readings and concepts explored in class. Also, your community of peers will be invaluable in helping you create and revise your projects in workshops.

I will allow only three absences without penalty, so please plan accordingly. For each absence beyond three, you will lose 2 points off your final grade average. For example, you have a 90 average at the end of term, but you were absent 5 times total. Because of the 2 excessive absences, you would lose 4 points on that average, leading to an 86 for the course.

That said, please talk to me in advance about accommodations for religious holidays/observances.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for contacting a classmate to get the information you missed. "I missed the last class and didn't know what to do" is an unacceptable excuse. I will not bring handouts you missed to the next class. You will also be expected to arrive prepared at the next class. Don't rely solely on the syllabus for work that is due, as the syllabus is subject to change. Make several reliable contacts in the class ASAP.

Surfing the web, emailing, texting, or talking on the phone during class time automatically negates any participation points earned during class that day. Unless cell phones are being used for class work (e.g., recording an oral presentation), they must be turned off during class. Although sometimes unavoidable, arriving to class late is disruptive. Students habitually arriving late to class (more than four late arrivals) will begin to accrue absences (one absence for every two tardies). In the same context, students are to remain for the entire class. Therefore, leaving the class early will count as a late arrival.

Etiquette

As a general rule, everyone in this class should treat everyone else with respect, and all students should follow the student code of conduct. Technology use in-class should be related to what we are doing in class. Set your mobile phone to vibrate. Do not answer your mobile phone unless it appears to be an emergency, e.g., the call is from a child or elder care provider or a parent who would not call during class except in case of emergency. Do not engage with social media or email unless I specifically request that you do so as part of our in-class work.

Writing Format and Resources

Word-process your essays and use the Modern Language Association (MLA) format and conventions for acknowledging sources. Online writing resources include <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/> and <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/1/>

All writing assignments must be typed, double spaced, and in twelve point font. Margins should not be greater than 1" left and right, 1" top and bottom. These should be submitted through Blackboard but, in addition, in some instances, you may need to provide a hard copy. I will let you know when this is the case.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted in this course. You will be responsible for either bringing completed assignments to class, as directed, or uploading them to Blackboard by the specified deadline. Unless you speak to me 48 hours in advance of the deadline and I approve an extension, this rule applies. Failure to meet the given deadline will result in a zero for the assignment.

Note on Student Work

Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford College and Emory College faculty and staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

Honor Code

<http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/student-services/student-honor-code/>

The Honor Code applies to all assignments, in and out of the classroom. All work in this course must be entirely your own. The bottom line: don't use someone else's ideas or words without proper citation. (This includes websites like SparkNotes!) I am always happy to discuss with you when something needs to be acknowledged and properly cited, but it is up to you to see me before your written work is due to ask your questions about documenting sources.

Office of Disability Services (ODS)

<http://www.ods.emory.edu/students/index.html>

ODS will offer qualifying students academic accommodations such as alternative testing, note taking, interpretation, etc. Students must register and request those services. To do so, contact the Office of Disability Services at Emory University or Oxford College.

Counseling and Career Services (CCS)

<http://oxford.emory.edu/counseling/>

CCS provides many services at no cost to help address students' personal and career development needs, including personal counseling, career counseling, and psychiatric services. To schedule an appointment, call 770-784-8394.

Changes to the Syllabus

This syllabus—especially the required reading/viewing and assignment schedule—may be modified as the semester progresses to meet course outcomes and address the needs of members of the class.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS/VIEWINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT 1: STORIED LANDSCAPES

Week One

8/26 Introductions/Review of Syllabus and Requirements

8/28 Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story"

Week Two

8/31 Thoreau, "Walking"

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on Thoreau's use of the metaphor of "the West." What does it mean to him? Provide examples.

9/2 Abbey, "Down the River"

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on Abbey's idea of nature. What does it mean to him? Provide examples.

9/4 Abbey, "Down the River"

Week Three

9/7 No Class—Labor Day

9/9 Owens, "Burning the Shelter"

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on how Owens challenges mainstream historical narratives. Provide examples.

9/11 Literary Analysis #1 First Draft Due/Peer Review Workshop

UNIT 2: UNCOVERING "HIDDEN" HISTORIES

Week Four

9/14 Individual Conferences (times TBA)

9/16 Mann, "A View from Above"

Due: 150-200 word response in which you address how Mann's revelation of the continent's "hidden" history might affect modern American identity. Provide examples.

9/18 Final Draft of Literary Analysis #1 Due

Kincaid, "In History"

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on how Kincaid challenges mainstream historical narratives. Provide examples.

Week Five

9/21 *American Experience: We Shall Remain* (episode 1: "After the Mayflower")

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on one of the major arguments advanced in this episode. Provide examples.

9/23 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*

Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the novel's narrative style. Provide examples.

9/25 Library Information Session (all sections will meet in Room 230)

Week Six

- 9/28 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*
Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the novel's character development.
Provide examples.
- 9/30 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*
- 10/2 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*

Week Seven

- 10/5 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*
- 10/7 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*
- 10/9 Erdrich, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*

Week Eight

- 10/12 Fall Break
- 10/14 Literary Analysis #2 First Draft Due/Peer Review Workshop
- 10/16 Individual Conferences (times TBA)

UNIT 3: STORIED REALITIES

Week Nine

- 10/19 Selection of secondary sources that analyze and discuss Erdrich's *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*
- 10/21 American Passages, *Native Voices*
Final Draft of Literary Analysis #2 Due
- 10/23 Kimmerer, "Learning the Grammar of Animacy"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you address the author's persuasiveness.

Week Ten

- 10/26 Abram, "The Ecology of Magic"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you address the author's persuasiveness.
- 10/28 Library Information Session/Audacity Workshop (all sections will meet in Room 230)
- 10/30 Silko, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds;" Erdrich, "The Red Convertible;" Zepeda, "Birth Witness"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the connections between these three texts.

Week Eleven

- 11/2 Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue;" Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the authors' narrative style. Provide examples.
- 11/4 Walker, "Everyday Use;" Morrison, "Recitatif;" Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the connections between these three texts.
- 11/6 Podcast Proposal Due
Hale, "The Voice of the Storyteller;" selected NPR podcasts

UNIT 4: SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE

Week Twelve

- 11/9 Research Project Presentations
- 11/11 Research Project Presentations
- 11/13 Research Project Presentations

Week Thirteen

- 11/16 Melendez, "Mujeres de Maíz"
Due: 150-200 word response in which you comment on the author's main argument. Provide examples.
- 11/18 Selected poems by Bruce Weigl and Nguyen Phan Que Mai
- 11/20 Li-Young Lee, "Persimmons"

Week Fourteen

- 11/23 Research Project Due/Reflections
- 11/25 No Class—Thanksgiving Recess
- 11/27 No Class—Thanksgiving Recess

Week Fifteen

- 11/30 Silko, "Yellow Woman;" "Cottonwood"
- 12/2 Blaeser, "This Weight of Small Bodies;" hooks, "earthbound: on solid ground"
- 12/4 Kimmerer, "Questions for a Resilient Future"

Week Sixteen

- 12/7 Reflective Essay Due
Wrap Up