

Oxford College of Emory University

English 251- 12A, 12:50-1:40 MWF
American Literature, 1865 to present
Williams Hall105
Fall 2010

Dr. Jeff Galle
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Required Texts

Csicsila, Joseph, *Canons by Consensus*.

Belasco, Susan, ed. *The Bedford Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 2.

Miscellaneous readings on Blackboard.

Course Description

English 251 (American Literature, 1865-present) meets the sophomore writing requirement and provides the context for an in depth examination of American literature from the 19th and 20th centuries.

This course possesses two key structural elements: 1) the idea of literary periods from 1865 to the present, arranged chronologically, beginning with Realism and moving through Naturalism, with a detour through Regionalism, and on through Modernism, to Postmodernism, and 2) the idea of the every-changing, ever-growing literary canon.

1. The literary periods and terms associated with literature and each period will provide the primary content of the readings, the bases for class discussion, and the primary content for your literary analyses.
2. The literary canon and all of its associated issues will provide the collection of ideas and materials from which we will work to develop an Inquiry-Guided Learning (IGL) project for the semester research project.

Course Objectives and learning outcomes

The student who successfully completes this course will

1. Improve the quality of his or her writing of analyses of individual selections and of longer pieces that explore a research question.
2. Increase knowledge of the literary periods that apply to this time period as well as a number of particular literary terms.
3. Increase knowledge and understanding of a number of issues related to the formation, extension, and change of the literary canon relative to this period.

Assignments in General

1. Reading and class discussion (led by individual students) of many selections from American literature, 1865-present.
2. Reading and class discussion of the second primary text, *Canons by Consensus*.

3. Writing of three essays (800-1200 words), each involving a particular kind of inquiry into the text(s) of the course.
4. One formal research paper (10-12 pages) requiring external sources cited in MLA style. (The research project will have several stages, each with a specific assignment and due date).
5. Quizzes, short assignments on the readings, and other short assignments in Blackboard. We will also use Blackboard for various other forms of communication, including these short assignments, some response prompts, and perhaps a discussion thread.
6. A written final exam with questions involving all of the primary issues of the course, so in one sense the final is comprehensive.

Other Responsibilities and Related Matters

1. Attendance. Part of the course grade relates to leading discussion and another part to participating in discussion led by others. So attendance is crucial in order to do well in these two areas. You may miss three class meetings, but I will deduct points (5 pts per absence) from your class participation grade after the third absence. Students who are late must assume responsibility to be certain the attendance record is changed to reflect their attendance.
2. Honor Code. We will discuss this important issue in class, and we will cover plagiarism at that time. But please be aware that your writing is to be your own, and any other person's writing must be acknowledged through citations in the proper form. Please consult the Oxford College Handbook if you have any questions regarding the Code or the Honors Council.
3. Late essays and other work. Work should be turned in on time so that I will be able to give you feedback on that assignment when the class is discussing the assignment. The longer period of time after we discuss an item that goes by, the less relevance and usefulness that assignment will have. For every class that an essay (or other work) is late, I will deduct a letter grade from that paper (or other work).

Grading of the Assignments and Assigned Weights of Each*

3 literary analyses	30%
Short assns, facilitation(s)	15%
Research Paper (research question, outline, references, paper)	25%
Final exam	20%
Class participation (in others' class discussion; prep)	10%

* All assignments will be assigned a letter grade, and I will use + and – to enable students to have more precise feedback as the quality of each particular letter

grade. Hence, on a 100 point scale, an A- would fall in the low 90s, and a B+ in the high 80s, for example. Using a 12-point scale, each letter grade with + or – has a value as well.

Office hours

My office is located in Seney 407, and my office hours for this class will be M-F from 2:00-3:30. I am also available to meet with you by appointment. My email is jgalle@emory.edu

Weekly Outline of Readings/Assignments

Readings and due dates*

*Short assignments, quizzes, and facilitation of discussion are not placed on the calendar because those due dates will be made in class.

August 25, syllabus and course themes, “Canon,” **Impromptu pgph**
27: Twain, from “Old Time on the Mississippi,” “The War Prayer”

August 30, Bierce, “Chickamauga,” *Canons*, Intro & Chapter 1
Sept 1, James, “The Real Thing”
3, Jewett, “A White Heron,” *Canons*, Chapter 4

September 6: Labor Day Holiday

September 8, Chopin, “The Storm,” Gilman, “The Yellow Wall-Paper”
10, Cahan, “A Ghetto Wedding,” Wharton, “The Other Two,”
Canons, Ch5

September 13, Robinson, all poems
15, Crane, “The Open Boat,” and several Crane poems
17, Dreiser, “Butcher Rogaum’s Door,” London, “Law of Life”
Essay 1(Sept 17th)

September 20, Cather, “A Wagner Matinee”
22, Washington, “Up from Slavery,” DuBois, “Souls of Black Folk”
24, Adams, “The Education of Henry Adams,” *Canons*, Chapter 6

September 27, AL 1914-45, Modernism, Modern Poetry and Prose
29, selected Lowell, Frost, Johnson, Sandburg
Oct 1, Stevens, “Sunday Morning,” “13 Ways of ...,” “Idea of Order at Key West,”
Canons, Chapter 7

October 4, selected Williams, Pound, and HD
6, selected T.S. Eliot, McKay, Millay, Cummings,
8, selected Hughes, Cullen, Brown
(Research question)

October 11-12: Midsemester Break

October 13, Stein, "Picasso," selected Anderson, Hurston, Toomer,
15, Fitzgerald, "Ice Palace," selected Faulkner, Hemingway

Essay 2 (Oct 15th)

October 18, Wright, "Almos' a Man," Welty, "A Worn Path"
20, AL since 1945, Toward Postmodernism (traits and terms)
22, selected Roethke, Bishop

(Research outline)

October 25, Williams, "Portrait of a Madonna"
27, Ellison, "Invisible Man"
29, Malamud and Bellow

November 1, Miller, Death of a Salesman
3, Miller, Death of a Salesman
5, Miller, Death of a Salesman

November 8, selected Lowell, Brooks
10, Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables"
12, O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

November 15, selected Ashberry, Rich, Le Guin, Snyder
17, Barthelme, "The School," Morrison, "Recitatif"
19, selected Plath

Essay 3 (Nov 19th)

November 22, Baraka, "Dutchman"

November 24-28: Thanksgiving Break

November 29, Walker, "Everyday Use," O'Brien, "The Things They Carried"
Dec 1, Silko, "Yellow Woman," selected Harjo and Dove
3, Cisneros, and selected Espada

December 6: Last day of classes for MWF

Research Paper

December 8, Reading Day

Final: Wednesday, December 15, (2:00-5:00)

EXAM