

Syllabus for English 2150-005/Fall 2018 20th & 21st Century Southern Literature



The focus in this course will be literary works that explore the dynamics, ironies, and complicated socioeconomic and cultural histories of the South. We will read works by iconic Southern authors such as Carson McCullers, but will largely focus on recent literature, including novels and essays by David Joy, Jesmyn Ward, and Omar El Akkad, and poetry by Nikky Finny, Terrance Hayes, Ray McManus, Natasha Trethewey, and others. In addition to honing their writing craft, students will complete creative projects using Adobe Spark technologies.



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Office Hours: 8-9:25 a.m., T/Th, and by appointment. I'm also in 313 ACS between classes at 12:15-12:30 and 1:45-2:00, T/Th.

Class Location/Time: Section 003: 9:30-10:45/313 ASC

Section 012: 11:00-12:15/313 ASC

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary objective of sophomore literature is to provide you with the skills necessary to perform close reading of texts in a variety of genres, including poetry, essays, novels, short stories, and creative nonfiction. The importance of reading closely is emphasized and necessary for daily discussion. You will become more confident in your abilities to analyze literature, both formally (e.g., in written essays) and informally (e.g., discussions).

The focus in this course will be texts that **explore contemporary Southern literature**. We will participate in **rigorous discussions** that consider historical, present, and future perceptions of the South; the identities that define and the issues that plague this region; how Southern literature, as a unique and spirited entity, gives voice to the often voiceless; and whether Southern literature is defined by geography, history, culture, voice, perception, or other.

Additionally, this class is participating in Clemson's "CT2" campus-wide Quality Enhancement Plan to target undergraduate **critical thinking**, an invaluable skill for you to strengthen during your college career (employers highly value this skill!). We will focus on consciously practicing critical thinking skills throughout the semester: in our discussions, reflections, presentations, and projects. As part of this effort, you will complete two versions of the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and submit an artifact (one of our three projects) as a measure of mastery of critical thinking skills.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: In meeting the requirements of this course, you will demonstrate competencies in three University general education areas, including:

- **Arts & Humanities:** Demonstrate an understanding of the arts and humanities in historical and cultural contexts;
- **Communications:** Effective oral and written communication is the means by which all competencies will be demonstrated; and
- **Critical Thinking:** Demonstrate the ability to assemble information relevant to a significant, complex issue, evaluate the quality and utility of the information, and use the outcome of the analysis to reach a logical conclusion about the issue.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

(INCLUSIVE OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS):

1. You will **read, critically review, and analyze** a variety of literature that transcends historical periods and genres. Within discussions and assignments related to these readings, you will **explore complex challenges and analyze multi-dimensional issues**.
2. You will **identify, critically reflect upon, and articulate** the cultural relevance for the texts analyzed (not only within the cultures in which the texts were written or written about, but also how the themes and philosophies in the texts permeate our contemporary culture).
3. You will **strengthen your writing craft** through reflection in informal written assignments, as well as in a formal academic paper. You will **communicate complex ideas** effectively through both oral and written analyses.
4. You will apply your knowledge of the text and its cultural context to a new media and/or creative project, wherein you will **extrapolate from one complex conceptual context to another**.
5. You will **collaborate with peers** to create a dynamic presentation that synthesizes close textual reading and critical thinking. This requires you to work together to evaluate peers' analyses, distill information, and articulate the group's collective response to a text.



In-class quizzes, writings, and discussions, individual and group projects and presentations, and mid-term and final exams are used as the measure of mastery of these learning objectives.

COURSE CONTENT



We will use the online learning management system, **Canvas**, for our course. Assignments, rubrics, expectations, grades, and absences are recorded in Canvas. You are expected to check Canvas and thoroughly read assignments, rubrics, and expectations there.

1. Required Text Reading: You will have daily reading assignments, as indicated on the course schedule at the end of this syllabus. We will be on a rigorous reading schedule! Be sure to have thoroughly read the text prior to the date it is due on the schedule. You will have daily reading quizzes to test that you have read the material.

Please note you must purchase the following books. All other readings will be provided on our Canvas page (or as a link from our Canvas page):

Novels:

1. *The Line That Held Us*, David Joy
2. *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Carson McCullers
3. *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, Jesmyn Ward
4. *American War*, Omar El Akkad

Additionally, we will read and discuss poetry, essays, and short stories by various authors across the South. These will be provided via Canvas link or printouts in class.



2. In-class Writing and Quizzes: You will participate in daily in-class quizzes to test that you are reading the material: 5 questions, 20 points each. Some days, you will participate in writing exercises related to our reading. I will offer a question or prompt, and you are to reflect and respond in a thoughtful way. These will be used to test your knowledge of the reading material and often to jumpstart our classroom discussion. **Be sure to always bring your laptops to complete these writing responses!** No makeups are allowed; do not ask.

3. Projects: You will complete **two projects** during the course of this class. One will be a critical analysis paper. A second will involve the creation of an Adobe Spark web site inspired by one or more of our literary works. These projects may be used as CT2 artifacts, showing how your critical thinking skills have strengthened in the class.

4. Midterm and Final Exams: Mid-term exams will be cumulative to that point in the semester. The exam will include identification questions. A final exam will be structured the same way and will be cumulative for the entire semester.

5. Class Participation: As this class is participatory by nature—meaning each class will involve class discussion and active participation—you are expected to actively participate by speaking, doing class work, and working collaboratively. **Simply showing up and being present will earn a C. As a matter of fact, every student will begin the semester with a C for this grading category.** It is totally up to each individual to move their grade beyond this.

- **An A grade** reflects active participation, contributing to the class conversation almost every class session, being present, and actively participating.
- **A B grade** is to be expected if you semi-regularly contribute to discussions and/or actively participate.

- **If you show up but do not talk/actively participate, you will remain at a C for class participation.**
- I will adjust the C as warranted at mid-term. At that point, it is completely up to you and the amount you're comfortable participating where your grade ends up at the end of the semester.

Behaviors that affect participation grades:

- Excessive absences
- Leaving the classroom
- Doing other class work in this class
- Excessive tardies
- PHONES/Social Media/Texting
- Being disrespectful to me or to peers

GRADES AND FEEDBACK

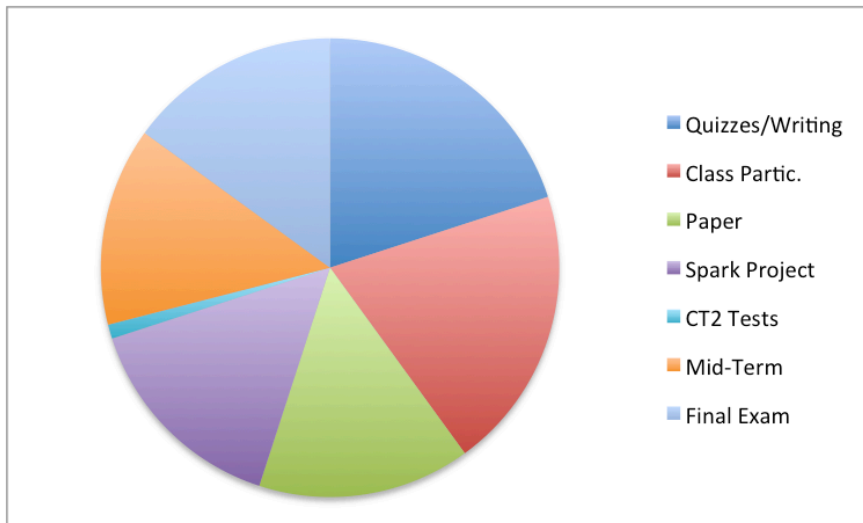
Grades and feedback are provided generally one week after the assignment is turned in (papers tend to take two weeks, sorry.). Unless otherwise stated, grades and feedback will be available on Canvas. If ever you need to discuss your grade with me, send me an email to set up a time to talk or come see me during office hours.

GRADING POLICY:

Final semester grades will be determined based upon the following:

In-class quizzes and writing:	= 20%
Class Participation:	= 20%
Paper:	= 15%
Spark Project:	= 15%
CT2 Test Participation	= 1%
Mid-Term Exam	= 14%
Final Exam:	= 15%
TOTAL	= 100%

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 59 or less



***NOTE* I will not round up to the next point bracket. I will not add additional points to your grade for any reason. Grades must be earned.**

CLASS POLICIES

Absences: You are allowed a **maximum of four absences**. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused. For every absence over the maximum, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade per absence (i.e., You have 6 absences, so the highest possible grade you could make in the class is a C.). There are several compelling reasons for your attendance. One, **this class is participatory by nature; absences affect the wellbeing of the entire class**. Two, assignments will be explained in class. Three, missing class sessions is likely to put you very far behind, not only in your comprehension of the texts, but also in your grades. And, four, this class will be fun, and you will be totally missing out. With that said, please note: I WILL NOT drop any assignment, writing, or quiz grades. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get class notes, etc., from a fellow classmate. **Do NOT email me asking what you missed in class; rather, contact a classmate**. Further, absences will affect your class participation grade, as if you are not in class, you cannot participate. **Missed in-class writing exercises, quizzes, and assignments cannot be made up, so be mindful of attendance**. If you know you will miss more than this maximum amount off the bat, this class may not be for you.

Weather Cancellations: Any exam that was scheduled at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be given at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any assignments due at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any extension or postponement of assignments or exams must be granted by the instructor via email or Canvas within 24 hours of the weather related cancellation.

Electronic Devices: Laptops, iPads, Kindles, etc., are allowed in class, as some of your readings are available online and **you must have your laptop to complete in-class quizzes and writing assignments**. These devices should only be used for coursework. Cell phones should be turned off and put away while in class. If you choose to use any device for texting, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, or any other online activity during class, your class participation grade will reflect this. (And I will call you out during class.)

Collaborative Work: Collaborative work is a required component of this course. Students are expected to work collaboratively by participating vigorously in discussions to contribute to the intellectual climate of the classroom. Our class is primarily based upon discussion, so **you are expected to talk a lot in this class**. Failure to do so will be reflected in your class participation grade. Further, students will participate in group projects and/or class sessions, and each person's ability to collaborate within the group is vital.

Late Work: Assignments must be ready, proofed, and turned in on their due dates. If you elect to turn in an assignment late, it will be marked down one grade per day late, up to four days. After four days, the grade will be recorded as zero. **Missed in-class writing exercises, quizzes, and assignments cannot be made up, so be mindful of attendance**. AND DO NOT ASK.

Waiting: If I am not in class 10 minutes after our start time, you may leave.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

In addition to the policies as stated above, this class will adhere to the following:

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class or by their due date on Canvas. Hand in all assignments to the instructor, and/or upload to Canvas as indicated. Do NOT leave an assignment on my desk, under my door, in my box, etc.
- **Consistent attendance, punctuality and active participation are expected.** If you have a serious and compelling reason for absences, please speak with me in private. In-class activities may not be made up. **DO NOT ASK.**
- All assignments must be word-processed. Handwritten assignments WILL NOT be accepted unless indicated.
- If you have any issues or questions about your grade, these must be discussed **within a week of receiving said grade. Do NOT wait until the end of the semester to do so.**

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

To view a list of all University student policies, please see

<http://www.clemson.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-handbook/universitypolicies/index.html>.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a "high seminary of learning." Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form. When, in the opinion of a course instructor, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies. If you have any questions whatsoever about what constitutes plagiarism, see me before you turn in final drafts of your work. Students are not allowed to submit work from other classes for credit in this course.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT: *Clemson University values the diversity of our student body as a strength and a critical component of our dynamic community. Students with disabilities or temporary injuries/conditions may require accommodations due to barriers in the structure of facilities, course design, and technology used for curricular purposes, or other campus resources. Students who experience a barrier to full access to this class should let the professor know, and make an appointment to meet with a staff member in Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. You can make an appointment by calling 864-656-6848, by emailing studentaccess@lists.clemson.edu, or by visiting Suite 239 in the Academic Success Center building. Appointments are strongly encouraged – drop-ins will be seen if at all possible, but there could be a significant wait due to scheduled appointments. Students who receive Academic Access Letters are strongly encouraged to request, obtain and present these to their professors as early in the semester as possible so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to follow this process each semester. You can access further information here: <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/sds/>.*

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY TITLE IX (SEXUAL HARASSMENT): *Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's*

status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>. Ms. Alesia Smith is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator and Executive Director of Equity Compliance. Her office is located at 110 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.565.0899 (TDD).

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SCHEDULE

***NOTE* Have works read and be ready to discuss by the due dates on the schedule!**

Week 1 (8/23): Welcome to Southern Lit

- Th: Syllabus/Class Overview

Week 2 (8/28-8/30): TRASH: stereotypes, perceptions, social hierarchies

- T: Intro to Southern Lit/Close Reading
- Th: "Digging in the Trash," David Joy: <http://bittersoutherner.com/digging-in-the-trash-david-joy/>; "My Mother Wasn't Trash," Joshua Wiley, <https://www.thisappalachialife.com/single-post/2017/05/10/My-Mother-Wasnt-Trash> Dorothy Allison, Essay/Introduction to *Trash*/CT2 Test #1 Due!

Week 3 (9/4-9/6):

- T: Rick Mulkey, "Cheese" and "An Explanation;" Natasha Trethewey, "Enlightenment" and "History Lesson;" Diane Gilliam Fisher, "Pink Holleyhocks" and "Violet's Wash;" Ray McManus, "Break" and "Dick;" Len Lawson, "For the Dead Whose Caskets;" Claudia Emerson, "Natural History Exhibits" and "The Change;" Kimberly Simms Gibbs, "Shift Bell;" Vera Gomez, "La Patria" and "At the farmer's market;" Terrance Hayes, "American Sonnet for My Past and Future Assassin"
- Th: Continuation of last class

Week 4 (9/11-9/13): THE LINE

- T: *The Line That Held Us*, David Joy, to p. 77/end of Ch. 9
- Th: *The Line That Held Us*, David Joy, to p. 149/end of Ch. 20

Week 5 (9/18-9/20):

- T: *The Line That Held Us*, David Joy, to p. 202/end of Ch. 30
- Th: *The Line That Held Us*, David Joy, finish/Author?

Week 6 (9/25-9/27): Academic Writing

- T: Literary Analysis/Thesis Statements/Outlines Explained/WRITE AN OUTLINE AND THESIS/BRING PRINTED OUT TO CLASS!
- Th: **PEER REVIEW IN CLASS**

Week 7 (10/2-10/4): MIDTERMS!

- T: Midterm Review
- Th: **Midterm Exam**

Week 8 (10/9-10/11): GHOSTS OF THE PAST

- T: Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, to p. 90/end of Pt. 1, Ch. 5
- Th: Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, to p. 181/end of Pt. 2, Ch. 5

Week 9 (10/16-10/18):

- T: Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, to p. 264/end of Ch. 10
- Th: Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, finish

Week 10 (10/23-10/25):

- T: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, Jesmyn Ward, to p. 90/end of Ch. 3
- Th: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, Jesmyn Ward, to p. 141/end of Ch. 6

Week 11 (10/30-11/1):

- T: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, Jesmyn Ward, to p. 219/end of Ch. 10
- Th: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*, Jesmyn Ward, finish/**SPARK Project Explained/PAPERS DUE!**

Week 12 (11/6-11/8): PAST AND FUTURE ASSASSINS

- T: **FALL BREAK**
- Th: *American War*, Omar El Akkad, to p. 93/end of Ch. 5

Week 13 (11/13-11/15):

- T: *American War*, Omar El Akkad, p. 170/end of Ch. 8
- Th: *American War*, Omar El Akkad, p. 262/end of Section III

Week 14 (11/20-11/22)

- T: *American War*, Omar El Akkad, finish
- Th: **TURKEY**

Week 15 (11/27-11/29): SPARK Presentations

- T: Spark Presentations
- Th: Spark Presentations/**CT 2 Test #2 Due!**

Week 16 (12/4-12/6): Wrap Up

- T: Spark Presentations /Student Evals
- Th: Spark Presentations/Review/**LAST DAY OF CLASS**/Student Evals

Final Examination is mandatory and will be in our classroom.
Section 003: Thursday, December 13, from 8:00-10:30 a.m.

******The instructor maintains the right to change policies, readings, assignments, and schedules as deemed necessary. Expect such changes! I will announce any changes in class and update the schedule on Canvas as necessary. It is your responsibility to check the schedule and be aware of such changes.******

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