

English 436

Professor Julianne Newmark  
Spring 2007  
Survey of Native American Literatures

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays: 12:00 to 12:50 p.m.  
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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00 to 1:50 p.m. and by appointment in 005 Fitch.

ABOUT OUR COURSE:

Welcome to Native American Literatures. In this course, we will conduct a survey of the texts – written and oral – produced by the Native peoples of the lands that now constitute the United States (and in a few instances, Canada). We will begin our study with centuries-old Native legends and creation stories; as we proceed through the semester we will read transcriptions of Native oratory, personal letters, autobiographies, short stories, plays, poems, and excerpts from novels. We will learn the dynamic nature of Native textual production and expression and will seek to understand the conditions by which Native peoples in the territories of the United States emerged in the context of print media. As students in this course, you will be expected to develop a solid understanding of the Native American literary and “storying” (a term of scholar Gerald Vizenor’s that we will discuss early in the term) traditions based on these readings, on the historical context that I will provide you in lecture, on the discussions we have as a class, and on the analyses of texts that you do individually in your essays and exams.

POLICIES:

**Required texts:**

- *Native American Literature: A Brief Introduction and Anthology*, Gerald Vizenor
- A style-guide of your choice
- Numerous texts that I will post on our WebCT site

**Required work and grading scale:**

Your grade will be based on various factors, including attendance, participation, and completion and quality of written work. You will be expected to participate in daily class discussions, occasional online discussions, and occasional group work in class. You will write two formal papers and complete two exams.

Essay one (four to five pages)	90
Essay two (four to five pages)	90
Midterm Exam	75
Final Exam	150
Textual analysis	20
Quizzes (as needed)	35
Participation and attendance	40
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TOTAL	500

**Grading scale:**

A	465 and above
A-	450-464
B+	435-449
B	415-434
B-	400-414
C+	385-399
C	365-384
C-	350-364

**Class Participation:**

You will be evaluated on your ability and willingness to participate in classroom discussions and other activities. Keep this in mind and be sure to be alert in class, prepared for class work, and engaged in our subject matter.

**Textual Analysis:**

Once during the term, each student will have offer an analysis of a reading of the student's choice (by the scheduled author for the class-day's discussion). This brief presentation must also incorporate discussion of one or two pieces of pertinent criticism of the author's work along with the student's own reading (i.e. analysis) of the text.

**Attendance and Tardiness:**

If you miss more than three classes, you will be asked to drop the course or you will receive a failing grade. There are, of course, extraordinary situations in which absences might be excused. A stay in the hospital, for example, is what I would call "extraordinary."

I do take attendance into consideration in the calculation of your final grade, along with the above-mentioned factor of participation. Be sure to attend all class meetings and to be on time. Every three days that you are tardy (more than five minutes) count as one "absent" day. I consider this syllabus, incidentally, as your contract with me, and mine with you. If you choose to continue in this class, after reading this syllabus, I expect that you will abide by the requirements of this course.

**Quizzes:**

There will be a series of unannounced reading quizzes throughout the term.

**Late Papers:**

Papers must be turned in at the beginning of our class time on the day the assignment is due. After this time, for each day an assignment is late, I will deduct one letter grade (meaning, if the paper begins at an "A" and is one day late, I will begin grading it from an "A-" -- etcetera). Again, extraordinary circumstances might excuse a late assignment, but these are rare. I will not accept emailed versions of papers; you must come to class, or arrange to see me in my office, to turn in your paper-copy of your assignment. I reserve the right not to accept late papers.

**Courteousness and Cell Phones:**

We will be covering some sensitive topics in this class. So, I will expect you to behave appropriately and be open to different opinions. Above all, be courteous to your classmates. One sign of courteousness is that you turn off your cell phone before entering class. If there are repeated problems with your cell phone, I will ask you to leave the classroom for the day. You will take an absence that day.

## Equal Access:

Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative accessible formats upon request.

## Plagiarism:

In our course, I will review the standards of correct citation, academic honesty, and intellectual property. After this information has been presented to you in class, you are responsible for it and cannot claim ignorance as a defense against an accusation of academic dishonesty. You will need to quote directly from literary texts, and appropriately cite these texts, in both of your papers and in your exams. Each of your papers must have a Works Cited page.

Plagiarism, in very general terms, is the use of someone else's words or ideas without proper citation. The style guide *Everyday Writer*, which you may have from English 111 or 112, includes information about plagiarism. I suggest that you become familiar with pages 168 and 173-175 and commit to memory the information regarding plagiarism that I provide for you in class. All other good style guides provide detailed information on avoiding plagiarism. Also, the NMT library offers a handy website addressing many plagiarism issues and provides advice on avoiding plagiarism:

<http://infohost.nmt.edu/~nmtlib/INFO/ORef/plagiarism.html>

## Essay Format:

All work that is to be handed in must be typed, double-spaced, printed on white paper in black ink, and must use twelve-point font (preferably Times New Roman). If your paper does not conform to these stylistic requirements, I will hand it back to you without a grade and you will be required to reformat in and will suffer a late-paper penalty. Again, your papers must include correct text citations and a Works Cited page.

## COURSE CALENDAR:

Week Number:	Reading/Assignment Due:
<b>Week one:</b>	
Wednesday, January 17	Course introduction, review syllabus. Discuss WebCT.
Friday, January 19	NAL, Introduction (1-15); Native "storying" (WebCT)
<b>Week two:</b>	
Monday, January 22	Creation stories and other traditional legends (WebCT) [from <i>Old Indian Legends</i> , by Zitkala-Sa, <i>Coyote Stories</i> , by Mourning Dove, and <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> , by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz]
Wednesday, January 24	Pontiac speech (delivered 1763); Cornplanter speech (delivered 1790) (WebCT) [from <i>Indian Oratory: Famous Speeches by Noted Indian Chieftains</i> , by W. C. Vanderwerth]
Friday, January 26	STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS Occom, "A Short Narrative of my Life" (written 1768) (WebCT) [from <i>Norton Anthology of American Literature, Shorter Sixth Edition</i> ].

**Week three:**

- Monday, January 29 NAL, Apess (19-31) (published 1829)
- Wednesday, January 31 Discuss Occom and Apess
- Friday, February 2 Speeches and petitions by Nancy Ward (ranging between 1781-1831) (WebCT)  
[from *Native American Women's Writing: 1800-1924*, by Karen Kilcup]

**Week four:**

- Monday, February 5 "A History of Federal Indian Policy" (WebCT)  
[from *American Indian Politics and the American Political System*, by David E. Wilkins]
- Wednesday, February 7 Continue with above; historical context
- Friday, February 9 STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS  
"A Cherokee View of Civilization" and letter by John Ridge to Albert Gallatin (written 2/27/1826). Two excerpts from the chapter *Exiles in their own Land*: "Plea from the Chickasaw" (1826) and "Tushpa Crosses the Mississippi" (recorded in late 1926) (WebCT)  
[from *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*, by Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, and *Native American Testimony: A Chronicle of Indian-White Relations from Prophecy to Present, 1492-1992*, by Peter Nabokov]

**Week five:**

- Monday, February 12 Continue with above.  
ESSAY ONE ASSIGNED
- Wednesday, February 14 David Cusick's "Sketches of Ancient History of Six Nations" (published 1827) (WebCT)  
[from *The Iroquois trail, or Foot-prints of the Six nations, in customs, traditions, and history*, by W. M. Beauchamp, S.T.D., in which are included David Cusick's sketches of ancient history of the Six nations, by W. M. Beauchamp]
- Friday, February 16 George Copway, excerpts from Indian life and Indian history by an Indian author (published 1860) (WebCT)

**Week six:**

- Monday, February 19 Susette La Flesche "Nedawi" (published 1881) and Pauline Johnson "A Red Girl's Reasoning" (published 1893) (WebCT)  
[from *The Singing Spirit: Early Short Stories by North American Indians*, by Berdn C. Peyer]
- Wednesday, February 21 STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS  
Zitkala-Sa, excerpts from *American Indian Stories* (published 1921) (WebCT)

Friday, February 23	Catch-up day. Essay questions day.
<b>Week seven:</b>	
Monday, February 26	ESSAY ONE DUE
Wednesday, February 28	Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin) and William F. Hanson, <i>The Sun Dance Opera</i> (1913) (WebCT) [from <i>Dreams and Thunder: Stories, Poems, and The Sun Dance Opera</i> , ed. P. Jane Hafen]
Friday, March 2	Continue with above.
<b>Week eight:</b>	
Monday, March 5	Catch-up and midterm exam review day
Wednesday, March 7	MIDTERM EXAM
Friday, March 9	TBA
<b>Week nine:</b>	
Monday, March 12	SPRING BREAK
Wednesday, March 14	SPRING BREAK
Friday, March 16	SPRING BREAK
<b>Week ten:</b>	
Monday, March 19	STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS Charles Alexander Eastman, excerpts from <i>Indian Boyhood</i> (1902) (WebCT)
Wednesday, March 21	NAL, Luther Standing Bear, (33-46) (published 1928, 1931)
Friday, March 23	NAL, John Rogers, (46-60)
<b>Week eleven:</b>	
Monday, March 26	NAL, John Joseph Matthews, 106-112, (published 1934)
Wednesday, March 28	Catch-up day
Friday, March 30	NAL, D'Arcy McNickle, 112-120, (published 1936)
<b>Week twelve:</b>	
Monday, April 2	TBA
Wednesday, April 4	NAL, N. Scott Momaday, 60-69, (published 1967) ESSAY TWO ASSIGNED
Friday, April 6	NO CLASSES

**Week thirteen:**

Monday, April 9

STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

NAL, Maria Campbell, 76-83, (published 1973) and NAL, Luci Tapahonso, 283-286, (published 1979, 1993)

Wednesday, April 11

NAL, James Welch, 166-175, (published 1974)

Friday, April 13

NAL, Mary TallMountain, 245-248, (published 1982), NAL, Maurice Kenny, 248-251, (published 1981), and NAL, Jim Barnes, 251-256, (published 1992)

**Week fourteen:**

Monday, April 16

Catch-up day

Wednesday, April 18

ESSAY TWO DUE

NAL, Leslie Marmon Silko, 182-189, (published 1977)

Friday, April 20

NAL, Simon J. Ortiz, 259-262, (published 1981) and NAL, Linda Hogan, 262-268, (published 1988, 1985, 1993)

**Week fifteen:**

Monday, April 23

NAL, Hanay Geiogamah, 337-359, (published 1980)

Wednesday, April 25

STUDENT TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

NAL, Louise Erdrich, 208-226, (published 1984)

Friday, April 27

NAL, Gerald Vizenor, 299-237, (published 1994)

**Week sixteen:**

Monday, April 30

Continue with above. Catch-up day.

Wednesday, May 2

Exam preparation day.

Wednesday, May 4

FINAL EXAM