

Georgia State University
English 4300: Senior Seminar
Native American Literature
Spring 2010

Prof. Audrey Goodman
Class TR 9:30-10:45
General Classroom Building 707

Hours M 2-4 and R 2-5
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Course Description

A capstone to every English major's undergraduate study, the Senior Seminar allows students to hone the skills they have acquired. One way of doing so is through preparing the Senior Portfolio and writing the reflective essay. The Seminar in literature also aims to introduce students to professional literary scholarship and contemporary scholarly debates; to teach students how to refine and apply research skills; and to provide practice in the art of writing and speaking about literature. This course will develop such professional awareness through exploring selected Native American novels, poems, and theories. Students will study a group of texts from several critical perspectives, choose one issue to pursue, and conduct a detailed research project. Our class will combine lecture, discussion, and collaborative research, culminating in student presentations of their final projects.

Objectives

This course will teach students to read, comprehend, and apply theoretical concepts to literary texts; understand and summarize literary scholarship; conduct independent research; integrate research and interpretation in a long essay; gain practice and confidence in public speaking from notes; and prepare an excellent Senior Portfolio.

Required Texts

D'Arcy McNickle, *Wind from an Enemy Sky*
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*
Thomas King, *Truth and Bright Water*
Louis Owens, *Dark River*
Joy Harjo, *The Woman who Fell from the Sky*

Required texts on e-reserve at Pullen Library (password 2y4ztc92S)

William Kittredge, "Home," from *Owning it All*
William W. Bevis, "Region, Power, Place," from *Reading the West*
Leslie Silko, "Interior and Exterior Landscapes," from *Speaking for the Generations*
Louis Owens, "Other Destinies, Other Plots: An Introduction to Indian Novels," from *Other Destinies*; "Beads and Buckskin," and "The Invention of John Wayne" from *Mixedblood Messages*

Assignments and Grading

1. Reflective Essay for the Senior Portfolio (10%). After you assemble the essays required for your portfolio, write a strong draft of the required reflective essay. We will discuss and workshop the essays in class; I will also give you feedback on the essay when you submit it online as a CTW assignment.
2. Article Summary, 1-2 pages (10%). Pick one recent essay or book chapter on Native American literature that could serve as the starting point for your research project. Summarize it accurately in 2-3 paragraphs and cite it correctly using MLA format. Submit this CTW assignment online.
3. Research Prospectus, 2-3 pages (10%). The prospectus should explain the issues you would like to pursue in your research essay, discuss the work of critics who have addressed similar issues, and propose one or two literary texts that you will use to explore your ideas. Include three potential sources with your prospectus and list them in MLA format. Submit this CTW assignment online.
4. Peer Review of Prospectus (5%). Write a 2-paragraph response to your partner's proposal that evaluates its argument, organization, and rhetoric and provides suggestions for how to develop the topic. Submit this CTW assignment online; it will also be viewed by your research partner.
5. Response to Peer Review (5%). Now that you have suggestions from another student, explain in one well-written paragraph how you will incorporate them – or why you don't want to. Then write another paragraph that explains a different direction your research could take if you were going to pursue a second project. Submit this CTW assignment online; it will also be viewed by your research partner.
6. Oral Storytelling (10%). Prepare to retell one story we have read together that you especially like. You may use notes, but please do not read from them word for word. Each student will tell a story and the class will be the audience.
7. Presentation of Work in Progress, 15-20 minutes (15%). Once you have read the key texts for your research essay and more critical history, prepare to present these materials to the class. Work to frame your questions within the context of existing scholarship and consider how to approach them from several perspectives. Select key scenes or passages to present to the class that will test these questions and articulate your point of view. The presentation should include a directed discussion with the class to help clarify your ideas.
8. Final Research Paper (25%). This paper should present a clear thesis about some aspect of Native American literature and develop it through the close analysis of several literary texts, critical essays, and/or historical studies. Along with your essay, include a one-paragraph abstract that summarizes its argument. Submit the abstract online as a CTW assignment.
9. Active Attendance and participation (10%). You are expected to come to every class on time, prepared to listen, take notes, and participate in our discussion of the week's reading. If you arrive late or unprepared, you miss learning the class lesson and may distract other students. You may miss up to three classes without penalty, but you will lose 5% from your final grade for every unexcused absence afterwards.

Policies

Academic honesty. Any work you submit should be your own. Plagiarism is grounds for failure in this course and expulsion from the University. For Georgia State's Policy on Academic Honesty, consult the University's web site.

Late work. Presentations and in-class activities cannot be given late or made up unless you have an excused absence. Other written assignments will be marked down one grade for every class session they are late.

Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

Students who need accommodations should consult the Office of Disability Services (Suite 230, New Student Center).

This is a Critical Thinking through Writing (CTW) Course

Beginning Fall 2009, students entering GSU will be required to take two CTW courses within their major. CTW courses present students with writing assignments based on issues, problems, and applications within their discipline that require critical thinking. Selected assignments will be posted, submitted, and graded using the online writing environment.

Using the Online Writing Environment

To submit CTW assignments, you will need to create an account. Go to <http://www.wac.gsu.edu/wow>. Click on our class (English 4300, Professor Goodman). Enter your email address and create a password. Click on signup. You will see a calendar on the left. Find the due date for each assignment. When you click on that day, you will see the assignment. At the bottom of the page click on "Start this assignment."

I strongly recommend that you work first on a word processor and save it to your computer. Then cut and paste your work onto the site. If you work directly on the site, it is likely to time out and erase your draft. I will read the assignment online, evaluate it, and indicate when and if other students can review it. Then, when you log on to your account, you will see that I have graded the assignment and written comments.

SCHEDULE of Readings and Assignments

Jan 12	Course introduction
Jan 14	Reading: Essays by Kittredge and Bevis
Jan 19	McNickle, <i>Wind from an Enemy Sky</i>
Jan 21	McNickle, con't
Jan 26	Reading: Essay by Owens, "Bead and Buckskin"
Jan 28	Discussion of portfolios Introduction to Silko, <i>Ceremony</i>
Feb 2	Essay by Silko, "Interior and Exterior Landscapes"; <i>Ceremony</i>
Feb 4	Silko, con't

Feb 9	Research workshop (meet in Library North, 2 nd floor conference room)
Feb 11	Reflective essay draft due Essay workshop
Feb 16	King, <i>Truth and Bright Water</i>
Feb 18	King, continued
Feb 23	Article Summary due Discussion of articles
Feb 25	Harjo, <i>The Woman Who Fell from the Sky</i> (Part I)
Mar 2	Harjo (Part II) Womack, Ch 7
Mar 4	Storytelling
SPRING BREAK	
Mar 16	Research Prospectus due Discussion of research projects
Mar 18	Owens, <i>Dark River</i> , beginning; “Other Destinies”
Mar 23	Owens, con’t
Mar 25	Peer Review of Prospectus due Owens, conclusion
Mar 30	Reading: Owens, “The Invention of John Wayne” Film viewing: John Ford, <i>The Searchers</i>
Apr 1	Response to Peer Review due film viewing, con’t
Apr 6	Storytelling
Apr 8	Research day: no class
Apr 13	Student presentations
Apr 15	Student presentations
April 20	Student presentations
April 22	Student presentations
April 27	Student presentations
April 29	Last day of class Final drafts of research essay and abstract due

Please note that this is a general plan for the course. Changes may be necessary.