THE AMERICAN NOVEL - HU3510.R01

Course Description
This course explores the characters, plots, & themes of six novels that grapple with wealth, poverty, class, gender, race, religion, sex, violence, & the nature of success & failure in American culture.

Required Texts

Instructor Information
Matt Seigel
Assistant Professor of Diverse Literatures & Creative Writing
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Email:
URL:
Phone: 906.487.2016
Office Hours: MWF 10-11am

Expectations & Grading
Simple & straight forward - fulfill your responsibilities, seldom early & never late: attend class & visit office hours, complete all assignments in & out of class on deadline, read, take notes, participate, be engaged & be engaging. Late assignments will not be accepted & no coursework can be made up without a written excuse from the Dean of Students Office.

Furthermore, please bear in mind that integrity & ethics are central components of a student's education & the ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student's life both professional & personal. Integrity & ethics are essential in any community searching for truth & are, some might argue, central to any social system claiming civilization as its own. Anything less than total commitment to integrity & ethics undermines the efforts of the entire community. Every member is responsible. Every member is culpable. Be kind. Be honest. Be curious. Be adventurous. Work hard. Leave the campground better than you found it. Those who cannot keep the compact will be asked to leave the building.

In terms of access, Michigan Tech encourages ALL qualified persons to participate in its programs & activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell me as soon as possible &/or visit the Office of Student Affairs or phone 487-2951.

Lastly, where grading is concerned, students can expect the following:
A (4) = Excellent. Student exceeded all course expectations.
A/B (3.5) = Very good. Student exceeded most course expectations.
B (3) = Good. Student met all course expectations, exceeding many.
B/C (2.5) = Above average. Student met all course expectations, exceeding some.
C (2) = Average. Student met all course expectations.
C/D (1.5) = Below average. Student met some, but not all course expectations.
D (1) = Inferior. Student met few course expectations.
F (0) = Failure. Student met very few to none of the course expectations.

**COURSEWORK**

**Attendance & Participation (15%)**: Engage. Come to class every day, prepared, & take part thoughtfully & conscientiously. I reserve the right to fail students who amass more than three unexcused absences (only excuses issued through the Dean of Students Office are accepted). Meet your deadlines, all of which are final & cannot be made up unless accompanied by documentation from the Dean of Students Office. Read daily, in small bites & stay current. Write daily in your journals & stay current. Come to class with observations to make; come with questions (classes in which students participate are significantly more interesting than those in which the professor drones on & on). Visit office hours. Visit the Writing Center. Give a good presentation. Be a human being.

**Reading Quizzes (15%)**: Reading is absolutely necessary for a literature class to function. As a gentle reminder this, there will be a very short, three question reading quiz at the beginning of each class covering the reading due that day. The quizzes are easy if you do the readings - do the readings, ace the quizzes; don't do the readings, watch your grade plummet.

**Journal Responses (15%)**: In five easy steps. Step 1, buy an inexpensive composition notebook. Step 2, read the assigned readings. Step 3, respond in writing in your notebook to the assigned reading. What did the day's reading make you think? What did it remind you of? What did it expose you to? What connections did you make between what you read & other things you've read or watched or heard or experienced? Make connections. Make meaning. Step 4, bring your notebook with you to class & use it to help you participate. Step 5, participate.

**Group Presentation (25%)**: Students will be assigned to groups. Groups will meet outside of class, decide on a topic for presentation, make an appointment with Prof. Seigel to OK their presentation topic, research the topic, put together an interesting presentation, & then present to the class on their assigned day. Presentations should be approximately 15-20 minutes in length. Multi-media is a must. Engaging is a must. Do not bore us.

**Scholarly Essays (30%)**: Students will write two scholarly essays on a topic of their own choosing. The first will be due at mid-term, the second on the last day of class. Topics must be proposed to Prof. Seigel for green light prior to proceeding. Creative essays/projects will be considered if deemed rigorous. Essays should be approximately 5,000 words in length. Extensive outside research is a must. Strict MLA formatting is to be observed. Start early if you want to do well.

**COURSE CALENDAR, FALL 2007**

**Week 1**
Wed. 09.05: Introduction to the course.
Fri. 09.07: *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.

**Week 2**
Mon. 09.10: *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.
Wed. 09.12: *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.
Fri. 09.14: Group 1 Presents; *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.
Week 3
Mon. 09.17: *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.
Wed. 09.19: *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.
Fri. 09.21: Group 2 Presents; *Rabbit, Run*, TBA.

Week 4
Mon. 09.24: *The Color Purple*, TBA.
Wed. 09.26: *The Color Purple*, TBA.
Fri. 09.28: Group 3 Presents; *The Color Purple*, TBA.

Week 5
Mon. 10.01: *The Color Purple*, TBA.
Wed. 10.03: *The Color Purple*, TBA.
Fri. 10.05: Group 4 Presents; Journals Due; *The Color Purple*, TBA.

Week 6
Mon. 10.08: *Invisible Man*, TBA.
Wed. 10.10: *Invisible Man*, TBA.
Fri. 10.12: Group 5 Presents; *Invisible Man*, TBA.

Week 7
Mon. 10.15: 1st Essay In-class Workshop.
Wed. 10.17: 1st Essay In-class Workshop.
Fri. 10.19: 1st Essay Due; *Invisible Man*, TBA.

Week 8
Mon. 10.22: *Invisible Man*, TBA.
Wed. 10.24: *Invisible Man*, TBA.
Fri. 10.26: Group 6 Presents; *Invisible Man*, TBA.

Week 9
Mon. 10.29: *Blood Meridian*, TBA.
Wed. 10.31: *Blood Meridian*, TBA.
Fri. 11.02: Group 7 Presents; *Blood Meridian*, TBA.

Week 10
Mon. 11.05: *Blood Meridian*, TBA.
Wed. 11.07: *Blood Meridian*, TBA.
Fri. 11.09: Group 8 Presents; Journals Due; *Blood Meridian*, TBA.

Week 11
Mon. 11.12: *Lolita*, TBA.
Wed. 11.14: *Lolita*, TBA.
Fri. 11.16: Group 9 Presents; *Lolita*, TBA.

Week 12
Mon. 11.19: *Lolita*, TBA.
Wed. 11.21: *Lolita*, TBA.
Fri. 11.23: Group 10 Presents; *Lolita*, TBA.

Week 13
Mon. 11.26: *The House on Mango Street*, TBA.
Wed. 11.28: *The House on Mango Street*, TBA.
Fri. 11.30: Group 11 Presents; *The House on Mango Street*, TBA.

Week 14
Mon. 12.03: *The House on Mango Street*, TBA.
Wed. 12.05: The House on Mango Street, TBA.
Fri. 12.07: Group 12 Presents; The House on Mango Street, TBA.

Week 15
Mon. 12.10: 2nd Essay In-class Workshop
Wed. 12.12: 2nd Essay In-class Workshop
Fri. 12.14: Journals Due; 2nd Essay Due; Course Wrap.