

American Literature • ENGL 2326.001
Who We Are, Where We've Been, and Where We're Going
Fall 2023
Tuesday & Thursday • 2:00-3:20 PM
(some online instruction)

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Office hours: Tu. & Th. 1-2 PM, & by appointment

**"Everywhere we go, we see that misery comes from buying into the eight worldly dharmas*.
It's also pretty obvious that people need help and that there's no way to benefit anybody
unless we start with ourselves." -Pema Chodron, *When Things Fall Apart***

***the hope for or fear of:** loss&gain, praise&blame (or criticism), fame&disgrace, pleasure&pain
*dharma means teaching or doctrine of truth

the hope-for or fear-of keeps us snagged in samsara (cycle of suffering via life, death, rebirth).
freedom from suffering is enlightenment.

we can say that these preoccupations, desires, fears, hopes, and obsessions create constant
tension, stress, or as Chodron puts it, "misery."

so what does this have to do with literature?

we are all messy beings, but we benefit ourselves and each other when we pay
attention to our hopes and fears and live in the middle, the in-between, the grey zone.

read, write, and think in the grey zone, and you will never be bored or not have
something to talk or write about.

Required Texts to Purchase:

Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg Ohio* (1919)
Wendell Berry, *The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry* (1957-1996)
Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (1953)
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (1993)
M.T. Anderson, *Feed* (2002)

Required Reading I Will Provide:

Let America Be America Again by Langston Hughes (1936)

Other Required Materials:

Access to Canvas
Access to UNT email
A writing journal

Course Overview:

In the last century and still today, writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry have been tracing the ever-changing physical and conceptual landscape of American identity. Patterns of loss and gain, praise and blame, and fame and disgrace evoke the human condition, amplifying the need for a reckoning of our present, past, and future. In addition to readings and discussion, this course will feature a scholarly writing component.

Course Policies:**Attendance**

Writing courses are by nature participatory, collaborative, and discussion-based. If you miss more than 20% of classes (2 weeks for a 10-week course), your grade may be reduced by 10% for each additional week missed. If you miss more than 30% of the class (3 weeks for a 10 week course), then I am authorized to keep you from passing the course.

Excused Absences and Make-up Work

An absence to be excused by the University must follow the procedure outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog: "Absences due to participation in sponsored activities must be approved in advance by the department chair and academic dean. Within three days of the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to their instructors." Failure to follow this procedure will result in an unexcused absence. State law requires that students notify their teachers at the beginning of the semester (in the first 15 days) if they expect to miss class on a religious holiday. An absence for an emergency doctor's visit or hospitalization may be excused at my discretion if an original, verifiable doctor's note (with contact information) is presented to me on the first day back after the absence and we hold a conference on the absence. To make up course days missed for extended excused absences, make-up work on the reading must be handed in with your documentation. Failure to hand in make-up work on time will result in a five point deduction from your participation grade. If extreme circumstances prevent you from handing in make-up work on time, you should contact me before the due date to discuss the situation. Do not schedule appointments during class time and then request that such appointments be excused. I will not excuse them. Excused absences do not change essay, quiz, or exam dates. Make arrangements accordingly.

Course Schedules and Drops

Students should monitor their course schedule every day for the first two weeks of class in order to make sure that they have not been dropped from their courses by the registrar's office. Students who are dropped from classes for nonpayment of financial aid or other reasons may not be readmitted to this section; it is the student's responsibility to make sure that all of their financial records are in order so that they are not dropped. Last day to drop with a grade of W is November 10, 2023.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. All assignments should be original work written only for this particular class. UNT defines the use of materials prepared by another person or agency as plagiarism. Looking at a phone during a quiz or exam is construed as cheating. Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment will result in a zero on the assignment, and may lead to an F in the course and/or disciplinary procedures established by the Administrative Office such as loss of scholarships or expulsion.

The use of generative AI writing tools (such as ChatGPT, GrammarlyGO, GPT-3, GPT-4, BERT, or others) is prohibited in this class. Assignments for the course have been designed to help you develop as a writer without the use of these technologies. You will generate ideas, read, revise, and write on your own and/or in consultation with peers, me, or Writing Center tutors, and you will not use AI at any stage of your writing process. You are the author of your work for the course and authorship means you take responsibility for your words and claims. Any use of AI technologies in your work will be considered an violation of UNT's academic integrity policy and addressed accordingly. *Statement composed by Annette Vee, under CC-BY-NC (Creative Commons By-Noncommercial license).

Classroom Etiquette

Excessive disruptions of our class time—including posting inappropriate or inflammatory comments or harassing others online—are unacceptable. Please respect the class environment by using your time effectively and helping your classmates do the same. We are all members of an academic community where it is our shared responsibility to cultivate a climate where all students/individuals are valued and where both they and their ideas are treated with respect. Therefore, I expect you to conduct yourself in a professional and respectful manner during all online interactions and class--related activities. I expect you to listen to and respect the viewpoints of others, even if you strongly disagree with them. When you do voice disagreement in your writing, do so in a civil manner. Remember that you are accountable for all of your actions in this course, including your submitted work, your grades, and your interactions with me and with other students. Everyone will have multiple opportunities to participate in class. Participation can be many things, including all of the following: Participating actively in small group work, class meetings, and discussions; Showing attention to others in discussion posts; Completing all assignments on time; Coming prepared to online conferences/office hours.

Required Materials

Everyone is expected to secure the course texts by the second week of the course. If there is difficulty obtaining these, e-mail me so that I can advise you on how to get the readings in time for class. It is your responsibility to bring the texts under discussion to class and to do the required reading. This includes handouts or online material.

COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19.

Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.

Class Recordings and Student Likeness

Synchronous (live) sessions in this course will be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. The decision of the instructor will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity, which is responsible for maintaining student conduct records. The incident may result in an official disciplinary record for the student(s). Academic integrity violations can include copying a passage from a source verbatim, but they can also include improper or misleading citations. Please note that all source material must be acknowledged, even if the material is paraphrased. Be careful to always acknowledge the work of other writers, and take the time to work out your thoughts and arguments without copying the work of others.

ADA Accommodation Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be notified verbally or in writing and may be directed to leave the classroom. Additionally, the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct

violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found on the [UNT Policy Page](#).

Syllabus Change Policy

I have made every attempt to provide this syllabus as an accurate overview of the course. However, unanticipated circumstances may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. These circumstances may arise in response to the progress, needs, and experiences of students. Advance notice will be given for any changes made to the syllabus.

Assignment Requirements

All work must be titled, stapled, double-spaced, and typed on 8 ½ x 11" paper with 1" margins on all sides. Use black ink, white paper, 12 point Times New Roman or a similar professional font, and a properly functioning printer. Number your pages and include your name on each page. In addition to your hard copy, all work will be turned in to Turnitin by class time on the due date. Late work will lose 20% per calendar day. Keep copies of everything you turn in throughout the semester. Save your work as you go.

Assignments

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Prompts | 10 ea. (6 total) | (60) |
| Workshop pieces | 100 ea. (2 total) | (200) |
| Final Essay | 200 (1 total) | (200) |
| Micro-presentations | 10 ea. (2 total) | (20) |
| Discussion | 5 ea. (4 total) | (20) |

Final Grades

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|------------|
| A = 90-100 |
| B = 80-89 |
| C = 70-79 |
| D = 60-69 |
| F = 00-59 |

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Total possible points: | 500 |
|------------------------|-----|

Prompts

Prompts are designed to help you reflect on the class material and discussion in order to prepare you to draft a complete Final Essay. You must complete these prompts in order to receive credit. These will be specified and turned in on Canvas.

Micro-presentations

Informal but required in-class sharing of your latest writing, insight and discovery of the course material. More details to follow.

Workshop pieces

You will write two workshop pieces for this course to respond to the readings, hone your skills in close reading, and engage in critical analysis of course texts while also addressing the broader topics of the course. You can use these to develop your Final Essay. Specific detailed instructions for each essay will be provided and discussed in class.

Final Essay

A cumulative essay on a topic of your choice. More details to follow on Canvas.

Discussion

You are expected to contribute to class discussion in-class and on Canvas to receive attendance credit.

Additional Requirements & Information

Assignment Schedule—The reading schedule is tentative and, if necessary, it may be changed to meet the goals of the course. Readings and writing is due on the day they are listed. You should be finished with each day's reading by the time you come to class.

Writing Help—I am happy to meet with you during office hours to assist with questions on papers or to help with brainstorming, organizing, or finalizing your material. Please make an effort to meet with me when you need help.

Writing Center—If you need additional help with grammar, punctuation, or any other element of composition, the UNT Writing Center may be of assistance. You may wish to take typed drafts to the Writing Center as part of your writing process. The tutors there can answer specific questions about the effectiveness of your essays and may help you polish your writing.

ADA / ODA Accommodations—The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323. If you are requesting ODA accommodations for this course, you should present your written requests by the fourth class day.