Course Name

ENGL 2326:002 / An American Demonology

Instructor Contact Information

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Communication Expectations: Feel free to pop in or leave office hours at any time. If you need to communicate with me urgently, please email me or text me.

Course Description

This course is a critical survey of witchcraft, vodou, shamanism, and conjure in American literature and culture from beginnings to present. What is a witch, anyway—and who gets to define that? Why were US Americans so eager to persecute women and people of color for the practice of witchcraft? What social orders does witchcraft disrupt? Why are witches connected to nature? And why are US Americans still compelled to return to the Salem witch trials as a way for thinking about many different forms of oppression? Though we will be reading and watching speculative fiction—fantasy, science fiction, and horror—we will also be reading literature and watching films that ask us to interrogate the limits of the possible, our connection to an invisible spirit world, and the nature of our belief in a world beyond that which we can readily see and intuit. To that end, we will explore historical tracts, poems, short fiction, novels, films, essays, and academic criticism in order to better understand why witchcraft has so continuously and completely captivated the American imaginary. This course will ask you to read primary source documents—literature and film—alongside secondary sources, in the form of essays, theses, reviews, articles, and blogs. By the end of the course, you will feel more comfortable using archives, navigating websites, and approaching and analyzing secondary sources of all kinds. This course will help you focus and develop your writing ability, in addition to an archival project, a paper quilt, a concept map, and a final creative project.

Course Structure

This 16-week course is face-to-face with occasional online instruction. The course is organized around three modules: Puritan Magic, Hoodoo Magic, and Ancestral Magic. Each module consists of a selection of literature, film, and secondary sources. The structure of the course is recursive and static: each week you will read the assigned work, attend class, and participate in class. At the end of each unit, you will

complete a project—an archival research project, paper quilt, a concept map, and a creative final project of your own design.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe major themes in US American primary source documents (film, literature, media) about witchcraft, healing, and magic.
2. Analyze secondary source criticism.
3. Critique and interpret primary source documents using a range of different secondary sources.
4. Compose your own analysis and criticisms of primary source docs using secondary source criticism.
5. Produce analysis in various forms (archival research; writing exercises; discussion forums; concept mapping; creative projects).

Materials

You are free to purchase any edition of these texts, including audiobooks and e-books. I am working with the Media Library to secure streaming of these films through Canvas when and where possible, but you will be responsible for renting or purchasing the films if the library is unable to stream them.

Books
- Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*
- Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*
- Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*
- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

Films
- *The VVitch* (dir. Robert Eggers, 2015)
- *The Crucible* (dir. Nicholas Hytner, 1996)
- *Eve's Bayou* (dir. Kasi Lemmons, 1997)
- *Sinners* (dir. Ryan Coogler, 2025)

Course Philosophy

In this course there will be no surprises—what you see is what you get! I firmly believe that it is my job to create conditions for each of you to pass this course, to learn something, and to be encouraged. Even during normal non-pandemic conditions, I know how difficult it can be for you to complete assignments, keep up with all of your courses, make it to work, and also make certain that you have time decompress by yourself and with others. I have designed this course to be recursive—each week and for each module you will develop important skills such as analysis and close reading interpretation. I have also designed this course to stress independent reading and learning, which means that I have provided you with interesting and well-researched (and often well-produced) essential background material in Canvas that can help you take more direct advantage of your own learning. The goal of this course is not to become masters—of witchcraft, of the dark arts, or or any other form of knowledge. Rather, the goal of this course is provide you with new ways of thinking about US American literature.

Technical Requirements & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements
- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements](#)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy
- Using Canvas and email
- Using Canva or other graphic design software
- Uploading documents or attachments to email
- Downloading and installing software
- Using presentation and graphics programs

Getting Help

Technical Assistance
Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](#) (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130
Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm
Telephone Availability:
- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](#) (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

Student Support Services
UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
- Individual Counseling (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Other student support services offered by UNT include

- Registrar (https://registrar.unt.edu/registration)
- Financial Aid (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
- Student Legal Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- Career Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- Multicultural Center (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- Pride Alliance (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
- UNT Food Pantry (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

Academic Support Services
- Academic Resource Center (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- UNT Libraries (https://library.unt.edu/)
- Writing Lab (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)
- MathLab (https://math.unt.edu/mathlab)

Course Requirements

In this course you have weekly assignments—discussion forums and short contemplation essays. In an online course, these assignments are important because they keep you engaged in the work of the class, give you an opportunity to dig deeper into the material, and can help you figure out where your gaps in knowledge are so you can get help if you need it. You will have four end-of-module projects.

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Archival Project	200 points	20%
Paper Quilt	200 points	20%
Concept Map	200 points	20%
Final Creative Project	250 points	25%
Class Attendance	150 points	15%

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Total Points Possible	1000 points	100%

Course Policies

Assignment Policy

All of the information you need for each assignment will be posted to Canvas. I will offer extra credit twice this semester. Occasionally the university will perform maintenance—if this schedule makes it impossible or difficult for you to get your work I will always make accomodations for you. There are other problems that might arise on your end with accessing Canvas or the UNT system. Report any problems you have to me immediately and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues as soon as possible.

This course employs lecture capture technology to record sychronous office hours. You may occasionally appear on video. The recordings will be available to you for study purposes.

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback

- It is my responsibility to help you grow and learn; to provide clear instructions for all assignments; to answer your questions about assignments; to provide you with guidance in understanding course materials; to review and update course content; and to grade your work.

- I will grade your assignments within 10 days of receiving them. I will be providing feedback using rubrics for discussion forums and contemplation essays, and will be providing feedback in Canvas for projects.

GenAI Policy

In this course, the use of GenAI tools is not permissible. No matter the approach, any attempt to represent GenAI output as a student's own work will be considered fabrication, cheating, and/or academic dishonesty as determiend on a case-by-case basis.

This class is designed to help you become a better writer and thinker, on your own terms, for yourself, by yourself. Generative AI—ChatGPT and others—does not require you to think or write! It is bland, average, derivative, often inaccurate, strange, confusing. In this class, you will have to use your own mind, think your own thoughts, and find your own words. I have a zero tolerance policy for the use of AI for any purpose in this class—it is not acceptable to use AI programs to generate writing, scan for sources, plan or outline, or help produce ideas. If I discover that you have used it *in any capacity* in your work for this class, you will receive an automatic zero on the assignment. You must use your own mind this semester.

Late Work

Late work is accepted at the discretion of the instructor. If you have extenuating circumstances that

prevent you from getting your work done, please contact me immediately—there is no problem we can't resolve together.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

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. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation.]

ADA Policy

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 (https://disability.unt.edu/).

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

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 directed to leave the classroom and 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. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (http://www.ecfr.gov/). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the

full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

(1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

(2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002).

Reading Schedule

Our Canvas page is organized by weekly units, but this reading schedule will show you what you must read for each class period. Please find links to all readings on the Canvas page.

August 19	Introduction to the class and one another
PURITAN MAGIC	
August 21	Barbara Ehrenreich and Deidre English, "Witches, Midwives, and Nurse: A History of Women Healers"
August 26	*The VVitch: A New-England Folktale* (dir. Robert Eggers, 2015) Stacy Schiff, "The Witches of Salem"
August 28	Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World*, pp. viii-xxv, 61-110
September 2	*The Crucible* (dir. Nicholas Hytner, 1996) Maggie Rosen, "A Feminist Perspective on the History of Women as Witches"
September 4	Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, Book I: Chapters 1-12 (pp. 3-86)
September 9	Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, Book II: Chapters 1-15 (pp. 90-172)
September 11	"Interview with Maryse Condé" (pp. 198-215) Sarah Mitchell, "The Influence of Slave Healers"
September 16	In-Class Writing
September 18	In-Class Writing
HOODOO MAGIC	
September 23	Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (pp. 1-89)
September 25	Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (pp. 91-131)
September 30	Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (pp. 133-245)
October 2	*Eve's Bayou* (dir. Kasi Lemmons, 1997) Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* (pp. 247-285)
October 7	*Sinners* (dir. Ryan Coogler, 2025)
October 9	*Black Panther* (dir. Ryan Coogler, 2018)
October 14	Zora Neale Hurston, "Hoodoo in America"
October 16	Zora Neale Hurston, "Hoodoo in America"
October 21	In-Class Writing
ANCESTRAL MAGIC	
October 23	Lloyd L. Lee, "Decolonizing the Navajo Nation: The Lessons of the Naabahii" Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*, Chapters 1-8 (pp. 1-64)
October 28	Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*, Chapters 9-18 (pp. 65-137)
October 30	Guy H. Cooper, "Coyote in Navajo Religion and Cosmology" Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*, Chapters 19-31 (pp. 138-229)

November 4	Rebecca Roanhorse, *Trail of Lightning*, Chapters 30-38 (pp. 230-285)
November 6	Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (pp. 1-102)
November 11	Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (pp. 102-138)
November 13	Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (pp. 138-233)
November 18	Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (pp. 223-262) Suzanne M. Augusten, "Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* and the Effects of White Contact on Pueblo Myth and Ritual"
November 20	In-Class Writing
November 25	Thanksgiving Break
November 27	Thanksgiving Break
December 2	In-Class Writing
December 4	Presentation of Final Projects