

English 242: American Indian Literature and Film (HU/ES)

Fall 2007; 3 Credits (T/Th 5:30-6:45), HS06

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Office Hours: M & W 11:00 – 1:00,
& by appointment
Andrews Hall 156

COURSE GOALS

This course is designed for you to make a cross-disciplinary exploration of Native Americans in literature, film, and other media. Since the first Europeans landed on this continent, there has been a constant and often bloody struggle for control of land and resources, language, identity, and power. While much of what we have as far as historical documents comes from the European perspective, in the past century there has been a recovery and resurgence of American Indian culture; academics, writers, artists and filmmakers have worked to return control of the representation of their culture into their own hands. They have also worked to improve cultural understanding between Native peoples and the people of European descent who came to settle the United States.

However, these efforts have given rise to questions that have resisted easy solutions: For example, how do we define “American Indian?” Who has the right to call him or herself one? How should American Indians be represented in our culture? Are there current representations that are no longer appropriate, like team mascots? If so, why? Should status as an American Indian entitle a person to separate rights (like gaming)? How should the United States govern American Indian nations within the larger nation? Our purpose this semester is to investigate these and other questions as we work to understand the changing trend, themes, and innovations in American Indian Literature. You may find that our reading may lead you to engage with myriad disciplines—like Political Science, Philosophy, and History—in new ways.

Through reading, discussing, and writing about select literary works (including poetry, prose, and drama), you will

- Broaden and deepen your exposure to and understanding of American Indian images to connect these literary and film images to the larger context of American history and society.
- Become familiar with the history, values, and culture of American Indians.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven by Sherman Alexie

Tracks by Louise Erdrich

The Way to Rainy Mountain by N. Scott Momaday

Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko

Readings on D2L; see course calendar for when to print, read, and bring to class.

Notebook, writing instruments, and folder for in-class notes and handouts; paperclips/staples for turning in papers

GRADE CALCULATION

Discussion, Preparation, & Quizzes: 5%
Historical Figure Presentation 5%
3 Response Papers: 45%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Comprehensive Final Exam: 25%

GRADE SCALE		
LETTER GRADE	VALUE	RANGE
A	4	3.75-4
A-	3.67	3.50-3.74
B+	3.33	3.25-3.49
B	3	2.75-3.24
B-	2.67	2.50-2.74
C+	2.33	2.25-2.49
C	2	1.75-2.24
C-	1.67	1.50-1.74
D+	1.33	1.25-1.49
D	1	.75-1.24
D-	.67	.50-.74
F	0	0-.49

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, OR, HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

Attend Class: Attendance is mandatory for every class. As a matter of courtesy, please contact me in advance via e-mail if you are going to be absent. **If you are absent, you are responsible for the material you will miss.** In-class assignments, such as quizzes and in-class writings, will not be available for “make up” work. Excessive absences will negatively influence your grade. **For every absence in excess of four missed classes, your grade may be lowered by 1/3 of a grade.** For example, if you earned a B in this course but missed class five times, you will have earned a B-. Students who are late may be marked absent, so it is in your best interests to be in class on time.

Participate: The success of this class depends on your preparation and involvement; therefore, you must come to class prepared to participate in discussion. You cannot participate if you have not done the reading, so make sure that you complete assigned readings before class. To facilitate critical discourse, I encourage dialogue and argument: all *thoughtful* comments will be entertained. There may be controversial issues discussed in class, so I expect you to act with tolerance and civility toward others. The rule here is simple: *show respect*. Participation also includes being prepared for class and having the necessary materials with you.

Practice Academic Honesty: Academic honesty requires that you include conventional citations of any outside sources in your papers. For this reason, papers with inadequate Works Cited sheets will not be graded. *Any involvement with plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated.* Academic misconduct is an act in which a student: (a) seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation; (b) uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise; (c) forges or falsifies academic documents or records; (d) intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others; (e) engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance; or (f) assists other students in any of these acts. The above acts are subject to disciplinary action. Further information may be found in the UW Colleges Student Rights and Regulations Handbook at: http://www.uwc.edu/student_services/student_R&R.pdf. The instructor may request to see your sources and an electronic copy of your paper if needed.

Turn Papers and Assignments in On Time: Any assignment handed in after the beginning of class on the due date is considered late and the ultimate **grade on the paper will be lowered by one third of a grade** (from an “A” to an “A-” for example) **for each calendar day it is late. No papers will be accepted seven calendar days after the due date.** This policy is subject to extenuating circumstances, if I am aware of the complications **before** the paper is late in the first

place. Because of the seriousness of this penalty, I urge you to let me know immediately if you are having problems. Also, take note of important due dates at the beginning of the semester to avoid scheduling problems ahead of time:

DUE DATES

**Historical Figure Presentation
Response Papers**

Write Yours In: _____

1: Thursday, September 27th

2: Tuesday, October 30th

3: Tuesday, November 27th

Midterm Exam

Thursday, October 18th

Final Exam

Friday, December 21st: 6:00-8:00 pm

Use Inclusive Language: Written work in this course should employ inclusive language, which shows that the writer honors the diversity of the human race by not using language that would universalize one element of humanity to the exclusion of others. For example, two areas where this exclusion commonly occurs are religion and gender. Scholarly conventions include using BCE (Before Common Era) instead of B.C., and CE (Common Era) rather than A.D., and using *men and women* or *people* or *humans* instead of the “generic *man*”; use *they* or alternate *he* and *she*. Moreover, language denigrating someone because of his or her race or sexual orientation is always inappropriate, unless, of course, the language itself is the subject of discussion.

Follow General Paper Requirements: All papers are **due at the beginning of class** on the specified dates. Please use **12-point font** and use **MLA style format and citations**. **Any paper that uses outside sources must also be accompanied by a Works Cited sheet.** If a paper is missing any of its requirements, the paper will be returned to you and late penalties will apply. Also, all materials should be submitted in an organized fashion (e.g., use staples, paperclips, or a folder). Detailed information about requirements and expectations of assignments will be distributed and discussed in class.

WHERE TO GET HELP

Visit office hours: Make an appointment to see me during my office hours any time you like in Andrews Hall, room 156. If my office hours do not accommodate your schedule, please let me know and we can schedule an appointment or conference over email. I am always available to help you in any way I can.

Visit the Learning Support Center: If you are looking for more help on a paper, a good resource to use is the **FREE one-on-one conferencing** available at the Learning Support Center, which is on the second floor of Andrews Hall, Room 231. You can make appointment by calling **758-6519**.

Use the Online Writing Lab (OWL): The OWL is a service that affords UW-Colleges students the opportunity to e-mail drafts of their writing to the OWL staff and receive feedback from a peer writing tutor. The OWL is part of the Study-Center Tutoring Program at UW-Waukesha, which is certified by the College Reading & Learning Association. Please note that it may take 2-3 business days for you to get feedback on your paper. Check it out at: waukesha.uwc.edu/academics/owl/

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – ROCK COUNTY POLICIES

Assessment: The UW Colleges-wide assessment program was established to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum, programs, and services of the institution. The institution-wide assessment activities focus on analytical, quantitative, communication and aesthetic skills because they are of primary importance in the general education of our students. This semester, students in literature and composition will be assessed on communication skills, specifically the ability to communicate clearly, precisely, and in a well-organized manner.

Campus Email Policy: All email correspondence to your instructors MUST be sent through your official campus email account. For safety against computer viruses and to remove SPAM email messages, your instructor **may delete without reading** any email originating outside our campus email system. If you use any other email account to contact your instructor – you MUST ASSUME that the message WILL NOT be read. Students are encouraged to read their campus email regularly. If you need assistance in accessing your campus email account, please contact Campus Network Administrator, Barb Palmer (office W07, barbara.palmer@uwc.edu), or Campus Instructional Technologist, Judy Konkel (office A51, 758-6570, judy.konkel@uwc.edu).

Sexual Assault and Harassment: Respect for human dignity is essential to an appropriate university environment. Thus, sexual harassment of students and employees is impermissible and unprofessional conduct and will not be tolerated. Conduct determined to fall within the definition of sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with applicable due process requirements, including, but not limited to, reprimand, temporary suspension, expulsion, or discharge of the harassing individual. Further information may be found in the UW Colleges Student Rights and Regulations Handbook at: http://www.uwc.edu/student_services/student_R&R.pdf

Students with Disabilities: Qualified students with disabilities (those who have been admitted and can provide documentation of their disability) have the right to request accommodations from the university, as stipulated within Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1976 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students needing accommodations should provide early notice to staff in the campus Student Services Office because of the time required for arranging accommodations. Students may also contact the coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in Madison at 608-262-2001 (voice) or 608-265-5766 (TDD/T*TY) for information and assistance. More information may be found at: http://www.uwc.edu/student_services/disability_services.asp

COURSE CALENDAR

T SEPT 4	Introduction to Course and Classmates
TH SEPT 6	Read Mary Rowlandson’s Captivity Narrative (d2l) & “Black Elk Speaks” (d2l)
T SEPT 11	Read “James Fenimore Cooper” (d2l); In class: <i>The Last of the Mobicans</i> (excerpts)
TH SEPT 13	Read “William Bradford” (d2l)
T SEPT 18	Read N. Scott Momaday, <i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i> 1-44

- TH SEPT 20 Read N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain* 44-88
- T SEPT 25 Read “The Invention of Western Film” (d2l); In class: *The Searchers*
- TH SEPT 27 Read “Jacquelyn Kirkpatrick” (d2l); In class: *The Searchers*, cont.
Response Paper 1 Due
- T OCT 2 Read “Tonto’s Revenge” (d2l); In Class: *Dances with Wolves* (excerpts)
- TH OCT 4 Read “Pocahontas to John Smith” (d2l) and “General History” (d2l); In class: Disney’s *Pocahontas* (excerpts)
- T OCT 9 Read “Where I Come From is Like This” (d2l) and “Mountain Wolf Woman” (d2l)
- TH OCT 11 Read “Peter Pan” (d2l); In class: Disney’s *Peter Pan* (excerpts)
- T OCT 16 Review for Midterm Exam; In class: “The Son Also Draws” (*Family Guy*)
- TH OCT 18 **Midterm Exam** (during class)
- T OCT 23 Read Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* 1-61
- TH OCT 25 Read Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* 62-95
- T OCT 30 Read Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* 96-164
Response Paper 2 Due
- TH NOV 1 Read Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* 165-226
- T NOV 6 Read “Vine Deloria Jr. 2” (d2l); “In Class: “The Cigar Store Indian” (*Seinfeld*, Season 5)
- TH NOV 8 Read Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* 1-53; In-class: *Smoke Signals*
- T NOV 13 Read Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* 54-104; In-class: *Smoke Signals*, cont.
- TH NOV 15 Read Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* 104-153
- T NOV 20 Read Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* 154-223
- TH NOV 22 Classes Excused – Thanksgiving
- T NOV 27 Read Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* 1-63
Response Paper 3 Due
- TH NOV 29 Read Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* 64-130

- T DEC 4 Read Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* 131-201
- TH DEC 6 Read Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* 201-262
Course Evaluations
- T DEC 11 In Class: “Christopher” (*Sopranos*, Season 4)
- TH DEC 13 Course Conclusions and Review
- F DEC 21 **FINAL EXAM, 6:00-8:00 PM**