

Course: ENGLISH 2324
Asynchronous online class

Instructor: Dr. John Wegner
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Office hours: M-F
9-11; and by appointment
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Communication: After the first day of class, I will create a SKYPE group and an email group. I will communicate with the class via SKYPE, email, Blackboard, and the Blackboard announcements page. Students are responsible for checking email and SKYPE at least **three** times a week for any class announcements. I will communicate with individual students via SKYPE and email.

Contact information: I check my email throughout the day. Students are welcome to contact me via email or SKYPE at any time, but you will have better results if you contact me and set up a designated time to meet. I usually respond fairly quickly (unless you email after 5:00 cst.). I do check my email after 5:00, but there is no guarantee I will email back that night. I check my email at least once Saturday and once Sunday. Generally, I will respond to students within 12 hours of contact. I do not check SKYPE after 5:00 or on the weekends.

A Special Note:

Online classes require that students act with discipline and actively participate in the class. Successful online students monitor the class multiple times throughout the week and the successful student will not be a passive participant in the class. An asynchronous online class is radically different from the traditional classroom. While I can reproduce parts of the traditional environment with video lectures, you must be prepared to work differently to succeed in this class. You have the freedom to choose (mostly) the times you spend “in class,” but you must establish a system whereby you consistently check the relevant online pages. In addition, it will be your responsibility to contact me should you have questions and concerns.

Accessibility/Disability Policy at ASU: For students enrolled at ASU who have diagnosed disabilities, please contact [ASU's Disability Services](#) for an explanation of the services available and the documentation requirements for the university in order to receive academic assistance.

Required Texts/Technology:

Students are welcome to purchase these books electronically (Kindle, iPad, Amazon, etc).

PRIOR TO BUYING LAWN'S BOOK: All of the stories in our first section are free and I will make those available in pdf formats in Blackboard. The remaining short stories are available in Lawn's book, but an industrious student could go to the library for many of our readings. **(I will indicate on the schedule which books are available and which are not.)**

Eliot, T.S. "The Wasteland." I will provide a copy and the poem is available free in two locations (You should choose which version you will read):

1. <http://www.bartleby.com/201/1.html>
2. <http://eliotswasteland.tripod.com/>

1. Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Border-Crosser with a Lamborghini Dream*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 1999. ISBN: 9780816519323
2. Lawn, Beverly. *40 Short Stories: Portable Anthology*. 3rd. Boston: Bedford Saint Martin's, 2009. ISBN: 9780312477103 **(See Note Above Prior to Buying this book)**
3. Lori-Parks, Suzan. *Topdog/Underdog*. Theatre Communications Group, 2002. ISBN: 9781559362016
4. McCarthy, Cormac. *All the Pretty Horses*. New York: Random House, 1992. ISBN: 9780679744399

Other required "texts":

- Purdue Online Writing Lab (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>)
- e-mail—You need to use your ASU email account.
- SKYPE—free software to download at <http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/home>
- Dropbox—free download at <https://www.dropbox.com/gs>. Students will create a Dropbox account and share that account with me.

Please note: These works of literature explore complicated, and often uncomfortable, issues. If you are not prepared to read works that discuss race, religion, sex, violence, and other issues you will find in the daily newspaper, you should not remain in this class. You should also be prepared for some rough language within some of our works.

Hardware and Software Requirements:

Webcam and video capture software: Students will need access to a personal computer with a high speed internet connection and with microphone and camera or webcam. Logitech offers fine webcams, such as

http://www.logitech.com/ens/webcam_communications/webcams/devices/6600. You will also need the ability to capture video, record short oral presentations, and upload those videos. Students will also need to register for a Skype and Dropbox accounts. All are free (yeah!). As soon as you have webcam installed and a Skype account configured, please contact me so that we can test everything.

Technical Difficulties: While I might be able to help with some basic technical issues, students who have issues should contact the IT Helpdesk at 325-942-2911 or 1-800-942-2911. You can also email them at helpdesk@angelo.edu.

NOTE: Students will not be penalized during the semester for technical issues caused by ASU or acts beyond their control. However, you should create back up files that are time stamped as you work this semester.

Purpose:

"I know what you want. You want a story that won't surprise you. That will confirm what you already know. That won't make you see higher or further or differently. You want a flat story. An immobile story. You want dry, yeastless factuality." (Yann Martel, *Life of Pi*)

This course is designed as a sophomore introduction to American literature. The reading list is not comprehensive, nor is it designed to create an exhaustive list of "classic" literature. Instead, the goal of the reading list is to create opportunities for discussing movements and trends in literature and culture. In large part, I hope you leave the class with a renewed appreciation for literature and an increased aptitude for critical thinking. The works listed above will allow us to explore both culture and identity, while gaining a greater sense of our shared humanity.

Course Objectives:

1. to gain factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2. to gain a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature);
3. to learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Learning outcomes:

Upon completing English 2324, students will be able to

1. define specific terms related to genres;
2. analyze individual works of literature for meaning;
3. understand the diverse intellectual and cultural tradition of American literature.

Method of Assessing Learning Outcomes:

Learning outcomes will be assessed via exams, essays, and class participation.

Essential Competencies for this course include the abilities to (1) read, analyze, and interpret complex literary works and criticism of those works; (2) to write extended, coherent and grammatically correct essays; and (3) to participate in class discussions about the ideas in the literature.

Prerequisites: "Satisfactory completion of English 1301 or achieving credit through examination is prerequisite for any sophomore-level course" ASU Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogue.

Attendance/Class policy/student expectations (READ CAREFULLY):

I have broken the class into three modules. Each module has required readings and an exam. Students are welcome to read ahead. I will update the class videos, assignments, and lecture materials every Wednesday night. You are responsible for checking the course every Thursday to ensure you know the assignments for that week. If you read ahead, you still must check to be sure I haven't posted any new videos.

In addition to the time spent with the readings, you should plan to engage with the course at least 3 hours per week.

You are responsible for all material covered in class. My video lectures and assignment discussion/instructions will be posted every **Wednesday night**. Students will view the videos **before** the following **Monday**. I have the ability to monitor when students access Blackboard and whether students watch the videos in their entirety.

Individual assignments will have specific due dates and participation dates. For instance, there will be blog assignments, student produced video assignments, etc. that will require students to “attend” class other times during the week. Missing those dates constitutes missed class.

Students who do not “attend” class or who miss assignment due dates will be counted absent. After 5 absences, students will lose 25 points off their final average. After 7 absences, students will lose an additional 20 points off their final average. (If a student has a special circumstance that prevents him or her from viewing the video or attending class, that student should contact me.)

ASU Policy of Religious holy days: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Daily Student Responsibilities:

You are responsible for any assigned homework AND the reading assigned. The works should be completed prior to the video posting. Students should be prepared to discuss the works as either a blog leader or in a video blog.

Quizzes: You will take a quiz over every reading assignment. Quizzes will be open book, but students are required to put the **page/chapter/scene/line number** indicating where the answer occurs in the text. All quizzes are submitted to the shared Dropbox account as a **pdf**. Failure to do submit as a pdf or include the page numbers results in no grade for that quiz.

Blog Leaders—Entering the Online Fishbowl: Periodically, I will designate blog leaders. The specific responsibilities are below. Blog leaders will lead small group blog discussions during the week. I will create groups with a designated blog leader. The assignment will dictate the number of responses required from each student. As a blog leader, the student is responsible for

1. Starting the conversation by making the first comment within 24 hours;
2. Monitoring the conversation to ensure participation;

NOTE: Blog discussions will be polite and students will stay focused on the conversation at hand. Certainly, students do not have to agree on everything, but disagreements will be handled professionally and discussion will be based on credible data. Personal attacks, inappropriate comments, and wild accusations will not be tolerated. All students should be prepared to defend their claims with textual evidence. (See the Blackboard Course Policies/Academic Support for more specific Netiquette information.)

Video Blogs: Periodically, students will submit a short 4-6 minute video blog on a topic introduced that week. These video blogs are relatively informal, but they will cover the relevant information. Other students will watch and respond.

(NOTE about videos—Blackboard periodically has trouble with videos because it is not set up as a video streaming device. However, short, 4-6 minute videos generally upload relatively easily. As a general rule, wmv file types upload easiest while mov files upload slowest and have the most difficulty. I highly recommend you purchase the webcam I mention above for this class even if your computer has an internal webcam.)

Technical Tip: If your video refused to upload into BB, post that video to your Dropbox account.

Individual Blogs: Periodically, I will ask one question of the entire class and each student will post an individual blog entry. These blog entries must be a minimum of 300 words and every blog entry should show some familiarity with the text discussed. Vague answers that show no real indication the student has read the material will receive a zero.

Final Note about blogs and quizzes:

Successfully completing this class and achieving the learning outcomes will require that students interact on a regular basis. When you review the class schedule, you will note that I expect students to be online every day. Some days require more work. Most assignments allow you to pick the time that you work, although there are a few synchronous meetings with me and at least one synchronous group meeting.

Exams: You will take three in-class (Blackboard) exams during the semester (one will be the final). These exams will consist of two parts: objective (short answer, multiple choice, and quote identification) and a short essay. Be aware that anything I discuss in class is potential test material. Your essay answers must be well-developed, well-written, grammatically, and mechanically correct short essays. I will keep in mind that you are writing in-class, but time constraints are no excuse for illiterate writing. Multiple errors in spelling, grammar, and other mechanical skills will influence your grade. I expect sophomore-level writing ability that is clear, concise, and contains complete sentences. You might want to review your freshman English class notes to review the thesis sentence and other important parts of the argumentative essay.

Your exams, including the essay exam, will be timed exams given in Blackboard. The Final Exam is comprehensive and covers the entire semester's reading.

NOTE: I reserve the right to contact you via skype during the exam. As faculty, we are under increasing pressure to ensure that the student taking the exam in our online classes is the student registered for the course. As such, I will periodically, skype students who are testing to ensure the student answering questions is the student in the course.

Major paper: You will write a paper outside of class on a topic TBA. Your paper needs to be 1000-2000 words and utilize no outside sources. Your paper should be a thoughtful response defended by a close analytical reading of the text. The out-of-class essay will be graded for content and mechanics. See the attached grading outline for a clear, concise explanation of the grading criteria. If you have not written about literature in the past (or recent past) visit the

Purdue OWL for some useful help. They discuss research; we will not research for this paper. I will provide a detailed handout as we get closer to the due date. Plagiarism, either intended or accidental, will result in automatic failure for the class. Visit the Center for Academic Integrity to learn more about this important issue.

Academic Honesty:

If you cheat, you will fail this course. Cheating, simply put, is turning in someone else’s work for credit. Copying answers on the quizzes, providing answers on the quizzes, copying questions on the exams, using your cell phone during an exam, and plagiarizing are all examples of cheating. Hiring someone to take the class is cheating.

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook.

See the Current Student page (on the ASU homepage) and click on Academic Honor Code.

In essence, the willingness to cheat undermines our purpose at the university. To read more, check out the Center for Academic Integrity.

Cutting and pasting information into exams, consulting outside sources, or using your friends, parents, and colleagues during an exam is cheating.

GRADES:

Daily work: blogs/videos/quizzes 15%
 Exams 70%
 Essay 15%

Students with Disabilities (statement provided by Student Life Office):

Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Tentative Schedule of Events: My videos will be posted in Blackboard. The schedule below breaks the semester into three modules. I will discuss the readings in the order they appear. Assignments/blogs/group discussions will also follow this order. Due dates, daily quizzes, etc will all be posted in Blackboard. Changes to this schedule will be noted in Blackboard.

*(Blackboard)=available as pdf in Blackboard and via request

***(Purchase)=student must purchase either traditional text or e-text

****(Lawn)=story available in Beverly Lawn’s collection. See note earlier in syllabus.

*****(Online)=story available online only

Week 1 (14-18)	Introduction; syllabus; How to Read Literature
	MODULE 1: Building an American Literature
January 21-Feb. 15 (Weeks 2-5)	Nathaniel Hawthorne: “Young Goodman Brown” *(Blackboard) Hermann Melville: “Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street” (Blackboard)
Required readings	Stephen Crane: “The Open Boat” (Blackboard) Kate Chopin: “The Storm”*

	Mary Freeman: “The Revolt of Mother”* William Faulkner: “Barn Burning” (Blackboard) Katherine Ann Porter: “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall” (Blackboard) T.S. Eliot: “The Wasteland” (Blackboard)
Friday, Feb. 15	Exam: Module 1
	MODULE 2: Conflicting American Mythologies
February 18-March 22 (Weeks 6-10) Required readings	Langston Hughes****(Online) Raymond Carver: “Cathedral” ***(Lawn) Joyce Carol Oates: “Where are You Going, Where Have You Been” (Lawn) Gwendolyn Brooks****(online) (Spring Break—March 11-15) Bambara: “The Lesson” (Lawn) Amy Tan: “Two Kinds” (Lawn) Tim O’Brien: “The Things They Carried” (Lawn) Cormac McCarthy: <i>All the Pretty Horses</i> **(Purchase)
Friday, March 22	Exam: Module 2
	MODULE 3: New Ages/New Myths
March 25-May 3 (Weeks 11-16) Required Readings	3-25/3-29: Synchronous online conferences over major essay Juan Felipe Herrera: <i>Border Crosser with a Lamborghini Dream</i> (Purchase) Ralph Ellison “Battle Royal” (Lawn) Flanner O’Connor: “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (Lawn) James Baldwin: “Sonny’s Blues” (Lawn) Alice Walker: “Everyday Use” (Lawn) Suzan-Lori Parks: <i>Top Dog/Underdog</i> (Purchase)
Monday April 22	Essay due by 5:00 (posted to Dropbox as pdf)
Week 17 (6-10)	Final—Comprehensive—1/2 exam will cover the last module; the remaining half will draw from Modules 1 & 2)