

20503 Major American Writers:



Instructor Name: Ms. Amanda Barnett

Semester/Year: Fall 2016

Class location: Beasley 103

Class Meeting time(s): Mon/Wed 2-3:20

Office: Reed 402

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Course Description

Welcome! In this course we will be discovering “the life that writes itself” through a wide range of texts. We will hear from a multiplicity of voices across time, race, ethnicity, gender, genre, and class in order to discuss not only these particular authors and their texts but also to learn more broadly about the purposes, meanings, and definitions of autobiographical literature.

Required texts: You may purchase them from the book store or online or wherever you please. However, you MUST have a hard copy to use in class and you MUST buy the edition listed.

Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson: *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, Second Edition ISBN #9780816669851

William Andrews and Paul John Eakin, editors: *Classic American Autobiographies*
ISBN #978-0451471444

Harriet Jacobs: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Dover Thrift Edition ISBN# 978-0486419312

Sandra Cisneros: *A House of My Own: Stories from my Life*, ISBN # 038535133X

Maxine Hong Kingston: *The Woman Warrior: Memoir of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*, ISBN# 0780736842

One small spiral notebook for your participation journal

Learning Outcomes

- Students will explore texts of multiple cultural heritages, aesthetic approaches, and ideological perspectives.
- Students will practice and demonstrate the skills of critical reading and interpretation.
- Students will practice and demonstrate the skills of oral presentation and discussion.
- Students will write logically coherent, informed, and persuasive prose.

Instructional Methods

In this course we will use discussion as our main learning tool. This means that you will be expected to come to class each day having read the text thoughtfully. We will talk about how to write discussion questions and how to take useful notes while reading. Other modes of teaching will include short lectures (by myself and your classmates) and essay writing. For the former I expect you to pay respectful attention while the presenters are speaking and to actively engage in lectures in whatever way you are asked to do so. **Our classroom is a place for the free exchange of ideas in an environment of mutual respect. Students whose behavior distracts or disrespects others will be asked to leave and will be counted absent.**

Grading and Requirements

Grading

Simply fulfilling the minimum requirements of the course warrants an average grade (*i.e.*, C). Coming to class every day and completing assignments is not something that earns extra credit or an outstanding grade; it is a basic expectation for coursework.

A higher than average grade will be based on:

- 1) the development of your work
- 2) consistently demonstrating critical and creative thinking
- 3) a willingness to take risks by exploring new subjects, genres, and techniques.

Final Grade Elements:

Oral Presentations	40% (2 at 20% each)
Essays	30% (2 @ 15% each)
Class Preparation/Journal	25%
Final Presentation	5%
TOTAL	100%

Final Numerical Grade Calculation (+/-):

Grade	Score		
A	94-100	C	74-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-73
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	84-86	D	64-66
B-	80-83	D-	60-63
C+	77-79	F	0-59

Requirements

Presentations: There will be two group presentations over the course of the semester: the Context Presentation and the Conversation Presentation.

For each presentation each group member will take a job from the list (you must switch jobs from one presentation to the next.) You will turn in your notes detailing your job and the work you completed for the presentation on the day your group presents. Both presentations must be interactive in some way (you must get your audience involved throughout the period) but your options for this are nearly unlimited. You may use any techniques a professor might use to encourage participation and learning. This includes but is not limited to: small group activities, discussion questions, call and response, questions throughout lecture portion, short writing time, large group activities etc.

Context Presentations: This type will occur on the first class day for each novel. The group may choose which types of context are most useful but must at least briefly cover: authorial context, biographical context, historical context (local or general), literary context, generic context. A detailed assignment sheet can be found on the course site.

Conversation Presentations: This type will occur on the last day of our discussion of each text. Thinking about how/what we discussed about this text, look at how others talk about it. Look both at general audience conversations (are there blogs or newspaper articles about it, reviews etc), student audiences (are there spark note or grade saver type site that discuss this text), and scholarly audiences (we will discuss how to search the library site for articles on the texts). You will be presenting these different conversations (and our classroom one) as well as synthesizing them to come up with an idea of why we still talk about this work (if it is old) or why we should (if it is newer). A detailed assignment sheet can be found on the course site.

Groups: in the second week of class I will be dividing you into groups which you will stay in throughout the semester. All group projects have an individual component and, although this is rarely necessary, I reserve the right to lower or raise the grade of group members who do not contribute (or who pick up the slack from their partners).

Essays: You will write two short essays in this course (3-5 pages). The first will be a creative assignment exploring your own autobiography and the second will be a visual recreation of the first assignment. I will give detailed assignment sheets two weeks before the final due date of each essay. We will spend time in class for each assignment workshopping a draft so be mindful of this deadline as well. We will discuss the expectations for workshopping when the first one approaches.

Participation Journal and Class Preparation: This journal is designed to house

two separate types of assessment. The first is the self-assessment of participation. Each week you will assign yourself a score using the rubric posted on the course site. The second is the warm-up, cool down exercises which we will do most days. These entries will be graded on a scale of 0-3. I will collect the journals at the end of each unit. A sample journal page looks like:

8/10/16

Warm-up: aksidfhkjahdggkjabgkjhakjghaksjdghaksjdfhksjdfh'kajdfha;kf

Cool- down: a;lsidkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkkfh

8/12/16

Absent

S-A score: 8- Although I was absent on the 12th, I participated actively on the 10th. I was on time, had read the entire assignment, spoke up in our class conversation and was respectful of the points of views of others even though we disagreed on the interpretation of Franklin's importance to the army.

8/17/16

Warm- Up: aksjdfh'kjasdfgh'

Cool- down: akehfkajhdf

Etc...

***I will occasionally give quizzes instead of warm-up activities. These will be multiple choice and mainly checking for plot/character knowledge and basic comprehension.

Final Project:

We will have a presentation of our visual essays during our final exam time.

Course Policies

Late Work

Work will be due by the beginning of class and will be considered late thereafter. If you know you will be missing a class, you must submit the assignment ahead of time to receive credit. If for any reason the technology (TCU online) is not working, email me the assignment with an explanation before the time it is due. I will not accept late work without agreement between myself and the student at least 24 hours before the work is due.

Class Conduct

Our classroom is a place for the free exchange of ideas in an environment of

mutual respect. Students whose behavior distracts or disrespects others will be asked to leave and will be counted absent.

Office Hours

During my office hours I will be available to talk with you about any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the course. Please stop by and see me during these hours – that time is yours. If these hours don't work for you, please email me and make an appointment.

Drafts

I do not look at drafts over email. However, if you come to my office (during office hours or by appointment) I will be happy to go over it with you.

Discussions about Grades/Comments

I am happy to discuss my comments on your assignments with you. However, you must wait at least 24 hours after receiving the grade and you must come in to my office (during office hours or by appointment) to discuss them. I will not discuss grades before or after class or over email.

Email Policy

Emails should be formatted respectfully and appropriately with a greeting, body, and signature. I will respond to your emails within 24 hours during the week. On the weekends I check my emails sporadically so while you may receive a response fairly quickly, do not count on this. This means that if there is an assignment due on Monday I strongly suggest beginning before the weekend so that you can ask questions if necessary. Again, I do not look at drafts over email, but if you have specific questions that cannot be answered by the syllabus or assignment sheet I am happy to help.

Technology Policy

We will often use our computers in class so you should bring it every day. However, when you are in groups you will not be using more than one computer per group. When we are discussing or watching presentations you will close your computer to reduce distractions and to foster respect for those in front of you. Phones should NOT be out during class unless you are specifically instructed to use them. If I see you off task due to technology I will give a warning and then will mark you absent for the day.

Attendance

Regular attendance is necessary to your success in this course. Only official university absences are excused. Students representing TCU in a university-mandated activity that requires missing class should provide official

documentation of schedules beforehand and turn in work *in advance*.

Tardiness is distracting to the class and in-class work cannot be made up. Please come on time as three tardies will become an absence.

You can be absent 3 times before it directly affects your grade. Each absence after that will lower the attendance piece of your participation grade by a letter grade. You will also receive a zero for both participation and preparedness for the day. I do not accept doctor's notes; everyone gets sick so I suggest saving the absences for when you really need them.

Three weeks (6 days) of unexcused absences constitute grounds for failure of the course. Students whose absences are due to circumstances beyond their control should contact me right away.

SCHOOL-WIDE POLICIES

Statement of Disability Services at TCU

Disability Statement approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council / Revised Summer 2011

Disabilities Statement: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.* Guidelines for documentation may be found at http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp.

Academic Misconduct:

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details;

<http://tcu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Student-Policies/Academic-Conduct-Policy-Details>). Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.
- Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore.
- Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

TCU Online (D2L Brightspace)

For this course we will be participating in the pilot program for the new TCU Online system that the whole school will be going to next semester. We will spend a little time in class playing around in the course shell, but please feel free to email me with any questions you might have regarding this new technology.

We will be using this system extensively so be sure you are comfortable using it. You can find tutorials for the site at <http://tcuonline.tcu.edu/knowledgebase/>

TCU Campus Resources for Students

TCU Campus Resources for Students: Many resources exist on the TCU campus that may be helpful to students: Mary Coats Burnett Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall. 1022); the William L. Adams Writing Center (257-7221, Reed Hall 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); and Office of Religious & Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006), and the Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Samuelson Hall).



Course Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule for the semester. It is subject to change as necessary. Readings and assignments should be completed before class on the day they are listed.

MW Schedule
(if necessary, this is subject to change)

Note: It is your responsibility to keep track of due dates. Please use your planner, cell phone calendar, or notebook to write down important due dates, daily assignments, and course work.

Date	In Class Activities	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Week 1	Unit 1: Intro to Autobiography		
M 8/22	Intro to class, syllabus, D2L	-----	-----
W 8/24		<i>Reading Autobiography</i> Chapter 1	
Week 2			
M 8/29	Put groups together	<i>Reading Autobiography</i> Chapter 9	
W 8/31			
Week 3	Unit 2: Colonial America		
M 9/5	Labor Day: NO CLASS		
W 9/7	Rowlandson Context	Rowlandson pgs 2-25	
Week 4			
M 9/12		Rowlandson pgs 25-53	
W 9/14	Rowlandson Conversation		
Week 5			
M 9/19	Franklin Context	Franklin 56-106	
W 9/21		Franklin 107-140	
Week 6			
M 9/26		Franklin 141-190	
W 9/28	Franklin Conversation	Franklin 191-220	JOURNAL DUE
Week 7	Unit 2: 19th Century America		
M 10/3	Jacobs context	Jacobs pgs. 2-50	
W 10/5	workshop	Jacobs pgs. 51-91	Essay 1 draft
Week 8			
M 10/10	Fall Break: No Class		
W 10/12		Jacobs pgs. 92-121	Essay 1
Week 9			
M 10/17	Jacobs Conversation	Jacobs pgs. 122-167	
W 10/19	Zitkala-Sa Context	Zitkala-Sa 413-432	
Week 10			
M 10/24		Zitkala-Sa 433-462	
W 10/26	Zitkala-Sa		Journal

		Conversation		
	Week 11	Unit 3: 20th/21st century		
	M 10/31	Kingston Context	Kingston 3-75	
	W 11/2		Kingston 75-109	
	Week 12			
	M 11/7		Kingston 113-160	
	W 11/9	Kingston Conversation	Kingston 163-209	
	Week 13			
	M 11/14	Cisneros Context	Cisneros 3-90	
	W 11/16		Cisneros 91-159	
	Week 14			
	M 11/21		Cisneros 160-244	
	W 11/23	Thanksgiving Break: no class		
	Week 15			
	M 11/28	Cisneros Conversation	Cisneros 245-374	
	W 11/30		Skim <i>Reading</i> <i>Autobiography</i> Chapter 6	
	Week 16	Unit 4: Autobiography Revisited		
	M 12/5	Workshop day		Journal, visual essay draft
	W 12/7	(Last Day of Class) Evaluations and work time		Visual Essay
	Finals			
	3-5:30pm Monday 12/12	FINAL		