



**ENG 689.001 (Independent Study: Contemporary Southern Literature)
Fall, 2013**

Instructor: M. Hunter Hayes

Office Location: HL 140

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 10:00-11:00 and by appointment

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook(s) Required:

Frederick Barthelme, *Waveland*

John Brandon, *Arkansas*

Harry Crews, *Scar Lover*

William Gay, *The Long Home*

Bobbie Ann Mason, *In Country*

Michael F. Smith, *Rivers*

Donna Tartt, *The Little Friend*

Course Description:

This course is an independent study, designed to augment research for the doctoral dissertation. This section has been designed to explore the contemporary scene of the American South through the lens of ecocritical studies, emphasizing the complications of rural and urban settings in the way they inform concepts of place, character, and development. Texts for this course will provide the student with a general study of ecocriticism as a framework for the creative dissertation.

Course Objectives:

1. To explore the sense of literature of the American South through the lens of ecocritical studies.
2. To provide the student with the opportunity to engage in guided research on ecocriticism and contemporary Southern fiction in order to develop the critical frame for the creative dissertation.
3. To understand the complications of urban and rural settings and how these settings inform concepts of place, character, and development in contemporary Southern fiction.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives of this course and instructional units/modules. By the end of this course the class will read and discuss ten novels and selected supplementary readings, and discussions will take in other aspects of Modernism and modernity beyond literature.

- **Weekly Responses:** Each week the student will prepare a critical reaction of 1-2 pages to that week's reading; on the weeks when no reading is due, the reaction should be to literary criticism the student has read in preparation for the annotated bibliography assignments.
- **Annotated Bibliographies:** The student will read two critical articles relevant to the theme and focus of the course and/or the specific works read. Each annotation should be approximately 150 words and observe MLA or another appropriate style.
- **Final Paper:** The final paper will be of seminar length (10-15 pages) and apply literary theory appropriate to the theme of the course.

Grading

Assignment and course grades will be determined by the student's performance on the following assignments:

- **Weekly Responses:** 25% of total course grade
- **Annotated Bibliographies:** 40% of total course grade (10 % each)
- **Final Paper:** 35% of total course grade

The instructor will determine grades on the following scale:

- A = 90%-100%
- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%

F = 0%-59%

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of **academic dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally-accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another person and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension and expulsion (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1, 2, 3]). Cheating, including plagiarizing papers in whole or part, will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment for the first offense and failure of the course for any subsequent offenses.

More details regarding academic honesty: Any student who commits plagiarism or violates any other tenet of academic honesty will receive a grade of zero for the first offense; a second violation will result in automatic failure of the course. Upon any infraction of academic honesty, I will provide the student with written notice of the infraction, will require a face-to-face meeting in my office to discuss the matter, and I will also notify the dean of the student's college.

Attendance Policy

Because your active participation in discussions is expected, attendance is vital for success in this course. Attendance requires more than simply logging on to the course site, and you should begin engaging in discussions by Wednesday evening each week.

Assignment Policy

I will provide specific details during class meetings and possibly by email. Students must stay current with all readings, including the course lectures and discussions. Students must complete and submit all assignments by their respective due dates.

Late Work

I will not accept any assignment after its due date. Assignments submitted after the due date may receive a score of zero (0).

Drop a Course

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled "Drop a class" from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the Web page.

Incompletes

Incompletes (grade of "X") are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Administrative Withdrawal

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of student conduct codes.

Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns or complaints that pertain to the course must first address the issue with the instructor. If the matter remains unresolved, ordinarily the student must schedule a meeting with the department head. Since I am the department head for Literature and Languages, the student would need to schedule a meeting with dean or associate dean of the college of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce**

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Class-Specific Notes on Student Conduct: I expect all students to treat all members of the class community with respect, including respect to differences of opinion, cultural background, and other matters. Although I encourage students to debate issues, it is important to note that there are effective and logical ways of conducting such debates.

Department Contact Information:

Dr. Hunter Hayes, Head of Literature and Languages (hunter.hayes@tamuc.edu)

Ms. Kim Jefferies, Administrative Secretary (kim.jefferies@tamuc.edu)

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The following course schedule is subject to revisions and other modifications as the instructor deems necessary for the course. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced on the course website in advance of the week in which the change will occur.

- Week 1 –Read *In Country* by Bobbie Ann Mason.
- Week 2 – Read *The Long Home* by William Gay (First Half).
- Week 3 – Finish *The Long Home*, **First annotated bibliography due.**
- Week 4 – Read *Arkansas* by John Brandon.
- Week 5 – Read *Rivers* by Michael F. Smith (First Half).
- Week 6 – Finish *Rivers*. **Second annotated bibliography due.**
- Week 7 – Read *The Little Friend* by Donna Tartt (First 1/3).
- Week 8 –Read *The Little Friend* (Second 1/3).
- Week 9 –Finish *The Little Friend*.
- Week 10 – Read *Waveland* by Frederick Barthelme (First half) **Third annotated bibliography due.**
- Week 11 – Finish *Waveland*
- Week 12 - Read *Scar Lover* by Harry Crews (First Half)
- Week 13 – Finish *Scar Lover*
- Week 14 – **Fourth annotated bibliography due.**
- Week 15 - **Final paper due**