



**ENG 202.001 (82438)—U.S. Multiethnic American Literature:
“The Global Ethnic American Narrative”
Fall 2014
TR
12:30-1:45 pm
HL 304**

Instructor: (Christopher Gonzalez, PhD – Assistant Professor)
Office Location: Hall of Languages 225
Office Hours: MW 12:00-2:30 pm and by appointment
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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah*. (ISBN: 0307455920)
Díaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. (ISBN: 1594483299)
Lee, Chang-Rae. *Native Speaker*. (ISBN: 1573225312)
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Lowland*. (ISBN: 0307278263)
Bulawayo, NoViolet. *We Need New Names*. (ISBN: 0316230847)
Skyhorse, Brando. *The Madonnas of Echo Park*. (ISBN: 1439170843)
Johnson-Valenzuela, Melissa. Ed. *Dismantle: An Anthology of Writing from the VONA/Voices of Writing Workshop*. (ISBN: 9780989747417)

*Note: Students are welcome to use alternate editions when available, including e-books.

Catalogue Description: Hours: 3 Lecture

This course is designed to give students knowledge of the ethnic diversity of American literature at the same time that they improve their skills in reading and interpreting literature and in writing. The course covers material from at least three of the following ethnic groups: Native American, African American, Hispanic American, and American Eskimo. Other ethnic groups may also be included. Prerequisite Eng 1302.

Course Description:

Because the presence of a multiethnic literature reaches back to even before the founding of the United States—to the colonial period of America—an exploration of race and ethnicity in U.S. literature is no small matter. The intention of this course is to present an introduction to this rich tradition of literary and cultural production by investigating very recent works of American literature—works by authors whose identity was/has been formed in geographic spaces outside of the borders of the U.S. We will explore novels that illuminate the transnational identities of many Americans—whether they have connections to African countries, Asian countries, or Latin American countries. We will proceed with the goal of understanding how these authors, through the creation of their novels, reorient our current understandings of American identity.

Primary readings for this course will consist of six novels from several racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. The treatment and struggle of these groups throughout history has contributed to their respective identities, and these issues often make readers uneasy. This is precisely the point; expect to feel troubled when approaching these topics. Our goal is to learn how to participate in this politically charged discourse in a way that respects the identity groups, your classmates, your professor, and yourself. Ultimately, we want to engage in these topics, not shy away from them because they cause us to be uncomfortable. Thus, students enrolled in ENG 202 should plan to engage regularly and productively in discussions; compose short critical responses (2-3 pp.) and longer analytical research papers (approx. 7 pages); and demonstrate knowledge in quizzes and exams.

Core Objectives (Language, Philosophy & Culture):

Critical Thinking Skills: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

Communication Skills: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Local learning outcomes:

Critical Thinking: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.

- This objective will be assessed by an evaluation of at least one essay assignment, critical response paper, quiz, and/or exam for each student.

Communications: In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure

- This objective will be assessed by an evaluation of at least one essay or critical response paper from each student.

Social Responsibility: Students will describe the relationships of individuals to their communities.

- This objective will be assessed by an evaluation of at least one essay by each student. The essays will focus on specific readings and issues relevant to the course.

Social Responsibility: Students will understand and practice academic honesty.

- This objective will be assessed by each student's successful completion of all papers, exams and quizzes without infringing upon academic integrity through violations that include committing plagiarism (intentionally or unintentionally) and cheating on exams and quizzes by consulting the answers of others and sources not permitted for the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes and objectives of this course and instructional units/modules. By the end of this course the class will read and discuss six novels and additional short shorts stories and poetry from the anthology *Dismantle*.

During the semester you will complete several major assignments designed to build on each other intellectually and conceptually. These assignments are:

Participation **10%**

You will conduct active participation in discussion and productive idea exchange, while exhibiting respect for your classmates and your professor. You cannot demonstrate participation if you are absent from class. Be prepared to discuss the scheduled readings for the day.

Quiz (x 10) **20%**

These very brief (3-5 questions) quizzes allow you another opportunity to demonstrate that you have a working knowledge of the concepts introduced in the week's readings. Major characters, significant events, and notable concepts from our readings will provide material for quizzes, as well as lecture points raised in class. Expect ten (10) quizzes throughout semester.

Short Critical Response (x 2) **10%**

These brief papers are intense explorations of a specific topic, literary device, character, and so on from a designated reading. The responses should be 2-3 pages in length.

Midterm Exam **20%**

The midterm exam is designed to test your ability to bring together concepts explored in the class readings. The exam will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

Analytical Research Paper (x 2) **20%**

The Analytical Research Paper (ARP) will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the texts and interconnected issues including historical, cultural, and aesthetic considerations. You will write two of these during the semester. You must provide a **critical analysis** of selected texts in a well- developed and supported essay that contains a clear and firm thesis. Paper length will be approximately 7 pages (+/- 1

page) each and may include no more than 5 secondary sources such as critical essays as approved by your professor. It is crucial that you demonstrate the ability to discern between personal opinion and well-substantiated points. All papers must reflect your original ideas and understanding of the information.

Final Exam

20%

The final exam is **not** comprehensive and will follow the same format as the midterm.

Grading

Students' assignment and course grades will be determined by the following:

Participation:	10%
Quizzes (x 10):	20%
Short Critical Response (x 2):	10%
Midterm Exam:	20%
Analytical Research Paper (x 2):	20%
Final Exam:	<u>20%</u>
	Total: 100%

Scale used to compute final letter grades:

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59-0

Technology

This is a f2f course, and it will **not** have an eCollege component. The only technology that you will need access to is a viable email address and access to the Gee Library databases.

There will be no extra credit assignments. As a rule, I do not accept late work.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Department of Literature and Languages do 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.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you notify me of potential conflicts with course expectations. Deadline extensions and other allowances can often be accommodated before they are required, but this requires advance notice. If you miss four class meetings (two weeks worth of class), expect to have a conference with your professor. Related to this, SEE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Classroom Policy

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment, and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

Certain electronic devices such as cellphones, laptops, iPads, and e-readers are a wonderful addition to the reading experience, but they may also lead to distractions within class. Please do not use these devices to check for text messages, Facebook and Twitter accounts, your favorite blogs, and the like. If I feel these are proving to be a distraction rather than a benefit, individual conferences may be warranted.

Assignment Policy

Student work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. Students who know they will miss class when an assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment. **You will submit all of your papers as hard copies. No electronic documents will be accepted.**

All papers should conform to the MLA or Chicago style guidelines.

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).

Class Cancellation Policy

In the unlikely event of an emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting. Likewise, if you are absent please contact me as soon as possible so that you may inquire as to what material you missed. This is your responsibility.

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.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

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 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. It is next to impossible to explore ideas in a classroom setting if students and instructors do not feel safe or otherwise supported. I will not tolerate discrimination in all its forms. Likewise, rudeness has no place in any classroom, and I will ensure that my classroom remains a rudeness-free environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Responsibility

You are responsible for understanding all of the material contained in this syllabus, as well as any announced changes to this syllabus. You are also responsible for understanding instructions and directives related to assignments, exams, and grades. This means visiting your professor during office hours if instructions and/or directives remain unclear. Unless you state otherwise, I will assume that you have understood what is expected of you in this class.

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 in class.

Date	Readings
Week 1	
8/26	Course overview and student expectations, Syllabus
8/28	From <i>Dismantle</i> : “Introduction,” by Junot Díaz; “Hailu’s Heart,” by Maaza Mengiste; “My White Wife™,” by Adam Balm; “Painting a Body of Loss and Love in the Proximity of an Aesthetic,” Chris Abani
Week 2	
9/2	From <i>Dismantle</i> : “Body,” by Minal Hajratwala; “Lessons,” by Justin Torres; “Aiyah!” by Sasha Hom; “Tal,” by Mat Johnson; “Selection from <i>Diary of a Dreamer</i> ,” by Alberto Ledesma
9/4	From <i>Dismantle</i> : “Oversoul,” by Mitchell S. Jackson; “Interior Security Regulations,” by Mia Malhotra; “Twinning,” by Faith Adiele; “What We Left Behind,” by Muthoni Kiarie
Week 3	

9/9	Adichie, <i>Americanah</i>
9/11	Adichie, <i>Americanah</i>
Week 4	
9/16	Adichie, <i>Americanah</i>
9/18	Adichie, <i>Americanah</i>
Week 5	
9/23	Bulawayo, <i>We Need New Names</i>
9/25	Bulawayo, <i>We Need New Names</i>
Week 6	
9/30	Bulawayo, <i>We Need New Names</i>
10/2	Bulawayo, <i>We Need New Names</i>
Week 7	
10/7	Midterm Exam
10/9	No Class Scheduled
Week 8	
10/14	Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i>
10/16	Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i>
Week 9	
10/21	Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i>
10/23	Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i>
Week 10	
10/28	Lahiri, <i>The Lowland</i>
10/30	Lahiri, <i>The Lowland</i>
Week 11	
11/4	Lahiri, <i>The Lowland</i>
11/6	Lahiri, <i>The Lowland</i>
Week 12	
11/11	Díaz, <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
11/13	Díaz, <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
Week 13	
11/18	Díaz, <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
11/20	Díaz, <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
Week 14	
11/25	Skyhorse, <i>The Madonnas of Echo Park</i>
11/27	Skyhorse, <i>The Madonnas of Echo Park</i>
Week 15	
12/2	Skyhorse, <i>The Madonnas of Echo Park</i>
12/4	Skyhorse, <i>The Madonnas of Echo Park</i> ARP #2 Due
Final Exam: Thursday, December 11, 2014 (10:30 am-12:30 pm)	