



**ENG 525.001 American Contemporary Literature**  
**SYLLABUS: Spring 2019 T—4:30-7:10 pm**  
**Location: HL 304**

## **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Tiffany M. B. Anderson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

**Office Location:** Talbot Hall 209

**Office Hours:** Tues. and Thurs. 10:00-12:30 and by appointment

**Cell Phone:** 214-283-4719

**University Email Address:** [Tiffany.Anderson@tamuc.edu](mailto:Tiffany.Anderson@tamuc.edu)

**Twitter Handle:** @TMBAnderson

**Preferred Form of Communication:** twitter or text

**Communication Response Time:** generally 24 hours M-R

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

### ***Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings***

#### ***Textbook(s) Required***

*Boxers + Saints* by Gene Luen Yang

*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz

*Corregidora* by Gayle Jones

*Farming of Bones* by Edwidge Danticat

*A Gesture Life* by Chang-rae Lee

*Heroes and Saints* by Cherrie Moraga

*In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez

*Leaving Atlanta* by Tayari Jones

*Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi

*Revolt of the Cockroach People* by Oscar Zeta Acosta

*White Boy Shuffle* by Paul Beatty

*Zoot Suit* by Luis Valdez

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

### **Software Required**

Word processing program such as Microsoft Word, Pages, or Open Office Access to email and internet

### **Optional Texts and/or Materials**

MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition

### **Course Description**

Contemporary Literature. Three semester hours. A study of post-1945 and recent literature in the United States and /or the United Kingdom and Ireland. Special emphasis will be placed on the ways in which national and international phenomena both social as well as aesthetic, have informed an increasingly diverse understanding of literary texts. Topics for analysis could include late Modernism and its links to postmodern thought, Cold War writing, literatures of nationhood, post colonialism, the institutionalization of theory, multiculturalism and its literary impact, and the ever-growing emphasis placed on generic hybridity, especially as it concerns visual and electronic media. May be repeated for credit when the emphasis changes.

This course will examine the fictional account of historical events in literature. We explore how to read historical novels and plays, and how we benefit or suffer from the blurred lines of fiction and history. The course will be divided into two parts. The first part of the course will explore various historical events and proceed with a general understanding of how human experiences documented in literature about history changes our personal interpretation of historical events. The second will explore novels that document the same historical event of Rafael Trujillo's regime of the Dominican Republic. For example, we will read Junot Diaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of Butterflies*, and Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*. We will consider how the story of this historical account changes according to the narrative perspective. In addition, the course explores how authors are licensed to explore hidden histories and are able, through their creative works, to expose suppressed stories to a wide reading population.

The course objective is to acquaint students with Multicultural literature. Students will learn to read literature as the counterpart of history and will learn to question if the human experience demonstrated in literature is a more accurate representation of history.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will become familiar with US Ethnic literature and the importance of cultural context when reading US Ethnic Literature (through readings, discussions and lectures).

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

2. Students will learn how to research cfp for conferences and submit materials for conference (through the composition of abstracts).
3. Students will navigate scholarly texts and analyze relevance of texts (through annotated bibliography).
4. Students will hone their skill of literary interpretation and will write scholarship with the intention to read aloud (through the submission and presentation of a conference paper).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Minimal Technical Skills Needed***

Using the learning management system, using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, using presentation and graphics programs, etc.

### ***Instructional Methods***

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 literature as well as secondary materials in a manner befitting a specialist in the discipline of English. You are expected to do all readings for class by the date indicated on this syllabus (see "Course Outline/Calendar" below). The readings are the foundation of our class meetings; we cannot discuss and understand the ideas and theories unless you have completed the required readings. On occasion there will be videos for you to watch on YouTube. You must have internet access to view them. Additionally, during the semester you will complete several major assignments designed to build on each other intellectually and conceptually.

### ***Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course***

1) Attend every class meeting. 2) Read every assigned reading. 3) Complete every assignment on time. 4) Communicate with your professor if you are in doubt.

## **GRADING**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## **Assessments**

### **CFP Research 5%**

Students will research conference cfp and compile a list of possible conferences with an explanation of how their research could contribute to each. Due Week 13.

### **Presentation on Scholarship 10%**

Students will read a scholarly article and present the argument of the scholar to the class. You will sign up for a week the first week of classes.

### **Book Review 10%**

Additionally, you will write or post to youtube a book review of any of the books we will read. The Book Review will be due the Tuesday after we have discussed the book.

### **Position Paper 10%**

You will compose a paper that might become a shorter iteration of your conference paper. This paper can be turned in any time before the first 12 weeks of the semester.

### **Annotated Bibliography 15%**

Students will compile an annotated bibliography and write a 250 word abstract as an introduction to the bibliography. You must include 8 secondary sources. Due Week 13.

### **Class Participation 20%**

Participation is essential to the intellectual growth of your classroom colleagues. Everyone is expected to add to the conversation of the classroom with a clear respect for the thoughts and opinions of others.

### **Conference Paper 30%**

For this assignment, you will compose an analytical essay. You must use secondary sources to bolster your argument. The essay should be a 15 minute conference paper. You will be reading these in our end of the semester seminar. Please use MLA style. Due Week 15.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

- This course is conducted face to face (f2f). However, some aspects of the course (e.g., grades, YouTube videos) are accessed online. This course will use D2L/Brightspace for grades only. Do not allow a technological problem or question keep you from a successful outcome in this course. Technology is designed to facilitate your learning experience in this class, not to hinder it.
- You will need occasional access to a computer with a broadband Internet

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

connection.

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

### ***Interaction with Instructor Statement***

The quickest method of contact for me is Twitter. If you do not have Twitter, feel free to text me your question or concern. If your concern is more detailed and lengthy, feel free to email me. If you text or Tweet, I will likely respond within 12 hours. I will often address your concerns expressed in your email next class period if it is not a matter that requires immediate attention.

Office Hours is also a good time to meet with me. You are welcome to drop by whenever; however, I prefer you text me ahead of time if possible.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **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]).

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

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 for your success in this class. Therefore, each unexcused absence after three will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade. Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not alter your grade. Also, use of a cell phone during class without permission will result in an unexcused absence (that means texting). **Eight unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.**

### **Assignment Policy**

Student work must be completed and submitted when they are due. Students who know in advance 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. All papers should conform to the MLA style guidelines.

Deadline extensions and other allowances can often be accommodated before they are required, but this requires advance notice. Therefore, I will not accept any assignment after its due date unless prior arrangements have been made. Assignments submitted after the due date will receive a score of zero (0).

### **Administrative Withdrawal**

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

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### ***University Specific Procedures***

#### ***Student Conduct***

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf).  
<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)  
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

## **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

## **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 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

### ***Nondiscrimination Notice***

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### ***Campus Concealed Carry Statement***

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

### **Week 1**

January 15: Introductions, Syllabus, Student Questions, Marjane Sartapi: *Persepolis*

### **Week 2**

January 22: Chang-rae Lee, *A Gesture Life*

### **Week 3**

January 29: Tayari Jones: *Leaving Atlanta*

### **Week 4**

February 5: Luis Valdez: *Zoot Suit*

### **Week 5**

February 12: Gayle Jones: *Corregidora*

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

**Week 6**

February 19: Cherrie Moraga: *Heroes and Saints*

**Week 7**

February 26: Paul Beatty: *White Boy Shuffle*

**Week 8**

March 5: Oscar Zeta Acosta: *The Revolt of Cockroach People*

**Week 9**

March 12: Gene Luen Yang: *Boxers + Saints*

**March 19: Spring Break****Week 10**

March 26: Julia Alvarez: *In the Time of Butterflies*

**Week 11**

April 2: Junot Diaz: *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

**Week 12**

April 9: Edwidge Danticat: *The Farming of Bones*

**Week 13**

April 16: Thesis Workshop/Research discussion

**Week 14**

April 23: Conferences

**Week 10**

April 30: Conference Presentation