English 245-26681

ETHNIC AMERICAN LITERATURE: RACE, CITIZENSHIP & THE POLITICS OF BELONGING

Professor Kirby Brown
Office: 523 PLC Hall
Office Hours: M, 2-4; T, 2-3; and by appointment
kbrown@uoregon.edu

Class Meetings
Gerlinger Hall, Rm. 301
MWF 12:00-12:50pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines how nineteenth and early twentieth century writers from Native American, African American and Mexican American communities negotiate the contradictions, ambiguities and anxieties embedded in questions of American national identity at the intersection of race and citizenship. Though often conflated as “oppressed minorities” struggling for racial equality, social justice and civil rights, the critical perspectives that emerge from these communities are diverse and at times place one community at cultural and political cross-purposes not only with white hegemonic discourses of national belonging but with each other as well.

While we will read across a variety of genres and historical moments, the last half of the class will focus on ethnic responses to questions of belonging through the form of the bildungsroman, a genre centrally concerned with narratives of maturation and the formation of the national citizen-subject. Attending to points of convergence as well as departure, we will come away from this course with a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between social location, historical context, and the politics of literary form in ethnic literatures of the United States.

REQUIRED TEXTS
John Joseph Mathews, Sundown
Américo Paredes, George Washington Gomez
Nella Larsen, Quicksand
MLA Handbook, 7th Edition
Supplementary readings available on Blackboard

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENT
This course offers a variety of assignments by which your performance is ultimately assessed so that your final grade is not dependent upon a single skill or performance. These include class participation, reading journals, weekly reading quizzes, formal critical responses, peer critiques and short answer/essay exams. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on which they are due. Late assignments will be accepted under no circumstances. However, if you advise me of an absence well in advance of the due date, I am more than happy to work out an accommodation that will allow you to turn your work in early. Such arrangements are your responsibility entirely.

Reading Journal
You are required to keep a reading journal (standard, one subject spiral notebook) for this course in which to take notes, ask questions, make observations and sketch out preliminary thoughts about the readings for the week. These journals will be evaluated at the end of the term on a credit/no credit basis. Why keep one you ask? The rationale is threefold: 1) they help to keep you on task with the reading assignments; 2) they allow you a private space in which to think and write freely and critically engage course texts on your own terms; and 3) they serve as an intellectual springboard for quizzes, discussions and your critical response papers.
Breakout Sessions and Exit Cards
On the first day of class and again halfway through the semester you will be randomly assigned to peer “breakout groups” in which we will generally begin each class. In these “breakout sessions” you will: 1) briefly discuss some of the questions, ideas or problems that you encounter in the readings and journal entries for that day and/or respond to prompts that I supply, and 2) submit “exit cards” on a 3x5 note card that outline some of your questions/interests that remain for next time. These activities are designed to “prime” class discussions, afford consistent feedback through which to better address your questions and interests, and monitor attendance.

Reading Quizzes
Plan on short, unannounced quizzes at least once a week to evaluate your engagement with and recall of course readings. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. Under no circumstances will you be allowed to make them up. Additionally, if you come to class, take the quiz, and then leave, you will be counted absent and your quiz nullified.

Critical Responses (CR) and Peer Assessments (PA)
You are required to submit three formal critical responses engaging our readings and discussions over the course of the semester and submit them via the appropriate assessment exercise in the assignments tab on Blackboard before the class on which they are due. You will receive feedback and assessment from your peers over the weekend, after which you will perform a self-assessment of your own work. Taking this feedback into consideration, you will submit a revised response under the appropriate Safe Assignment number on Blackboard before class on the day on which it is due. In addition to your revisions, you should include a word count and short paragraph at the end of the essay where you reflect on some of the challenges and successes of the assessment/revision process.

On weeks where you do not submit a formal critical response of your own, you will perform two substantive peer assessments of your colleagues’ work via the Peer Assessment Tool on Blackboard. You will have the weekend to perform these exercises.

This assignment is designed to introduce writers to the conventions and expectations of formal academic writing, to encourage you to begin synthesizing your thoughts and questions from your reading journals into analytic arguments, to encourage productive intellectual exchange, and to capitalize on the benefits of peer assessment and recursive intellectual engagement.

Instructions for writing and responding as well as sample responses are available on Blackboard.

Midterm and Final Exams
Both the midterm and final exams will consist of passage identification and short essay questions. The final exam will be comprehensive. I will provide review sheets and sample questions a week in advance of each exam.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION
Reading Journal √
Attendance & Participation 12.5%
Reading Quizzes 12.5%
Formal Critical Responses (CR) 20%
Peer Assessment (PA) 10%
Midterm Exam 20%
Take Home Final Exam 25%
ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
The University Student Conduct Code (conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student’s obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students.

CLASS COMMUNICATION
Get in the habit of checking your UO email account regularly as this will be our primary means of communication outside of class. I highly recommend trying to contact me via email rather than telephone as I check it regularly and am thus able to respond more quickly, generally within two working days. Also be aware that I will not respond to emails sent after 5pm or on the weekend after 8am on the next weekday.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS
If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon and request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
If inclement weather makes traveling to campus difficult, I will notify you by email and/or voice mail about whether we are holding class. If the weather is bad, check your email for a message from me, and check my voice mail (541-346-1314) if there are electrical outages around town that might prevent my emailing you. Whether or not I decide to hold class, you should use your own judgment about the safety of traveling to campus.
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics/Readings**</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 7</td>
<td>Introduction, Greetings, Logistics</td>
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<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td>Historicizing Citizenship, Setting Terms</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pocock, “Ideal of Citizenship Since Classical Times” (Blackboard)</td>
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<td>Jan. 11</td>
<td>Clarke, “Citizen Human” (Blackboard)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>Race, Citizenship and the Early Republic, 1776-1827</td>
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<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Slavery, Liberty &amp; Emancipation</td>
<td>CR1.1 (b)</td>
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<td>Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America”; Walker, from Appeal; Stewart, “Address” (Blackboard)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>NO CLASSES: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</td>
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<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>NO CLASSES: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</td>
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<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?”; Jacobs, from Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (Blackboard)</td>
<td>PA1 (b)</td>
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<td>Jan. 25</td>
<td>Douglass, from “The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro, Grigg, from Imperium in Imperio (Blackboard)</td>
<td>CR1.2 (a)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>Civilization, Removal and the “Indian Problem”</td>
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<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Corntassel, “Speech to the US Congress (1785); Cherokee Women’s Petitions (1817/18); Cherokee Memorial (1829) (Blackboard)</td>
<td>PA1 (a)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>Jackson, “Addresses,” Boudinot, from “Address to the Whites”; Ross, from “In Defense of Cherokee Sovereignty” (Blackboard)</td>
<td>CR 1.1 (b)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 1</td>
<td>Documents in Indian Education: Bonnin, from School Days of An Indian Girl (Blackboard)</td>
<td>CR1.2 (b)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>Expansion, Manifest Destiny &amp; War with Mexico</td>
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<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td>Ridge, from Joaquin Murieta; Ruiz de Burton, from The Squatter and the Don (Blackboard)</td>
<td>PA2 (b)</td>
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Feb. 6    “El Plan de San Diego”; Corridos (Blackboard)
Feb. 8    MIDTERM EXAM

Week 6
Feb. 11   Mathews, Sundown, 1-86
Feb. 13   Mathews, Sundown, 87-138
Feb. 15   Mathews, Sundown, 139-186

Week 7
Feb. 18   Mathews, Sundown, 187-261
Feb. 20   Mathews, Sundown, 262-312
Feb. 22   Paredes, George Washington Gomez, 9-58

Week 8
Feb. 27   Paredes, George Washington Gomez, 141-189
Mar. 1    Paredes, George Washington Gomez, 189-228

Week 9
Mar. 4    Paredes, George Washington Gomez, 228-302
Mar. 6    Larsen, Quicksand, 1-34
Mar. 8    Larsen, Quicksand, 34-66

Week 10
Mar. 11   Larsen, Quicksand, 67-125
Mar. 13   Larsen, Quicksand
Mar. 15   Course Wrap-Up

Week 11
Mar. 19   TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM DUE VIA BLACKBOARD BY 5PM

**Selections subject to change with a week’s notice