ENG 392

U.S. Literature Survey II: 1865-Present
English 392, section 2 Kelly Reames
Fall 2007 Office: Cherry Hall 109e
MWF 10:20-11:15 a.m. Office Hours: MWF 11:20-12:30 & by appointment
CH 126 kelly.reames@wku.edu

Morrison, Toni. Beloved.
Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th ed., or another up-to-date
guide to MLA documentation as defined by the 6th edition.

The course and its objectives: This course is designed to familiarize you with authors and trends of
literature in the United States from 1865 to the present, including how that literature has been classified
by literary periods (realism, naturalism, modernism, the Harlem Renaissance, and postmodernism) and
the limitations of such definitions.
We will focus primarily on two types of literary analysis: close reading of the text itself and interpreting
how the text responds to the culture in which it was written. To a lesser extent, we will use what we know
about authors’ lives and stated purposes. These goals interweave productively, but none should be
allowed to preclude the possibilities of the others. A text might be read very differently by a 19th and 21st
century reader, for instance. Because different interpretations have varying goals and limitations, there
can be many excellent and even contradictory readings of one text. All interpretations, however, are not
equally valid; the strongest are those that best account for the complexities of the text.
This class is designed to help you develop your analytical and expressive skills so that you can
produce nuanced and convincing interpretations of the literature you read. The class will therefore
consist primarily of discussion, including some group work. You share responsibility for the quality and
content of the class, and I expect you to take that responsibility seriously.
One of my hopes for the course is that we will have lively discussions—I hope it will become one of
your goals as well, as that will make class more fun for all of us. Because we will study a wide range of
texts, some of which address controversial issues, each of us will inevitably disagree with ideas
expressed in some of the material. At times, we may even feel offended if a text challenges our own
beliefs. I want you to feel free to disagree, intelligently and respectfully, with characters, authors, each
other, and me. Finding material offensive, however, does not absolve you of your responsibility for
learning the material, which includes understanding and being able to explain authors’ and characters’
reasoning and beliefs.

Prerequisite: English 200

Conferences, office hours & communication: I will regularly be available for visits or calls during my
office hours. On the rare occasions when I cannot be in my office due to an unavoidable conflict, I’ll tell
you. If you cannot meet with (or call) me during office hours, I’ll be happy to arrange another time with
you. You are always welcome to call or stop by to talk.

Requirements: You are expected to carefully read all assigned texts, come to class prepared (which
includes bringing your book!), and participate actively in class discussions. Doing so is necessary not
only to your successful completion of the tests and assignments but also to your full intellectual
engagement and enjoyment of the course. You will also write one paper, give one presentation, and take
three exams and many quizzes.

Attendance and participation are expected. While there is no attendance or participation grade,
absences will inevitably lower your quiz and exam grades. You are responsible for all material covered
in class whether you are present or not.
Any students required to travel for university-sponsored activities may arrange to take quizzes they
will miss and turn in homework that will be due prior to the absence, but only if they provide written
documentation of the activity prior to the absence.
Papers: You will write one literary analysis essay in response to specific questions that I will provide. I will be happy to comment on drafts of a paper prior to its due date, but papers may not be rewritten once the due date has passed. Hard copies of papers are due at the beginning of class. You may not turn in papers by email. If for some reason you cannot turn your paper in to me in person, you may turn it in to the main English department office (Cherry 135) and ask the staff member at the desk to place it in my mailbox; I will not accept papers any other way.

Late papers will be penalized five points if turned in after the beginning of class on the due date and then ten points per twenty-four hour period, including weekends. Any paper more than five days (120 hours) late will receive a zero. Keep a hard copy of all your papers to protect yourself against loss. Papers will receive letter grades with the following numerical equivalents: A=95, A-=92, B+=88, B=85, B-=82, C+=78, C=75, C-=72, etc.

Presentation: In the beginning of the semester, you will choose one author you would like to learn more about. You will read the Dictionary of Literary Biography entry on this author, search for credible and useful web sites, and present relevant information to the class on the day we read that author's work. In the event that the number of students in the class exceeds the number of authors we study, some of the presentations will cover literary topics. (See attached assignment.)

Exams: There will be three exams, which will test your ability to interpret literature as well as your knowledge of assigned texts and class content. Exams will consist of identifications, short answer, and essay questions. Make-up exams will be given only in extraordinary circumstances and must be arranged within 24 hours of the exam.

Quizzes, Homework, and In-Class Writing: Unannounced quizzes will be given throughout the semester and will test your careful reading of assigned texts and mastery of material presented in class. Studies have shown that quizzes facilitate learning and memory; some quizzes will be given at the end of a class period, as this timing has been shown to be particularly effective at increasing learning. Other days, I may assign in-class writing to serve similar purposes. Occasionally, homework may be assigned to help you prepare for class. Prior to submitting your paper, you will be required to bring a draft to an inclass workshop; bringing the draft and participating in the workshop will count as one homework assignment.

Quizzes may not be “made up”: if you are absent or late, you will receive a zero. Homework may not be turned in late.

These quizzes, homework, and in-class assignments will count 10 points each. More than one type of assignment may be given on the same day.

You will also take announced, open-note (not open-book) quizzes based on the introductory sections in the anthologies. The notes you use must be handwritten and your own; anyone caught using another person’s notes will receive a zero grade for all quizzes. These quizzes will be worth more points than the unannounced quizzes.

How To Take Notes and Study for This Course: This course is designed both to convey content and to enhance your interpretive skills, so your note taking and studying need to address both. Content I emphasize in class or give you on a handout is obviously important, but you should also mark text passages anyone in class points our as important. Reviewing the marked passages is excellent preparation for tests, both to remind you of what we have read and discussed and to hone your interpretive skills by asking yourself why the passage is important. Finally, actively engaging with the texts and class conversation is the best preparation of all—mark passages, write down ideas, ask questions and make comparisons in the margins of your book.

Grades: I will calculate your course grade as follows:
Presentation: 10%
Paper: 20%
Exams (3): 45% (15% each)
Quiz/Homework: 25%
Plagiarism: All work you submit for a grade must be original work done by you for this class. You cannot submit others’ work as your own, nor may you submit work you have done or are doing for another class. You are responsible for knowing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. I am always happy to answer questions about how you can legitimately use information from other sources—or any other questions you may have about plagiarism. If I suspect for any reason, including my uncanny intuition, that all or part of a piece of writing you turn in contains the writing or ideas of someone else without proper documentation, the paper will receive a zero and/or you will receive a failing grade for the course. Student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software.

Manners: Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, watch alarms, or other potentially disruptive devices before class, and please do not leave any trash in the classroom when you leave. Please refrain from text-messaging during class; anyone caught doing so during a quiz or exam will be given a zero for that test.

Student Disability Services: In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270-745-5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

The Writing Center is located in Cherry Hall 123. You drop by or make an appointment (745-5719).

The last day to drop a full-semester course with a "W" is March 7.

SCHEDULE
Read the author introduction and assigned texts prior to class on the date listed.

Late Nineteenth Century: Realism & Naturalism, 1865-1910 (vol. C)

W 1-23 Introductions & Overview


W 1-30 Psychological Realism & the New Woman: Henry James, Daisy Miller, 281-300;

F 2-1 Henry James, Daisy Miller, 300-320


W 2-6 Reconstruction, Racial Identity, and the Persistence of Racial Images: Ethnic Notions (film)


M 2-11 Regionalism: Kate Chopin, “Désirée’s Baby,” 359 & “The Story of an Hour” (handout)

W 2-13 Naturalism: Ambrose Bierce, “Chickamauga,” 455
F 2-15 **Naturalism**: Stephen Crane, “The Open Boat,” 497

M 2-18 **Toni Morrison, Beloved**, 1-100

W 2-20 *Beloved* reading in DUC, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. (approximate)—participate for 10 points added to your quiz grade—no class meeting

F 2-22 *Beloved*, 101-195

M 2-25 *Beloved*, 196-end

W 2-27 & F 2-29 No class meeting (I'll be at a conference); prepare for exam

M 3-3 **EXAM I**
**Modernism, including the Harlem Renaissance, 1910-1945** (vol. D)

W 3-5 **Transitional Figure**: Edith Wharton, “The Other Two,” 983; “Toward the Modern Age,” 867-68


M 3-10 – F 3-14 **Spring Break**

M 3-17 **The Iceberg Theory**: Ernest Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants,” 1422

W 3-19 **Southern Modernism**: William Faulkner, “Barn Burning,” 1464


W 3-26 **The Harlem Renaissance**: from Jean Toomer’s *Cane*, “Box Seat,” 1510


M 3-31 Hughes continued: re-read poems

W 4-2 **The Harlem Renaissance**: Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat,” 1578

F 4-4 Catch up as needed

M 4-7 **EXAM II**

**Contemporary Period, 1945-present**

W 4-9 **Drama**: Tennessee Williams, *Portrait of a Madonna*, 1962

F 4-11 **Drama**: Edward Albee, *The Sand Box*, 2303; **Open-note quiz introductory section, vol. E**, 1883-1890

M 4-14 **Poetry**: Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool,” 2148; “A Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi.”
Meanwhile, a Mississippi Mother Burns Bacon,” 2149; “The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmett Till,” 2152


F 4-18 Paper Draft Workshop: bring a complete draft of your paper; catch up on discussion (if needed)


W 4-23 Poetry: Wendy Rose, “Throat Song: The Rotating Earth,” 2838; “Loo-wit,” 2839; “To the Hopi in Richmond (Santa Fe Indian Village),” 2840; “If I Am Too Brown or Too White for You,” 2841; “Story Keeper,” 2842; “Julia,” 2845


M 4-28 Paper Due: Prose Response to Vietnam: Tim O’Brien, “In the Field,” 2392

W 4-30 Prose Response to Vietnam: Norman Mailer, from The Armies of the Night, 2401

F 5-2 Catch-up day

Tuesday, May 6, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 Final Exam

English 392 Presentation Assignment
My presentation is on (topic) on (date).
In the beginning of the semester, you will choose one author you would like to learn more about. You will read the Dictionary of Literary Biography (DLB) entry on this author and search for credible and useful web sites. On the day we read your author’s work, you will give an organized, five-to-ten minute presentation on the author’s biography and writing career. You will also provide the titles and web addresses of two credible and useful web sites for the author, other than the PAL (Perspectives in American Literature) site <http://web.csustan.edu/english/reuben/home.htm>. (In the event that the number of students in the class exceeds the number of authors we study, some of the presentations will cover literary topics.)

If you wish, you may provide the class with a one-sided, one page handout. (The number of students registered for the class can be ascertained through TopNet; as of the beginning of the semester, it is 30. Remember to add one for me.) Note that quotations and paraphrases from the DLB or any other source should be properly documented.

What you will turn in: a copy of the first page of the DLB entry for your author, an outline of your presentation, and a copy of the handout (if applicable).

Your grade will be based on the organization of the presentation and your mastery of the material (i.e., don’t fumble or just read to us from a written document). Part of your grade will be based on your accurate following of directions; hence, the grade is subject to the following deductions.

Five points will be deducted if
• the presentation is completed in less than five minutes (not including other students’ questions);
• the presentation last longer than ten minutes (not including other students’ questions);
• the handout exceeds one side of one 8-1/2” x 11” page;

Ten points will be deducted if
• you fail to turn in a copy of the 1st page of the DLB entry;
• you fail to turn in an outline of your presentation.

Twenty points will be deducted if the presentation is not ready on the assigned date.
**Where to find the DLB:** Enter the library through the main floor of Java City (doors on your left), go straight back as far as you can and then turn to the tables on your right. The many volumes of the DLB have light blue cloth covers. If you don't see them, ask a librarian.

**How to use the DLB:** Each volume of the DLB has a cumulative index in the back. Look up your author, and the index will direct you to the correct volume. Note that some authors appear in more than one volume. If you don’t see your author listed, try looking in the index of a higher numbered volume (authors published in later volumes aren’t listed in earlier volumes’ indexes).