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Race and Sex in Contemporary U.S. Text (ENGL/WMGS 310) Syllabus

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ENGL/WMGS 310: Race and Sex in Contemporary U.S. Text

Community Engaged Course

Spring 2022
MWF 8:30-9:30am
Boyle 103
Lecture/Seminar/Zoom
St. Norbert College

Dr. AnaMaria Seglie Clawson
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Office Phone: 920-403-3145
Office Hrs. MW 1:15-2:15, or by apt.



How do race and gender shape the way we engage our world and local communities? As we seek answers for this question, we will study Native American, U.S. Latinx, African American, and Asian American texts in contemporary U.S. culture (1960s-present). We will discuss and analyze short stories, novels, poems, films, music videos, and even comic books to explore how stories have served as a powerful forum for representing race and gender. To consider

how these categories and their intersections shape our world, we will perform service with one community partner. Our goal in doing so is to learn from both our experiences and our service in a mutually beneficial relationship. Together, these activities – reading, discussion, writing, and serving – will help us better understand how issues surrounding race and gender call us to turn our analytical skills from close-reading texts toward an active, engaged dialogue with our community.

This 4-credit course has no prerequisites and fulfills a requirement for the English Education major/minor and an elective for the English major and WMGS minor. This course meets in person for three, 60-minute periods. In addition, this course carries the expectation that students will work on course-related activities (reading, writing, studying, **service**, completing assignments, etc.) for approximately three hours outside of class for every class period, totaling an average of 12 hours per week in and outside of the face-to-face/virtual class.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students should be able to
Think Critically

- Recognize major movements and authors of contemporary, multiethnic U.S. literature.
- Assess how race and gender intersect in culture and within our communities.

Communicate Effectively

- Craft and evaluate thesis-, evidence-based written arguments.
- Engage in collaborative discussions and build oral presentations.

Interact Respectfully

- Collaborate with others from diverse backgrounds to discuss issues surrounding race/gender.
- Recognizing the contributions of diverse authors from contemporary U.S. literature.

Serve Responsibly

- Participate in an engaged and mutually beneficial relationship with our community.
- Demonstrate critical awareness of and consistency with service work.

This syllabus represents an agreement between the professor and the student regarding the nature and guidelines of this course. The professor reserves the right to modify, if necessary, the syllabus to adapt to new circumstances. These changes will be made known to students via Moodle, email, and/or in class.

Required Texts: (Hard Copies Required)

- Sherman Alexie, *Ten Little Indians* (2004) (9780802141170)
- Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (1984) (9780679734772)
- Junot Díaz, *Drown* (1996) (9781573226066)
- Gene Luen Yang, *American Born Chinese* (2006) (9780312384487)
- Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1970) (9780307278449)
- Moodle Readings and Films (digital versions allowed)

SNC Policies

Health and Safety Statement. The college is taking a safety-first approach in its [plans](#) to return to campus, following local, regional and CDC public-health guidelines. Basic precautions are required by members conducting [daily self-checkups](#). These precautions include:

- Virtual class for the first two weeks of the semester.
- Staying away from campus if you have a fever, cough or shortness of breath, or if you have come into contact with someone who potentially has COVID-19.
- Wearing face masks on campus as stipulated by the college's administration.
- Observing physical distancing requirements.
- Washing hands often.
- Covering coughs.

Students, faculty and staff who don't adhere to these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Accommodations: In keeping with the St. Norbert College mission to help students develop their full potential, and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the College provides supportive services to students with disabilities. For inquiries and further details, please choose from the following options:

- Visit the [Office of Academic Success, Support, and Accessibility](#) located in room 211, Todd Wehr Hall
- Visit the website: <http://www.snc.edu/academicsupport/or>
- Call (920) 403-1321 for Academic Support Service.

Academic Integrity: In this course, all students are expected to adhere to the College's academic policies regarding academic integrity (please refer to the "St. Norbert College Academic Honor Code" listed in *The Citizen*, or see the Honor Code website for the text of the Honor Code process, procedures, and penalties). For further details – or if you have any questions, see the link for *The Citizen* on the judicial affairs website: www.snc.edu/judicialaffairs or contact Judicial Affairs at x3054 or the Associate Academic Dean's Office at x4044.

Title IX Statement.**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement (adopted 7/25/16).****Land Acknowledgment Statement.**

Course Policies and Practices

First Two Weeks/Virtual Class: As per the college administration's decision, we will be virtual for this semester's first two weeks. For us, this means you will be joining a Zoom class during our normal class time, unless otherwise stipulated on the schedule. (The link can be found on the top of our Moodle page under "schedules.") Please treat this experience as a classroom experience by:

- Finding (to the best of your ability) a quiet a space where you can focus.
- "Arriving" on time and turning on your camera for the entire class period.
- Muting yourself when you are not talking, unless you are using a headset.
- Muting and stowing your phone.
- Keeping your books handy and taking notes.
- Being patient as others speak and about repeating what you say.
- Following directions for activities and breakout room discussions.
- Following general Netiquette (to learn more, follow [this link.](#))

In-Person COVID-19 Course Procedures: If you are experiencing any COVID symptoms, please do not come to class. Should you require quarantine for Covid-19:

- Please communicate with the [Academic Success, Support, and Accessibility Office](#). They will email me an accommodation form, after which I will consider all your absences due to Covid-19 excused until quarantine ends. Without this form, absences will not be excused.
- Please follow these guidelines for "Remote Participation":
 - Respond with me via email or Zoom about readings, assignments, and engagement/participation make-up accommodations.
 - Complete all readings on the syllabus.
 - Access course assignments via Moodle and complete them on time or according to a new timeline established in consultation with me.
- This is an in-person class. After we return to normal learning, it will not be offered simultaneously using Zoom or any other media. Likewise, the class will not be recorded.
- Should it become necessary because of health concerns, we will pivot to Zoom class. Such a shift would be announced with standards and expectations.

Student Office Hours: These hours are designed entirely for students – to further discuss the readings, assignments, or concerns about the course. I am happy to meet! I will be available for drop-in, in-person and virtual office hours from 1:15-2:15pm every Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Alternately, you can email me to set a meeting should these times not work with your schedule. These extra appointments may be virtual. You can find the Zoom link on Moodle. *Nota Bene:* Office hours will be entirely on Zoom during the first two virtual weeks of our course and during any other period of virtual learning stipulated by the college administration.

Communication: You should check your SNC email frequently to receive announcements from Moodle. I will also offer announcements and reminders at the beginning of every class. I welcome emailed questions/concerns and check my email once a day Monday – Friday. However, I also encourage you to **check the syllabus and assignment instructions**, ask questions in class, and/or attend student office hours.

Preparation: Complete ALL the readings/assignments listed for each date BEFORE class on that date. Take notes on relevant aspects of the reading such as those referred to in the note-taking handout from the beginning of the semester. If you are confused or have questions, note this for part

of our class discussions. Completing the reading and taking notes will prepare you for discussion, quizzes, and assignments. **Please bring a hard copy of each of the required course books.** *You receive Engagement points for simply having the required materials with you.*

Attendance: This course depends on your engagement, defined here as participation in discussions and assignments. You cannot participate if you do not attend. You should arrive **on time**, attend all classes, and be prepared to participate. More than **three absences** will result in a significant grade deduction because of your inability to participate. **Three tardy days** amount to one absence. When you miss a class, please contact another classmate to see what you missed. If you have additional questions, feel free to stop by office hours. **More than eight absences** may result in course failure.

If there are extenuating circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible. Your physical/mental health and safety is a top priority at SNC. In the event that you become ill or require quarantine due to Covid-19, we will follow the “remote participation” guidelines outlined above. “Remote Participation” is *only available* for those who have accommodations from the Office of Academic Success, Support, and Accessibility.

Technology: There are **no** cell phones allowed in class unless I ask you to use them for an activity. Otherwise, **please stow your cell phones before entering class.** Laptops and ipads are permitted for the purposes of note-taking and in-class activities only. Please be a courteous and responsible adult when using electronics in class.

Essay Submissions and Late Work Policy: All papers and their drafting components should be submitted online in the appropriate Moodle folder as a **Word Document or PDF** at the beginning of our regular class time. Written work should be double-spaced and formatted through MLA style (see below for resource) with one-inch margins and 12 point Times New Roman font for **all lettering and punctuation.** If you choose to change these details, you will receive an automatic deduction of one letter grade. Written work, including peer review drafts, must be submitted by the appointed due date. Any late work drops by 1/3 of a letter grade each day (week or weekend).

Grading: All grades will be returned via Moodle. You will receive an email that notifies you when your assignments have been graded. The marking for your essays will include a rubric, an end comment, and brief marginal comments. **It is your job to keep track of your grades.** **All information for calculating your grades can be found on this syllabus.** In addition to your assignment grades, I will provide a midterm grade. I am also happy to meet throughout the semester if you have questions.

English Major Portfolio: If you are planning to be or already are an English major--read on. In order to graduate, you will compile a portfolio of your written work in English from St. Norbert. You will be required to include one piece of writing from each course you’ve taken. Please consider which essay from our course you would like to include. You can find more information here: www.snc.edu/english/portfolio.html. If you have further questions, talk to your English advisor.

Assignment Resources:

- **Tech Services:** The [Tech Bar](#) is a place for student development of digital skills, competencies, and data security. The Tech Bar has both student workers and full time staff to help with things like learning to use Google products and spreadsheets, creating a website or digital maps, learning to make a video or screen-cast, or really anything in the digital world.
- **Writing Center:** Here you will find peer consultants trained to help you work through every step of the writing process. The service is free, and consultants can help with written

assignments from a variety of academic areas. Students can [make an appointment online](#) and attend virtually or in person. For more information about the consultation format, visit the [Writing Center website](#). You can reach the Writing Center at writing@snc.edu or 920-403-3003, if you have any questions.

- **Purdue Writing Lab:** <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Assignments

All papers must be submitted to pass this course.

Engagement (20%): Regular and active engagement are key components of intellectual communication and this course. Engagement grades include:

- **Active, In-Person Participation:** This means attending class prepared, keeping up with course readings, participating in both large and small group class discussions, and activities.
- **Notetaking:** Students are encouraged to take their own notes for every class. However, one student will be assigned each day to take notes and share them with the class. Every student will take course notes twice. See the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.
- **Introduction Slide and Conference:** During the semester's opening weeks, I will meet with you for 10-15 minutes wherein we will discuss your learning goals for the semester. We will also complete Introduction Slides via a Google Slideshow posted on Moodle.
- **Discussion Leading:** Alongside 1-2 other students, you will lead discussion. See assignment instructions on Moodle for more information.
- **Service:** This course is a CENG course, meaning that service is a central part of the course and your learning. You should take this commitment seriously, not only attending to your service tasks in a timely and respective manner but also working closely to fulfill those assignments that call you to reflect on your service. You will be asked to perform **16-20 hours of service across this semester**. You must complete at least 8 of these hours by the end of March and 16 by the end of the semester. Your schedule will be negotiated with your community partner, and you may count group meetings/trainings as part of your hours.

Service Reflection (20%)

- **Service Journal (15%):** You will keep a journal and complete a total of 10 entries across the semester. These entries ask you to reflect on your experiences each time you engage in service (i.e. working on your assigned project, attending group meetings, conducting research, etc.). These entries should be 1-2 double-spaced pages. They need not be formal and can be reflective and personalized, but they should demonstrate a thoughtful engagement and go beyond note-taking. You will submit these journals three times for grading. Please see specific assignment instructions on Moodle.
- **Service Log (5%):** To track your service, you will complete a service log that you will submit during the last week of the semester.

2 Analytical Essays (35%): These essays are **4-5 and 5-6 double-spaced pages**. These papers should go beyond what we discuss in class and represent your unique perspective and analysis. Because these are analytical papers, they should draw on evidence and close-reading. I will provide specific assignment instructions at least one week before you begin drafting. Each of these essays includes a peer reviewed rough draft and a final draft.

Synthesis Writing: (25%)

- **Mid-Point Essay (10%):** This assignment asks you to say what you've learned from your service with VAWA so far and connect it to course material. This essay is 2-3 pages (double-spaced). Please see assignment instructions for prompts.
- **Final Project (15%):** This project asks you to synthesize your service experience, gather your reflections, and pose final questions. You will perform a final presentation with a slide show that summarizes and reflects on your service experience. You will, then, write an essay that explains how your service relates to course material. Please see assignment instructions.

Extra Credit: The Cassandra Voss Center and the Normal Miller Center host a variety of events that are relevant to our course discussions. You may attend up to two of these events and write a 1-2 page reflection in your journal for extra credit. Please mark these journal entries "extra credit." I will post a link to these events on our Moodle page and advertise them in class.

Grading Criteria for Written Work

An **A** paper (93-100) fulfills the assignment by developing an insightful argument that goes beyond ideas covered in class discussion. It contains a clear thesis statement, thoughtful introductory and conclusion paragraphs, and body paragraphs that analyze textual evidence to support the argument. It has few problems with grammar, punctuation, or style, and uses correct citation formatting.

An **AB** (89-92) attends to the major issues of the assignment. It contains a creative, argumentative thesis, sufficient evidence, thorough analysis, and overall coherent organization. It may have some slight unevenness in pacing, a few mechanical problems, or a less than specific thesis.

A **B** (83-88) paper develops an insightful argument that goes beyond ideas covered in class discussion. It may use textual evidence without sufficiently analyzing its import. It may also have some problems with organization, clarity, grammar, style, or citation of sources.

A **BC** (79-82) paper contains an argument that attempts to go beyond class discussion but falls short. It may lack sufficient evidence and contain unevenness in scope, pacing, and organization as well as exhibit grammar, style, and citation errors.

A **C** (73-78) paper presents an argument that does not go beyond class discussion in any meaningful way. It may have serious problems with organization, clarity, grammar, style, or citation of sources.

A **CD** (69-72) paper presents an argument that does not go beyond class discussion and is not debatable. It lacks evidence and analysis as well as grammatical coherence. It also does not attempt to offer any sense of organization.

A **D** paper (60-68) fails to fulfill some basic requirement of the assignment, such as length or topic. It may also suffer from problems with organization, clarity, grammar, or style that are severe enough to obscure the argument.

An **F** paper (0-59) is less than half of the required length, was submitted too late to earn credit, or contains egregious plagiarism.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

(All reading/writing is due on the day for which it is listed. All bolded writing represents an assignment due.)

WEEK 1 **Zoom Class (Go to Link on Moodle)**

- M 1/24 Syllabus and Introductions
 In-Class Discussion of Peggy McIntosh, “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (Moodle)
About You Form (Moodle)
Introduction Conference Sign-up (Moodle)
Notetaking Sign-up (Moodle)
- W 1/26 Christie Lanuius and Holly Hassel, “Intersectionality,” pp. 114-122 (Moodle)
 Audre Lorde, [“Who Said It Was Simple”](#)
 Danez Smith, [“poem where I be & you just might”](#)
Introduction Slide Due on Moodle by 8:30am
- F 1/28 [“My Year Volunteering”](#) from *The Onion* (Moodle)
 VAWA Readings (Moodle)
 In-Class VAWA Orientation via Zoom
Discussion Leading Preference Form due by 8:30am

Authenticity in Native American Literature

WEEK 2 **Zoom Class (Go to Link on Moodle)**

- M 1/31 Simon Ortiz, “Toward a National Indian Literature” (Moodle)
 Leslie Marmon Silko, “Aunt Susie Had Certain Phrases” (Moodle)
VAWA Service Survey due by 8:30am
Memorandum of Understanding due Moodle by 8:30am
- W 2/2 Louise Erdrich, [“Matchimanito”](#)
 Erdrich, “Fleur” (Moodle)
 Erdrich, [“The Rape of Native Women”](#)
- F 2/4 Online Restorative Justice Training
Share First Journal Entry by 8:30am (see assignment instructions)

WEEK 3 **Return to In-Person Class**

- M 2/7 Sherman Alexie, “The Search Engine” from *Ten Little Indians*
- W 2/9 Alexie, “Lawyers League” and “The Life and Times of Estelle Walks Above” from *Ten Little Indians*
- F 2/11 Alexie, “What You Pawn I Will Redeem” from *Ten Little Indians*
 Lynn Neary, [“‘It Just Felt Very Wrong’: Sherman Alexie’s Accusers Go on Record”](#)

WEEK 4

- M 2/14 In-Class Peer Review
Analytical Essay #1 Rough Draft due on Moodle by 8:30am
- W 2/16 Joy Harjo, “Running” and “She Had Some Horses,” “he told me his name was sitting bull,” and “I am a Dangerous Woman” (Moodle)
- F 2/18 NO CLASS – VAWA SERVICE HOURS
Analytical Essay #2 Final Draft due on Moodle by 8:30am

Resisting Master Narratives in African American Literature**WEEK 5**

- M 2/21 “Master Narrative” (Moodle)
Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Prologue)
- W 2/23 Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Autumn)
- F 2/25 Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Winter)

WEEK 6

- M 2/28 Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Spring)
Journal Check-Point (3-4 total entries) due on Moodle by 8:30am
- W 3/2 Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Summer)
- F 3/4 Beyoncé’s “[Hold Up](#),” “[All Night](#),” and “[Formation](#)”
Warsan Shire, selected poems (Moodle)
bell hooks’ “Moving beyond pain” (Moodle)

WEEK 7

- M 3/7 Mandalit del Barco, “[In Moonlight, Growing up Black, Gay, and Poor in 1980s Miami](#)”
Dir. Barry Jenkins, *Moonlight* (Watch streaming on Moodle)
- W 3/9 VAWA Service Discussion
Mid-Point Assignment due on Moodle by 8:30am
- F 3/11 NO CLASS – VAWA SERVICE HOURS

WEEK 8

- M 3/14 **SPRING BREAK**
- W 3/16 **SPRING BREAK**
- F 3/18 **SPRING BREAK**

Immigration and Reimagining Myths in Asian American Literature

WEEK 9

- M 3/21 Gish Jen, “In the American Society” (Moodle)
- W 3/23 Gene Luen Yang, *American Born Chinese* (1-84)
- F 3/25 Yang, *American Born Chinese* (85-end)

WEEK 10

- M 3/28 Maxine Hong Kingston, “No-Name Woman” from *Woman Warrior* (Moodle)
- W 3/30 **ADVISEMENT**
- F 4/1 NO CLASS – VAWA SERVICE HOURS
Journal Check-Point: (6-7 total entries) due on Moodle by 8:30am

WEEK 11

- M 4/4 Kingston, “White Tigers” from *Woman Warrior* (Moodle)
- W 4/6 In-Class Peer Review
Analytical Essay #2 Rough Draft due on Moodle by 8:30am
- F 4/8 Dir. John Chu, *Crazy Rich Asians* (Streaming on Moodle)
[Chiu, “An all-Asian cast and no martial arts: Why the ‘Crazy Rich Asians’ movie matters” \(Moodle\)](#)

Borders and Belonging in U.S. Latinx Literature

WEEK 12

- M 4/11 Gloria Anzaldúa, “The Homeland, Aztlán” and “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” from *Borderlands/La Frontera* (Moodle)
Analytical Essay #2 Final Draft due on Moodle by 8:30am
- W 4/13 NO CLASS – VAWA SERVICE HOURS
- F 4/15 **EASTER BREAK**

WEEK 13

- M 4/18 **EASTER BREAK**
- W 4/20 Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (xi-48)
- F 4/22 Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (49-end)

WEEK 14

- M 4/25 Junot Díaz, “Fiesta, 1980” and “Aguantando” from *Drown*

W 4/27 Díaz, “Drown,” “Edison, New Jersey,” and “How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie” from *Drown*

F 4/29 Díaz, “Negocios” from *Drown*

WEEK 15

M 5/2 VAWA Presentations

W 5/4 VAWA Presentations

F 5/6 Maya Angelou, “[A Brave and Startling Truth](#)”

Abby Gorman, “[The Hill We Climb](#)”

Wrap Up

Journal Check Point: All entries, including #10 (which has a separate prompt) due on Moodle by 8:30am

Service Log due on Moodle by 8:30am

FINALS WEEK

M 5/9@ 11:15am

Service Final Project Essay Due on Moodle