

## ENGL 3250.001: INTRODUCTION TO NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURES

T/Th 12:30-1:45 Fall 2004

Dr. Ellen Arnold

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Office hours: T/Th 12-12:30, 2-3:30; T 5-6:30

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will survey literatures written by and about Native Americans in the twentieth century, including autobiography, fiction, poetry, and essays. In addition to studying the texts as literary productions, we will study historical, political, and cultural background to help us understand them more fully. We will also be addressing issues of identity and authenticity, language and orality, stereotyping and prejudice.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** Purdy and Ruppert, Nothing But the Truth  
Hogan, Solar Storms  
Duncan, Living Stories of the Cherokee

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:** (On Reserve at Joyner Library)  
Bruchac, Joseph, Survival This Way (interviews)  
Coltelli, Laura, Winged Words (interviews)  
Jaimes, M. Annette, The State of Native America (essays on contemporary issues)  
Krupat, Arnold and Brian Swann, Here First (autobiog. essays)  
Swann and Krupat, I Tell You Now (autobiog. essays)  
Gaillard, As Long as the Waters Flow (Indians in the S.E.)

**Note:** To obtain materials on reserve, you must go to the library, look up the call number of the book in the library catalog, and give it to a librarian at the front desk, along with the course number and the professor's name. Materials are available for 2 hours of use in the library.

**ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:** Regular attendance and active participation are essential to this class. Two absences are permitted, no questions asked; your grade will drop one letter grade for each additional four absences. Please note that the clocks in GCB are not accurate, and you must be responsible for knowing the correct time; if you arrive after roll is called, speak to me after class to be sure I have marked you present. Three tardies equal one absence. Participation includes: arriving on time and staying the full class period; coming to class fully prepared with all required materials and assignments, and a list of three questions or points you would like to bring up in class discussion; responding with appropriate feedback to the written work, presentations, and comments and questions of other class members; providing input and feedback to the instructor regarding the structure and goals of the class; active, respectful listening and questioning.

**JOURNAL:** You will keep a reading journal for making notes and recording your personal reflections on course materials. The journal is for your private use, so that you may write freely and creatively without censoring yourself or concerning yourself with teacher expectations or writing "rules." I will not take up or read your journals; however, you will be asked to demonstrate in class that you have done particular assignments and are keeping your journal up to date, and you will be required to draw on your journal responses for class discussion and reaction papers. Be sure to bring your journal to class every day. For maximum effectiveness, coordinate your journal with active reading of the texts by underlining key words and phrases, making notes in the margins, and noting page numbers of key quotes and references in your journal. You may use your Reading Journal for the Final Exam as well.

**QUIZZES AND SHORT PAPERS:** You will take frequent in-class quizzes on the reading assignments, and write a number of response paragraphs or study questions both in and out of class, some assigned and some unannounced. Come to every class period prepared to discuss or write the **Close Reading Assignment** described below. Responses that you write in class should be handwritten (or printed if your handwriting is difficult to read) in **ink** on lined paper that is not torn out of a spiral notebook. Therefore, you should come to class every day with an ink pen and loose notebook paper, in addition to your syllabus, a notebook for taking notes in class, your journal, and the assigned reading material.

All papers you write at home, whether formal or informal, should be typed on a computer, double spaced, with standard 1 inch margins and normal 12 point font. All written assignments should be titled, each page numbered with a running head that includes your last name, and **stapled**. Please proofread and edit your papers carefully in order to make them as readable and correct as possible.

**Note:** Please be aware that cutting and pasting from documents or reviews on the internet or borrowing ideas and words from any source without giving credit to the author is **PLAGIARISM**. Plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in your dismissal from college, so do not take chances. Always give credit in your writing to anyone whose ideas you use (including your roommate or classmates!).

**REACTION PAPERS:** You will write three shorter (3 to 5 page) and one slightly longer (5 to 6 page) formal reaction papers at the end of each unit of study, which will trace your personal reactions to the assigned readings, class lectures, and discussions. Each paper should be comprehensive, allowing you to go back over all of the material in each unit (reading, videos, lectures, and discussion) and think about how you make sense of it, how you organize it, how it is meaningful to you. Reaction papers should be written in the first person (using the word "I"), but should be polished essays centered on a specific theme. A good reaction paper will balance personal

opinion and reflection with critical analysis. See the attached handout for suggestions; look at this sheet each time you complete a reading assignment to help stimulate responses for your reading journal. If you have kept your journal faithfully, you will find the papers much easier to write! The final paper should be weighted more towards the critical end of the spectrum and make good use of the critical essays you have been assigned.

See specifics above for the format of your papers. As you write, be sure to **save frequently to disc**; computer problems are not acceptable excuses for late papers. Save everything you do in this class until the class is over and you have received your grade. You will need to go back to some of the earlier things you have written to complete later assignments. This is also a good practice to follow in any class, for your own protection. No late papers will be accepted unless you have contacted me **before the due date**.

**GROUP PRESENTATION:** Each class member will participate in one group presentation. In groups of four, you will prepare a presentation to open our discussions of specific authors and texts. Presentations should be carefully organized in advance to fill 30 minutes and should be geared toward helping the class understand the specific reading assignment; therefore, you should read the assignment through more than once before you prepare the presentation. Include information about authors' lives and other work, historical and cultural background of the reading, and any other material that you feel will augment understanding and interpretation of the assigned materials. Consult published interviews with authors, critical essays on the appropriate texts, and use visual and audio materials, discussion questions, journal exercises, or other activities you think will add to our in-class experience.

Each presentation should include a **1 page handout** that summarizes key points of the presentation, with an annotated bibliography of 3 sources (no more than 2 internet sources). Groups should work together to provide a coherent presentation, rather than just presenting individual reports. All members of each group will receive the same grade (except that anyone who is absent gets a zero), so it behooves each of you to work together so that all members of the group perform optimally. A good presentation will involve:

- Ø meeting well in advance of the assigned date to **plan and practice** so that you know your material will fill the allotted time and flow smoothly
- Ø arriving early on the day of your presentation so that you can be fully organized and ready to go **before** class begins
- Ø being familiar enough with your material to "talk" it (using notes is great, but do not read word for word)
- Ø speaking loudly and clearly, with enthusiasm for your subject
- Ø making good eye contact with the audience
- Ø raising interesting points and questions for discussion that will get your audience energized and involved
- Ø being clear about the facts and points that you think are important to the interpretation of the text we are reading (these will show up on exams!)
- Ø having your handout ready to pass out **at the time of the presentation** (you may choose whether you want to distribute it before or after the presentation);

**Note:** Handouts can be printed out for the class at no cost at the computer labs.

**CULTURAL EVENT:** You will attend one required event outside class and submit a one-paragraph (2/3 page) response to your experience. Hopefully, you will be able to attend a reading or performance on campus that relates to topics covered in the course. If appropriate events are not available, you may substitute a television show, or art or museum exhibit relating to Native Americans. Keep your eyes and ears open throughout the semester and report to the class on the opportunities of which you become aware.

**BLACKBOARD:** We will be using Blackboard as support for this class. Go to the ECU homepage, select Blackboard Gateway, and log in using your ECU id and password. You should check the Announcements page regularly for changes, cancellations, clarification or elaboration of assignments, and other newsworthy tidbits. In case you misplace your syllabus, you will find it posted in the Course Information folder. Under Course Documents, you will find important bibliographies of resources to use in your research, some of your reading assignments, and additional documents. To download a document, right click on the document title, choose Save Target As, and save the document to your hard drive or a floppy disc. If the document is a PDF file, you will need to be sure you have downloaded the LATEST version of Adobe Acrobat (it's free). Using the functions under Communication, you will be able to email your classmates, contact your group members, and hold Discussion Forums.

**TIP:** Some functions of Blackboard do not work with the Netscape browser; always use Internet Explorer.

**\*\*\* !!!You MUST get in the habit of checking your ECU email account on a regular basis, or you are likely to miss important communications!!! \*\*\***

On occasion, online discussion may be assigned as part of the course requirements. On selected class days (and in case of dangerous weather conditions or other unexpected events), we may conduct class online. Your presence and participation in online classes and Discussion Forums counts the same as regular class attendance and participation and may also involve quiz and response grades.

**FINAL:** The final exam will be comprehensive and will be based on the reading assignments, class lectures, group presentations, and discussion. It will combine short answer and short essay questions. You may use your Reading Journal for the Final, but not the texts themselves.

**GRADING:**

Attendance/participation/	
Quizzes/short papers	25%
Group presentation	10%

Reaction papers	45%
Final	20%

## PROJECTED CALENDAR:

NBT=Nothing But the Truth

- Th. 8/26 Introductions, syllabus review
- Tu 8/31 History, Demographics  
**Due:** Journal Assignment (see page 5 below)  
 NBT (1-4) "ntroduction"
- I. Removal/Assimilation (1900-1968)**
- Th 9/2 (5-9) "Nonfiction"  
 (130-131) 2 paragraphs on Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa)  
 (54-61) Ohiyesa, "The Ghost Dance War"
- Tu 9/7 (190-193) "Fiction"  
 (406-411) Zitkala-Sa, "The Soft-Hearted Sioux"
- Th 9/9 (282-288) Johnson, "As It Was in the Beginning"  
 (Blackboard) McNickle, Ch. 1 Wind From an Enemy Sky
- Tu 9/14 **Due: Paper I** (3-4 pages)  
 Video: In the Spirit of Crazy Horse
- II. Renaissance**
- Th 9/16 (172-184) Swann, "Introduction: Only the Beginning"  
 (82-93) Momaday, "Man Made of Words"  
**Group 1:** Momaday
- Tu 9/21 (510-515) Momaday, Poems
- Th 9/23 (159-165) Silko, "Language and Literature from a Pueblo Perspective"  
 (358-361) Silko, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds"  
**Group 2:** Silko
- Tu 9/28 (362-366) Silko, "Tony's Story"  
 (535-536, 544-552) Silko, Poems
- Th 9/30 (367-374) Silko, "Yellow Woman"  
**Group 3:** Interpretation
- Tu 10/5 **Due: Paper II** (4-5 pages)  
 (560-563) Welch, Poems  
 (474-482) Harjo, Poems
- III. Contemporary Writers**
- Th 10/7 (62-81) Gunn Allen, "The Sacred Hoop"
- Tu 10/12 (255-262) Gunn Allen, "Deer Woman"+  
(212-217) Brant, "Swimming Upstream"
- Th 10/14 (391-395) Tapahonso, "All the Colors of Sunset"  
 (556-557) Tapahonso, "Blue Horses Rush In"  
**Group 4:** Tapahonso
- Tu 10/19 **FALL BREAK**
- Th 10/21 (194-202) Alexie, "The Approximate Size of My Favorite Tumor"  
 (203-211) Alexie, "This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona"  
**Group 5:** Alexie
- Tu 10/26 (416-418) Alexie, "13/16," "The Business of Fancydancing"  
 (424-430) Alexie, "The Exaggeration of Despair," "How to Write the Great American Indian Novel," "Crazy Horse Speaks"  
 Video: The Business of Fancydancing
- Th 10/28 Video: The Business of Fancydancing  
**Due: Paper III** (4-5 pages)
- Tu 11/2 Solar Storms (Fall: 4-59)  
**Group 6:** Linda Hogan

Th 11/4	<u>Solar Storms</u> (Winter: 59-133) <b>In Class Write:</b> Close Reading
Tu 11/9	- <u>Solar Storms</u> (Spring: 134-196) <b>Group 7: Images and Themes</b>
Th 11/11	<b>Reading Day (SAMLA)</b>
Tu 11/16	<u>Solar Storms</u> (Summer: 197-333) <b>Group 8: Images and Themes</b>
Th 11/18	<u>Solar Storms</u> (Return: 334-351) Video: <u>Power</u>
Tu 11/23	<b>Due: Paper IV (5-6 pages)</b> Online Small Group Discussions
Th 11/25	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>
Tu 11/30	Duncan, <u>Living Stories of the Cherokee</u> (xi-xiv, 1-27) <b>Group 9: Indians in North Carolina</b>
Th 12/2	Duncan: Littlejohn, Arch
Tu 12/7	<b>Last Class</b> Duncan: Bushyhead, Owle
Dec. 16	FINAL EXAM (11-1:30)

**Note:** All items on this syllabus are subject to revision.

**Disabilities:** East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services, located in Brewster A-117, to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-328-6799.

**Inclement Weather:** Check [www.ecu.edu/alert/](http://www.ecu.edu/alert/) or 328-0062.

### \*\*Communicating with the Professor\*\*

If you need to provide me with information or ask questions about assignments outside of office hours, the best way is to send me an email. ECU is increasingly using email to communicate important information to students, so you should get in the habit of checking your ECU account regularly. When emailing me (or any other professor) be sure to use an appropriate subject line (e.g. the course name and number); with current virus problems, we are likely to delete without opening any messages that have unidentifiable senders/addresses or non-specific subject lines.

### JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT (Due 8/31)

Bring to class your Personal Journal, in which you have written several pages of reflection on the knowledge, preconceptions, opinions and emotions that you bring to this class. I will check to see you have done the assignment, but I will not read it. Please be informal and do not censor yourself. These reflections will form the basis of our class discussion.

What do you know about Indians?

Think back to your childhood; what games, TV shows, movies, books, or events shaped your ideas about Indians?

What did you learn about Native Americans in school?

How have your early ideas been reinforced or changed by more recent experiences?

What contacts have you had with living Native Americans?

What do you hope to get from this class?

### READING JOURNALS/REACTION PAPERS

Actively converse with the texts you are reading/watching/studying. Underline, highlight, make notes in the margins of your books or in a notebook as ideas, associations, or questions occur to you. Be sure to mark passages and terms that summarize or highlight key points. Have your journal available each time you read any material for the course. Jot down responses as you read, and when you are done, reflect more broadly on the text as a whole. Outline it. Summarize the main themes? How was it structured? Link your responses to specific examples and passages in the text (don't forget page references!). Use your journal responses to generate questions or points you wish to bring to class for discussion and ideas for your reaction papers. The following are some questions you can consider:

**Content/Analysis** (What did I observe/think?)

Who are the main characters? What are their relationships to each other? Their roles in their communities and in the text itself?

What recurring images and symbols help tie the text together? How do they contribute to the development of what you consider to be the primary themes?

What historical or cultural forces do you see at work in the texts, both overt and implied?

What cultural and social values are expressed in the text? How are they similar to or different from the social and cultural values that are familiar to you?

When comparing each text to others, what commonalities of theme, method, and style did you observe among the readings?

Differences?

How do you explain the similarities and differences among the texts?

What questions occurred to you in the course of reading the assignments that were not answered? What was extra or didn't seem to fit?

What kind of explanations might account for these omissions or inclusions?

**Personal** (How did I feel? What did I learn?)

Did you like or dislike the material?

What exactly did you like or dislike and WHY? Give specific examples (with dates and page numbers for future reference).

How did you feel while you were reading/participating in class?

What images, associations, or memories came to mind?

What surprised, shocked, or disturbed you? Disappointed you or made you angry? Enlightened or inspired you?

What internal conflicts did you experience? (Try writing a conversation or debate between two parts of yourself about conflicting ideas or feelings.)

What bored you? Can you explain WHY you were not engaged?

What experiences or expectations (relating to your life history, your education, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, or religion) do you bring to the reading that might help you understand your reactions?

What did you learn of personal significance to you that has either challenged or confirmed your thinking?

How have your conceptualizations of "identity" and "self" been challenged, complicated, stretched or confirmed?

#### CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT:

Choose a passage from the text (1 or 2 sentences to a paragraph) that you think is particularly significant for understanding the meaning of the text as a whole. Describe the passage: what is it about?; whom does it involve?; what does it accomplish in the text?; what does it set up or resolve?; what is its relationship to the text as a whole? Situate the passage in the context of the text in which it is embedded.

Is it typical or paradigmatic of the text as a whole, or does it provide some kind of rupture or shift? Why did you choose this passage?

What does it mean to you?