

**English 313/513**  
**The American Novel**  
University of Wisconsin, SP, Spring 2021

**Professor: G. Christopher Williams**

**Office: CCC 423**

**Office Hours: Via Zoom appointment (email me to schedule a time)**

**Office Phone: 346-2769**

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**Class Time: 6:30-7:45PM MW**

**Classroom: Debot 053-055**

**Catalogue Description:** 3 cr. American novels from (a) late 1700s to 1900 including Hawthorne, Melville, James, and Twain; or (b) 1900 to the present, including Wharton, Hemingway, Cather, Faulkner, and Bellow. May take once for each period. GDR: HU2; GEP: HU

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

The *primary goal* of this course is to interpret and analyze novels from the American literary tradition. In particular, the course is interested in considering the development of the the novel over the course of the nation's history. As such, we will additionally consider the literary and historical context surrounding these novels and how they reflect changing literary philosophies, especially modernism and postmodernism.

**Texts:**

Faulkner. *Novels 1936-1940.*

Hemingway. *The Sun Also Rises.*

O'Connor. *Collected Works.*

Morrison. *Beloved.*

McCarthy. *Blood Meridian.*

Delillo. *White Noise.*

Palahniuk. *Invisible Monsters.*

Danielewski. *House of Leaves.*



**Grading Formula:**

Exam #1	100 pts.
Exam #2	100 pts.
Exam #3	100 pts.
Thesis Proposal	20 pts.
Analytical Paper	50 pts.
Final Research Paper	200 pts.
In Class Writing	50-100 pts.
Attendance & Participation	50 pts.

**Grading Scale:**

	94-100% = A	90-93%=A-
87-89% = B+	84-86% = B	80-83% = B-
77-79% = C+	74-76% = C	70-73% = C-

67-69% = D+      64-66% = D      60-63% = D-  
59% and below = F

### Assignments:

1. **Exams.** Essay exams will be given in class and will be open book. Bring your book, **since quotation from it will be required for justifying your answers.** No cell phones or other electronic devices will be allowed during the exam period. Blue books may be provided on the date of the exam. As noted, exams may not be made up. Plan to attend.

2. **Research Essay.** This is the most important assignment in the course, and must be written in the assigned sequence. You cannot receive a grade on a later stage until you have submitted all of the work previously assigned.

To write this paper you need to do the following:

A. **Read and take notes** in the library (on your own).

B. **Research** using both the library and the internet to familiarize yourself with research on your topic and text. Journals and books are preferred sources of research. Internet sources are largely used for general reference and are generally not preferred.

C. Develop a **thesis proposal** that introduces your argument and some of the research that you will use to frame the argument and/or be opposing in your argument. This proposal will be about **one page** in length.

D. Write and submit a **four to five page rough draft** of the paper **focusing on the primary source of your research** (that means that quotation of the primary source as well as descriptions of scenes, characters, etc. are the most important evidence in this draft, limit use of secondary sources in this version of the paper) with an **MLA formatted works cited page.**

E. **Revise and expand** the rough draft to **8-10 pages** using additional secondary sources to help you create a framework for your own argument about your primary source or to provide some idea of what you are arguing against. Develop this based on feedback from on your rough draft and, again, using additional secondary research sources. At minimum there should be three secondary sources discussed in relationship to your observations about your primary source.

### Classroom Regulations:

1. **Attendance.** Attendance is taken at each class. It is preferred that you should plan on attending and contributing to discussion regularly in class. It should be noted that all of my courses are very much discussion oriented. There may be some lecture, but most of the course is more interactive than that. However, I do realize that some members of the class may need to participate online. If that is the case, it is highly encouraged to attend class during class time via Zoom whenever possible. Doing so will allow you to participate more directly in class discussions, allowing you to try out your ideas and to ask questions. In either case, plan on coming **prepared** to discuss and debate the readings. Additionally, also plan on leaving your electronic devices off during class time. Texting throughout a class, for example, is not being present and participating in a class.

Classes will be recorded and either made available on Canvas or by e-mail for those that need them. However, due to the nature of the class, I would highly, highly recommend joining the class at the scheduled class meeting times via Zoom. Again, alternatives are possible, but trying to attend as synchronously as possible will likely improve your overall experience. Information on how to access the class via Zoom will be made available prior to those class times.

Finally, if you do intend to take the course online or need to switch to an online experience due to the present circumstances of the pandemic, good communication is crucial to success. Asking questions via Zoom or by e-mail is always welcome and important to making sure that you remain on the same page as the rest of the class. Additionally, you do need to let me know if you are having trouble accessing online resources or not

receiving all necessary instructions. While it is my intention to send out the syllabus, handouts, and the like to online students as they become relevant, nevertheless, if you don't receive those materials in a timely manner, you do need to let me know as soon as possible. I can't read minds, so letting me know what you need help with or what you are missing is necessary to improve your chances of success, and if I overlooked something, the only way that I can know that is if you let me know as soon as possible.

2. **Daily writing.** Daily writings are common in class. These writings are relevant to the discussion that we will be having during that period. Those attending in person and via Zoom will be expected to write them and to turn them in during class time. If you are attending fully online, please contact me for further instructions on writing prompts. Your writings will be due before each class period, so you will need to let me know that you need to be placed on the list to receive these prompts within an appropriate time frame. E-mail me after this first class period if this issue applies to you. As I said, these writings are intended to get conversation started during many class periods, so missing one or two of these writings will probably have no significant effect on your final grade. However, missing many of them can. Therefore, regular attendance is encouraged.

3. **Paper specifications.** All papers must be word processed and double-spaced in a 12-point readable font with standard one-inch margins. Identifying information (your name, instructor, class and--most importantly--section number, and date) should be typed in the upper left hand of the first page. Papers will be turned in electronically via Turnitin.com. Instructions will be given regarding how to register at Turnitin.com prior to the due date for the first assignment.

Students meeting face to face during class time and synchronously via Zoom will be asked to have their papers available the night the paper is due either in hard copy form or electronically on your phone. We will discuss details regarding this requirement in more detail as appropriate.

4. **Plagiarism.** Students in this course are responsible for reading and understanding the University's policies on plagiarism. It is available on the UWSP web site. While inadvertent plagiarism can be easily corrected, intentional plagiarism is a serious academic offense with potentially grave consequences. With the rise of internet usage, incidents of plagiarism have risen. At the same time, internet tools have made plagiarism easier to identify. Don't take chances. Do your own work.

Many people do not understand what plagiarism is. The simple definition is this: **plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without properly documenting that the words or ideas belong to that original author.** If you are uncertain whether you may be plagiarizing, please **ask me** what is appropriate. We are here to learn and asking questions ahead of time is always welcome and helpful.

5. **Schedule.** The following schedule **is subject to change at my discretion.** If you have been absent, please make sure to check with your fellow students regarding possible schedule changes for the next day that you will be attending. While you may have been absent, you are still responsible for being prepared for class when you return.

6. **Students With Special Needs.** If there is anything I can do to help you to make the best of your opportunities in higher education, please let me know. If you have any or need any special equipment, interpreters, or books on tape that would aid you in pursuing your interests in the course, I will do my best to help. Additionally, should any concerns come up regarding your ability to participate in or complete the course due to the circumstances of the pandemic, please let me know as soon as possible. We can discuss alternative arrangements at that time. I just need a heads up, though, in order to make adjustments in a timely manner.

MONDAY		WEDNESDAY
1- Week of Jan. 24	Introduction to the syllabus	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>

2 - Week of Jan. 31	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>
3 - Week of Feb. 7	<i>The Hamlet</i>	<i>The Hamlet</i>
4 - Week of Feb. 14	<i>The Hamlet</i>	<i>Wise Blood</i>
5 - Week of Feb. 21	<i>Wise Blood</i>	<i>Wise Blood</i>
6 - Week of Feb. 28	<b>Exam #1</b>	<i>Beloved</i>
7 - Week of Mar. 7	<i>Beloved</i>	<i>Beloved</i>
8 - Week of Mar. 14	<i>Blood Meridian</i>	<b>Discussion of Research Paper</b>
9 - Week of Mar. 21	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
10 - Week of Mar. 28	<i>Blood Meridian</i>	<i>Blood Meridian</i>
11 - Week of Apr. 4	<b>Exam #2</b>	<i>White Noise</i>
12 - Week of Apr. 11	<i>White Noise</i>	<i>White Noise</i>
13 - Week of Apr. 18	<b>Thesis Proposal Due</b>	<i>Invisible Monsters</i>
14 - Week of Apr. 25	<i>Invisible Monsters</i>	<i>Invisible Monsters</i>
15 - Week of May 2	<i>House of Leaves</i>	<i>House of Leaves</i>
16 - Week of May 9	<i>House of Leaves</i>	<b>Analytical Draft Due</b>