Modern American Literature Syllabus

# General Information

## Instructor Information and Availability

Tristan Striker

Phone number: 4574

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 11-12

Office Location: North Santiam Hall 214

## Course Information

Course name: ENG 255 Modern American Literature

CRN: 40927

Scheduled time/days: Tues and Thurs 10-11:50

Number of credits: 4

Classroom(s): North Santiam Hall 207

### Prerequisites:

A C or better in WR121.

## Course Materials

Required (in order of when we will read them):

* Luther Standing Bear’s *Land of the Spotted Eagle*
* Nella Larsen’s *Passing*
* Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*

*All other materials will be made available on our Moodle Page*

**Course-Specific Requirements**

Your presence and a high tolerance for puns and bad jokes.

## Course Description

Focuses on a century and a half of fiction, poetry, drama, and essays (The Literature of an Expanding Nation: 1865-1912, The Literature of a New Century: 1912-1946 and The Literature Since Mid-Century: 1945-Present). Questions how "American Literature" has been defined and how those definitions have been challenged and changed over the last century. Emphasis on long recognized "major" authors as well as "minority" ones. Exploration of the literature in relation to literary and historical movements as well as on its own merit. ENG 255 provides an understanding of and appreciation for American culture as expressed in literature.

## ENG 255 Student Learning Outcomes

* Describe how Modern American Literature (19th century to now) explores the human condition.
* Demonstrate an understanding of the dynamic diversity of cultures which contributes to American Literature.
* Interpret Modern American Literature through critical reading.
* Participate in activities that encourage personal awareness, growth, and/or creativity through the experience of Modern American Literature.
* Write and speak effectively about your own and others’ ideas regarding Modern American Literature.

# Class Policies

## Behavior and Expectations

You are held accountable to the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/administration-information/policies/students-rights-responsibilities-and-conduct), which outlines expectations pertaining to academic honesty (including cheating and plagiarism), classroom conduct, and general conduct.

### Guidelines for communication

1. Stay focused on the conversation. Refer back to texts we are reading in class to make your points.
2. Engage ideas instead of attacking each other.
3. If you start feeling defensive, attacked, or put on the spot, try asking yourself why you feel that way. Share your feelings with the class.

### Use of cell phones

Please put away your cell phones until class is finished. See it as a test to determine if screens and electronic devices really are addictive.

## Attendance/Tardiness Policy

I expect you to be on time and to attend every class. Attendance is worth 10 points out of 100 for the course. I understand that life happens. You have two (2) freebies, or absences that will not count against your final grade. My policy is simple:

1. Each absence is worth two (2) points. This means that each time you are absent beyond the two freebies, you will lose two points.
2. Every two tardies, or every two times you are late to class, will count as one absence. So, if you are tardy four times, that counts as two absences.

## Grading

Here’s how the class breaks down (out of 100 points):

* Response Papers (4)- 20 points (5 points each)
* Paper 1 (Close Reading)- 15 points
* Paper 2 (Research)- 25 points
* Final Creative Project- 20 points
* Attendance- 10 points
* In-class Discussion Questions- 10 points

Final Grade Calculation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Percentage | Performance |
| A | 90-100% | Excellent Work |
| B | 80-89% | Good Work |
| C | 70-79% | Average Work |
| D | 60-69% | Poor Work |
| F | 0-59% | Failing Work |

### Late Assignment Policy

Because of how short quarters are, I cannot and will not accept late papers. However, do not hesitate to contact me if you are feeling overwhelmed or something happens. It is always better to let me know than to not hand anything in.

# College Policies

## LBCC Email and Course Communications

You are responsible for all communications sent via Moodle and to your LBCC email account. You are required to use your LBCC provided email account for all email communications at the College. You may access your LBCC student email account through Student Email and your Moodle account through Moodle.

## Disability and Access Statement

LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in the class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please visit the [CFAR Website](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar) for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

## Statement of Inclusion

To promote academic excellence and learning environments that encourage multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas, all courses at LBCC will provide students the opportunity to interact with values, opinions, and/or beliefs different than their own in safe, positive and nurturing learning environments. LBCC is committed to producing culturally literate individuals capable of interacting, collaborating and problem-solving in an ever-changing community and diverse workforce.

## Title IX Reporting Policy

If you or another student are the victim of any form of sexual misconduct (including dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment), or any form of gender discrimination, LBCC can assist you. You can [report](https://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php/pid073717) a violation of our sexual misconduct policy directly to our Title IX Coordinator. You may also report the issue to a faculty member, who is required to notify the Coordinator, or you may make an appointment to speak confidentially to our Advising and Career Center by calling 541-917-4780.

## Public Safety/Campus Security/[Emergency Resources](http://www.linnbenton.edu/public-safety-emergency-planning):

In an emergency, call 911. Also, call LBCC Campus Security/Public Safety at 541-926-6855 and 541-917-4440.

From any LBCC phone, you may alternatively dial extension 411 or 4440. LBCC has a [public safety app](http://lbccpublicsafety.mobapp.at/landing/Desktop) available for free. We encourage people to download it to their cell phones. Public Safety also is the home for LBCC's Lost & Found. They provide escorts for safety when needed. Visit them to learn more.

# Campus Resources

## Learning Center

This is an amazing resource. You should go here for all of your classes. For this class, you can go to the Writing Center for help with your writing assignments. I strongly encourage all of you to use this resource as much as you can. Many studies have shown that students who use the Writing Center perform better on their assignments. Did I mention that it’s free?

## Library

The library is your best friend. We have excellent librarians here who are trained in helping you with your research projects. You can use the library online or in person. Either way, use it! It is such a wonderful place. Why wouldn’t you want to go?

## Me

Seriously? Seriously. I am here for you. I want you to succeed. I am not a gatekeeper. I am not here to see whether you make the cut. I am here to do whatever I can to get you where you want to go. We are in this together, so please remember that I would LOVE to help you succeed in this class beyond our given class time. Use my office hours or let me know if there is a better time for you. We can make it work.

# Tips for Success in This Class

1. Hand in your assignments, even if they aren’t finished.
2. Take on the mindset that you are coming to class on time every day. Treat our class like a professional environment.
3. Come to office hours or communicate with me in some other way. Do this as often as you want to. The relationships you build with your instructors here are vital to your success.
4. Make friends and build a community here! Your classmates are perhaps your most valuable resource (even more valuable than me, and that’s saying something).

# Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through a Moodle Announcement, or through LBCC e-mail.

**Week 1: Reconstruction and Restoration (Twain)**

Tuesday: Read:

Mark Twain’s [Puddin’head Wilson](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/102/102-h/102-h.htm) (Whisper to the Reader-Chapter V)

Thursday: Read:

[Puddin’head Wilson](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/102/102-h/102-h.htm) (Chapters VI-X)

**Week 2: Reconstruction and Restoration (Twain Cont’d)**

Tuesday: Read:

[Puddin’head Wilson](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/102/102-h/102-h.htm) (Chapters XI-XV)

Thursday: Read:

[Puddin’head Wilson](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/102/102-h/102-h.htm) (Chapters XVI-Conclusion)

**Week 3: Jim Crow and Modernism**

Tuesday: Read:

Charles W. Chesnutt’s [The Goophered Grapevine](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1887/08/the-goophered-grapevine/306656/)

Ida B. Wells’s [Southern Horrors](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14975/14975-h/14975-h.htm) (Preface, The Offense, The Black and White of It)

Thursday: Read:

T.S. Eliot’s [The Wasteland](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47311/the-waste-land)

William Carlos Williams’s [The Red Wheelbarrow](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45502/the-red-wheelbarrow)

**Week 4: Indigenous Voices: Imperialism at Home**

Tuesday: Read:

Luther Standing Bear’s *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Social Customs, Indian Wisdom)

Thursday: Read:

Standing Bear’s *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Later Days, What the Indian Means to America, The Tragedy of the Sioux)

Thomas Whitecloud’s “Blue Winds Dancing” (Available on Moodle)

**Week 5: The Harlem Renaissance and the Roaring Twenties**

Tuesday: Read:

F. Scott Fitzgerald’s [Bernice Bobs her Hair](https://public.wsu.edu/~campbelld/engl494/bernicebobs.pdf)

Ernest Hemingway’s [Hills Like White Elephants](https://faculty.weber.edu/jyoung/English%202500/Readings%20for%20English%202500/Hills%20Like%20White%20Elephants.pdf)

Thursday: Read:

Nella Larsen’s [*Passing*](https://archive.org/stream/passing00lars/passing00lars_djvu.txt) (Part 1: Encounter)

**Week 6: Harlem Renaissance (Cont’d)**

Tuesday: Read:

Nella Larsen’s [*Passing*](https://archive.org/stream/passing00lars/passing00lars_djvu.txt) (Part 2: Re-encounter)

Thursday: Read:

Nella Larsen’s [*Passing*](https://archive.org/stream/passing00lars/passing00lars_djvu.txt) (Part 3: Finale)

**Week 7: The Beats and Counterculture**

Tuesday: Read:

Allen Ginsberg’s [Howl](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49303/howl)

Sylvia Plath’s [Ariel](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49001/ariel)

Thursday: Read:

Gloria Anzaldua’s [To Live in the Borderlands](https://www.powerpoetry.org/content/live-borderlands)

Tim O’Brien’s [The Things They Carried](https://savanna.auhsd.us/view/26051.pdf)

**Week 8: Renaissance Cont’d**

Tuesday: Read:

August Wilson’s [*Fences*](http://web.mit.edu/wpick/output.pdf)(Act 1)

Thursday: Read:

August Wilson’s [*Fences*](http://web.mit.edu/wpick/output.pdf)(Act 2)

**Week 9: Our Current Time**

Tuesday: Read:

Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being* (Part 1)

Thursday: Read:

Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being* (part 2)

**Week 10: Our Current Time (Cont’d)**

Tuesday: Read:

Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being* (Part 3)

Thursday: Read:

Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being* (Finish)