

American Migrations

ENGL 229: Diversity in US Literatures
Spring 2018
MWF 900-950
Merrifield Hall 117

Dr. David Haeselin

E-mail: david.haeselin@und.edu

Office: Merrifield 23B

Office Hours: MW 2:30-4:00 and by appt.

Course Description:

If elected, 2016 Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump plans to build a “great, great wall” along America’s southern border with Mexico to deter border crossing. Fellow Presidential candidate Chris Christie suggested implanting RFID chips into border crossers in order to track them like “FedEx packages.” Without a doubt, immigration represents a major source of discord across the nation and the globe. Despite examples of fervent anti-immigrant rhetoric on the national stage, one cannot deny that the United States is a nation peopled primarily by the descendants of immigrants and immigrants themselves. This course will argue that reading narratives depicting the processes of individuals becoming recognized as American and starting to feel like American themselves can help clarify the current social, cultural, and political complexities associated with legal and illegal immigration.

This course will survey the literature of the many phases of American migration and immigration starting with European settlers in the Colonial period, then moving to the influx of “White” ethnic groups during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Next we will look at stories and poems that emerge from the “Great Migration” of African Americans to the Industrial North after the abolition of slavery as well as the stories of Jewish immigrants before and after World War II. The historical arc of the class will end with films and novels dealing with the “new” trend of Asian and Latino arrival during the last fifty years.

This course fulfills the Essential Studies categories of Intercultural Knowledge and Skills in Humanities and U.S. Diversity.

Texts:

Required Books (available in campus bookstore and online)

Cather, Willa. *My Ántonia* (1918)
Markham, Lauren. *The Far Away Brothers* (2017)
Ozick, Cynthia. *The Shawl* (1989)
Tan, Shaun. *The Arrival* (2007)
Whitehead, Colson. *The Underground Railroad* (2016)

Various selections available on the course's Blackboard site. Marked in the syllabus as BB.

Films and Television

Fresh Off the Boat (creator Nahnatchka Khan, 2015).
Master of None (creators Aziz Ansari and Alan Yang, 2015).
Children of Men (dir. Alfonso Cuarón, 2006).

Course Objectives

- Introduce students to theoretical and practical issues of diversity in the United States through stories about immigration and movement.
- Model a historically specific, contextual, and socially responsible model of interpretation for novels, short stories, films, television, personal narratives, video games, journalism, and critical essays.
- Enrich our understanding of national, regional, and self-definitions of the meaning of “home” from Americans of all different backgrounds and places.
- Familiarize students with multimodal methods for analyzing narratives and information in accordance with new expectations of the workplace.
- Foster proficiency in a variety of written genres, including literary analysis, visual analysis, and academic argument.

Assignments

- I. **Sourcing Immigration** (20%)
3-4 page written analysis of *My Ántonia* using 2 critical sources included in the Norton reader or Blackboard.

- II. **Midterm: Traces and Roots** (25%)
Work together as a class to construct a digital archive of historical remnants that speak to the lives of the characters of Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*.

- III. **Envisioning "Home"** (25%)
Compare how two works we've read, watched, or played over the course of the semester each represent the changing location of home for migrants and immigrants since the American Civil War.

5-6 pages, must include at least 2 critical sources, and 1 historical document.

- IV. **Homework, Reading Quizzes and Short Writing assignments** (15%)
- V. **Class Participation** (15%)

Attendance, Class Participation & Lateness

I expect all students to be prepared for class everyday; being prepared means paying close attention to scheduled assignments, doing the homework, and *bringing relevant materials with you to class*. If you do not bring the text we are reading to class, you will be considered absent.

You are allowed **five** absences without penalty— following your fifth absence, your grade in the class will begin to drop by a **half-a-letter grade** per absence. Plan ahead if you think you might miss class for religious holidays or for other scheduled events. Just because you inform me of an absence beforehand does not mean that it does not count towards your total. ***I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences – you are allowed five absences – be they excused or unexcused – before your grade begins to decrease, unless other special arrangements have been made with me ahead of time.*** For every two days you are late to class, you will be marked for one absence. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be

marked absent for that day. If you miss a class meeting, you are responsible to contact your peers or **come to my office hours** for materials and information you've missed. Finally, you are responsible for keeping track of your own absences. A sign-in sheet will be used daily and absences will be thus recorded. Please be conscientious of your class participation – make sure you get the sign-in sheet, and please don't expect me to keep a running tally of your absences!

Scholastic Dishonesty

At UND, we trust in the excellence of our students and in the integrity of our academic programs. We also trust that your good ideas become better when you test them against the ideas of others. So for this course, feel free to discuss your ideas about the major writing assignments with other students. Collaborating on question/answer homework assignments or open-book quizzes, however, is not acceptable; these types of assignments are designed for me, your instructor, to monitor how you are handling specific parts of the course materials. Blatantly taking someone else's words, ideas or concepts, and using them without citing your source is plagiarism. So is using another student's essay, or part of his or her essay, as your own. In the world of writing (academic writing especially), this is a serious crime, and is treated as such. Anyone who uses non-documented material from another source, including online sources, will receive **a failing grade** for the entire course and will be referred to the Dean's office for possible further disciplinary action.

Plagiarism, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, is a serious offense and will be subject to official university policy and punitive action as found in the "Code of Student Life" available at <http://sos.und.edu/csl/index.php?main=1&pg=s3&subpg=3-3>.

If you have any questions, always feel free to ask me. It's been my experience that those writers who plagiarize are those who feel overwhelmed by the assignment and out of desperation, use someone else's work to stand in for their own. If you get so frustrated with an assignment that you feel like your only option is to plagiarize, come see me. My role as a teacher is to help students, not to punish them— *please* use me as a resource to help you write, brainstorm or work out your essays.

Deadlines

All written assignments must be submitted on the due date, and missing the class when the assignment is due doesn't mean your assignment isn't late. Turning in an assignment on time is part of doing the assignment, and late work will be graded down, regardless of how well it's executed.

Lateness penalties are as follows:

- Final drafts. For every day that a =
- Short assignments. All late assignments may receive a maximum of half-credit, regardless of how late they are.

Using Recording Equipment in Class

If you need to tape or record classroom activities, you may do so for *personal* use or for all students presently enrolled in the class. However, you may not further copy, distribute, publish or otherwise use for any other purpose without my express written consent.

Technologies

I **expect** you to turn off your cell phone before coming to class. There is to be **NO** text messaging or smartphone surfing during class. **All laptops must remain closed** unless I explicitly encourage you to bring it for in-class writing or group assignments. You will receive exactly **ONE** warning. After that, you will be marked as absent for the day.

Learning Disability

If you have a learning disability that could impair your progress in this course, please contact Disability Services on campus (<https://und.edu/disability-services/>). We can arrange to accommodate your learning style based on EOS recommendations. Please notify me at the semester's beginning of your learning needs--do not wait until the semester becomes overwhelming to acknowledge the problem.

General Guidelines For Submitting Assignments

- Unless otherwise directed, please submit all major assignments in .doc or .docx format via the SafeAssign feature on Blackboard. **(If your word processing software does not seem to save documents as .docx files, come see me and I will help you).**
- **Name your files according to this protocol: Lastname_AssignmentDraft.docx (For example: Jones_MidtermRoughDraft.docx)**
- All papers, including daily assignments, must be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins. (Note: The default spacing in MS Word is 1.25")
- Include page numbers on all assignments longer than one page.
- **Staple** all printed out assignments longer than one page.
- Carefully edit and proofread all texts to eliminate problems in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Spell-check your documents. A hint in this regard: typos typically occur in the last minutes when you are making final revisions to a text. Be sure, therefore, to always do a final spell check on at least the section of the document in which you have been making changes. Just because there are no spelling errors found by the spell check does not mean that your paper is error-free; often the spell check "fixes" errors by replacing a similar correctly spelled word. Closely re-reading every word you submit to me is the only fail-proof way to spell-check your papers.
- Any time you cite an essay, film, or book in your main essays, you will need to include a Works Cited section of your essay that provides complete and accurate bibliographic information of the material mentioned in your essay. If you're not sure how to cite sources, ask!

Documents that do not meet these and other assignment-specific requirements will not be graded. They will be returned to you and when resubmitted will be treated as late submissions. Pay attention to these details for handing in your final drafts. Superficial errors do not necessarily signify poor thinking, but they

do indicate a lack of precision and nonchalance toward the task. When you write papers for your courses within your major, your professors will expect high quality, readable prose. Use this class as a stepping stone toward that end. You'll have to plan your writing process to make time for proofreading—printing a just-written paper 10 minutes before class time will probably not yield terrific results.

On-Campus Writing Resources

I enthusiastically encourage all students to take advantage of the Writing Center in the basement of Merrifield Hall. All students are eligible for one-on-one tutoring, but you must make an appointment. Remember, though, that tutors are not editors. It is not their job to “correct” your work or simply edit it while you go on Facebook. Think of the writing tutors as supplementary instructors for the class. They can address some issues (from the lowest-level to the highest) in much greater detail than I can since are not responsible for teaching you academic argumentation. For those of you who feel anxious about the requirements of this class, I recommend that you establish a relationship with a tutor early in the semester and rely on their expertise regularly.

Writing Center, web address: <http://und.edu/academics/writing-center/>

ESL Resource Center, Merrifield Hall, Room 112. The ESL Resource Center arranges tutoring and/or conversation partners for multilingual speakers seeking more practice with the English language. Contact Mary Monette for more information: mary.monette@UND.edu or 701-777-3624.

Student Success Center, Memorial Union, Second Floor. The Student Success Center offers advising, learning services, and specific program to help students meet their educational goals. Individualized assistance and assessments are available. <http://und.edu/student-affairs/studentservices/>

Grading Policy And Scale

- A Exceptional. Assignment criteria met with creativity, rigor, and insight. Rich theoretical, historical, and creative analysis of the objects grounded within the larger academic context. Ideas articulated with convincing detail and display careful planning. Research and writing is lucid. Errors in style in grammar are rare and never prevent easy comprehension.
- B Good work. Displays sustained analysis, concentration and effort, although mainly recapitulated from class discussion and/or directly from class sources. Minor style problems never completely obscure writer's meaning.
- C Acceptable, but uninspired. There may be a glaring conceptual or execution problems. Work mostly descriptive with little to no historical, critical, or theoretical analysis. Serious issues with validity and/or depth of research. (Note: this is the median grade in the university system)

- D Unsatisfactory work. Ideas never move beyond generalizations. No analysis of any kind. Lacking research and focus. Work displays little to no grasp of the goals of the assignment.
- R Fail. Student does not submit complete work or shows no attempt to engage the concerns of the assignment.

Expectations for Class Conduct and Devices

Much of the reading for this class will come from handouts distributed via Blackboard. You are required to closely read these articles. Furthermore, you are required to bring a version of each article to class. I prefer that you bring a printed copy, but I understand that many of you prefer to read on media devices. I will allow you to bring copies on your devices, but with a caveat. If, at anytime in the semester I get the feeling that people are not reading the articles or that they are using their devices for non-class related activities, I will revoke this privilege and require everyone bring printed copies of the articles to class.

Assessing your class participation

ENGL229 is a discussion course; it's absolutely necessary that you participate in class. Participation which includes both classroom involvement and physically being in class makes up roughly 10% of your total grade. Your in-class participation grade falls to my discretion and can nudge a borderline grade higher or lower. When you contribute to class discussion, be sure that your comments are helpful ones and not tangential to the current threads of conversation. You should be ready to participate in general class discussion at least once a week, and you should always be prepared to generate thoughtful input in small-group discussions and peer review work. Be sure to be supportive of your peers' ideas, even when you disagree with them. Disagreement can be constructive - very constructive - but when you raise disagreement within class discussion, be sure to do so respectfully by articulating your grounds for disagreeing with an idea rather than with your peers. Of course, all discussion should refrain from language and tone that could be considered inappropriate or offensive.

If you have questions about the policies of this class, review the syllabus first, and then contact me.

I reserve the right to make any alterations, additions, or subtractions I see fit.



[Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

Course Schedule

UNIT I: The US as an Immigrant Nation

Core concepts: Melting Pot, Ellis Island, Citizenship, Illegal Immigration, Generations, Migrant, Refugee.

Week 1

Wednesday January 10: Introduction and course preview.

Friday, January 12: Gambino, “No Human Being is Illegal.” (BB)

Week 2

Monday, January 15: No class; MLK Jr. Day

Wednesday, January 17: Ozick, “The Shawl”

Friday, January 19: James, “From Jamaica to Minnesota to Myself.”

DUE: Your personal definition of “Home.” 1-2 pages. Be sure to explore the physical space and the emotional context of your choice. How has your sense of home changed for you over your lifetime?

Week 3

Monday, January 22: Ozick, “Rosa.”

UNIT II: Moving to the Midwest

Core concepts: The Frontier, Americanization, The Homestead Act of 1862, Immigrant act of 1924, The Turner Thesis, Manifest Destiny, Assimilation, uprooting, folklore

Wednesday, January 24: Cather, 1-30, “Peter” and Wilson, “The Meaning of Citizenship.” (MA)

Note: All readings contained within our edition of *My Ántonia* are marked MA.

Friday, January 26: Cather, 30-60 and Kallen, “Democracy v. the Melting Pot.” (MA)

Week 4

Monday, January 29: Cather, 60-110. (MA)

DUE: 1 page response to Cather. Does Kallen or Wilson’s better represent your understanding of the novel?

Wednesday, January 31: Cather, 110-140. (MA)

Friday, February 2: Cather, 140-end and Mencken, “Sunrise of the Prairie: VII” (MA)

Week 5

Monday, February 5: Urgo, “The Cather Thesis: The American Empire of Migration” (BB).

UNIT III: Histories of Movement

Core concepts: Alternative History, Diaspora, (National) Identity, The Historical Novel, Steampunk, Fake News, Revisionism

Wednesday, February 7: Whitehead, 1-50

Friday, February 9: Whitehead, 51-100.

Week 6

Monday, February 12: Federal Writers’ Project.

DUE: Sourcing Home Paper.

Introduce Midterm Project.

Wednesday, February 14: Whitehead, 101- 150.

Friday, February 16: Whitehead, 150-200.

Week 7

Monday, February 19: **No class; President's Day.**

Wednesday, February 21: Federal Writers' Project Selections and Konstantinou, "Critique Has Its Uses" (BB)

Friday, February 23: Whitehead-201-250.

Week 8

Monday, February 26: Whitehead, 250-300.

DUE: Personal Reflection on Class Participation. See Blackboard for prompt.

Wednesday, February 28: Whitehead, 300-end.

UNIT IV: Growing up Between Worlds

Core concepts: Hybridity, Assimilation, (National) Identity, the alien, Bilingualism, Identification, Refuge

Friday, March 2: Markham, 1-50.

Week 9

Monday, March 5: Markham, 51-100.

Wednesday, March 7: Markham, 101-150.

Friday, March 9: *Fresh off the Boat*, "Pilot"

DUE: Midterm Project via Blackboard link.

Week 10

March 12 – March 16. No class; Spring Break; read!

Monday, March 19: Markham, 150-250.

Wednesday, March 21: Markham, 250-300.

Lauren Markham presents on noon panels on Thursday, March 22 and Friday, March 23. She will read from her work on Friday at 8 p.m.

Friday, March 23: Markham, 300-end.

N.B. Extra credit opportunity. Attend Markham’s talk at the 2018 UND Writers Conference and submit a 1 page analysis of how the author engages one key term from the class.

Submission due Monday, March 26 by 11:59PM, via Blackboard.

Week 11

Monday, March 26: Master of None, “Immigrants.”

Wednesday, March 28: Jen, “Who’s Irish?”

Friday, March 30: No class; Spring Holiday.

Week 12

Monday, April 2: No class; Spring Holiday.

Wednesday, April 4: Master of None, “Thanksgiving.”

Due: 2-page response to Markham. What does home mean for the Flores Brothers?

Friday, April 6: Fresh off the Boat, “Pilot.”

Unit IV: The Immigrant as Archetype.

Core Concepts: Archetype, allegory, emulation, Graphic Novel

Week 13

Monday, April 9: Read Tan, beginning. I-II.

Wednesday, April 11: Tan, II- IV.

Friday, April 13: Tan, IV- end., and Vandermeer, “The Arrival of Shaun Tan” (BB)

Week 14

Monday, April 16: Cole, “Migrants Welcome”

Wednesday, April 18: TBA.

Friday, April 20: **Read; Final Project Assignment Sheet.**
Introduce assignment.

Week 15

Monday, April 23: Begin *Children of Men* in class.

Tuesday, April 24: Screen the rest of the *Children of Men*, location TBA.

Wednesday, April 25: Discuss *Children of Men*

Friday, April 27: **Final Paper Proposal Due.**
Rubric and Sample paper analysis.

Week 16

Monday, April 30. Envisioning Home, TBA.

Wednesday, May 2: Course Evaluations. Course wrap-up.

Wednesday, May 9: Final projects due. Please submit via Blackboard.