

ENG 439—Teaching Literature of Diversity

Dr. Lee Bebout
Email: bebout@shsu.edu
Office Phone: 936-294-1990
Office: Evans Complex 459

Office Hours: T & Th 3:30-4:30
& by appointment
Section: 1
Class Time: T & Th 11:00-12:20
Location: EV 353

Course Description:

This course examines strategies for incorporating and teaching multicultural literature within the secondary education classroom. As a point of departure, we will explore the meaning of key concepts such as multiculturalism, diversity, and representation. In order to build a common foundation from which we can discuss our ideas, we will read texts from diverse literary and cultural traditions. Placed in dialogue, these readings will help us investigate identity formation as constituted through race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and the intersections thereof. Notably, we will also interrogate the role of education in identity formation and power relations. Ultimately, this course seeks to become a collaborative space for understanding how we read, teach, and participate in a democratic, multicultural society.

Course Goals:

- 📖 Explore the strategies for teaching multicultural literature within the secondary education classroom.
- 📖 Examine key issues and themes of multicultural literatures.
- 📖 Form a constructive dialogue regarding the concerns of underrepresented communities.
- 📖 Investigate the role of literature and other cultural productions in the representation and social construction of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and other identity categories.

Learning Outcomes:

- 📖 Demonstrate ability to conceptualize, plan, and carry out lessons in multicultural literature.
- 📖 Hone critical thinking and close reading skills.
- 📖 Develop, articulate, and support cogent arguments.

Required Texts:

- George Lamming, *In The Castle of My Skin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, [1970] 2005).
- Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones* (New York: Penguin, 1999).
- Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (New York: Vintage, [1970] 2007).
- Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima* (New York Grand Central, [1972] 1999).
- Helena María Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (New York: Plume, 1995).
- Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (New York: Little, Brown, 2007).
- Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club* (New York: Penguin, [1989] 2006).

Semester Grading Rubric:

Quizzes & Daily Assignments_____	10%
Teaching Presentation_____	10%
Short Paper #1_____	15%
Short Paper #2_____	15%
Proposal & Annotated	10%
Bibliography_____	15%
Poster Presentation_____	25%
Final Project_____	

Grading Plan:

Your numerical grade for the semester will correspond to the following alphabetical grading scale: 100%-90% = A, 89%-80% = B, 79%-70% = C, 69%-60% = D, 59%-0% =F.

Quizzes & Daily Work:

These are minor assignments that are geared to foster and evaluate learning throughout the semester. They cannot be made up except in the cases of religious holidays and excused absences, as defined by me.

Teaching Presentation:

During the semester, you and a group of your peers will work together to facilitate a class session. It will be your collective responsibility to devise a lesson plan, provide contextual

information, as well as generate discussion and learning in the class. Ideally, these presentations will be both engaging and instructive. Groups will be assigned in the first two weeks of class. Note: all groups should meet with me a week or two prior to the presentation for a strategy session.

Short Papers:

While we will discuss these in more detail as the semester develops, these short writing assignments (1,000 words, single-spaced) emphasize concision, argument, and evidence. Like all writing assignments, these are the result of a process. I highly recommend that you begin thinking about, organizing, and drafting these papers early. Moreover, please feel free to see me or the writing lab for assistance.

Proposal & Annotated Bibliography:

You are required to write a brief proposal (2 pages, double-spaced) for your final project. The proposal should introduce your argument and explain its significance. While your project may shift over the course of the semester, this proposal should guide you in the process. Also, with the proposal, you will turn in an annotated bibliography that includes a minimum of eight secondary sources. The bibliography should be completed in MLA format followed by brief, 5-6 sentence, annotations evaluating these sources and explaining how they will contribute to your final project. I highly encourage you to meet with me before undertaking the proposal and annotated bibliography.

Final project:

For your final project, you will design a unit on literature of diversity appropriate for a grade-level of your choosing. The narrative of this project should run 10-14, double-spaced pages in length and cover the following areas: unit description and justification, goals and objectives, assignments and assessment strategies. As an appendix, you should also include a few select sample lesson plans with supplementary materials. While this project will not take the form of the standard research paper, you will be expected to draw on secondary sources to support and further your ideas. Note: You will need to seek out and select primary texts that we have not read in this class.

Poster Presentation:

Toward the end of the semester, you will be required to present the work for your final project in the form of a poster presentation. We will dedicate an entire class period to these presentations and invite interested guests to view and comment on your work. This serves

several purposes. The poster presentation functions as a trial run for your final project where you can discuss your ideas with your peers. Also, this presentation allows you to see and learn from the work of your colleagues. Finally, this is an opportunity for you to help other educators consider how they might include literature and issues of diversity in their own classes.

Late Work Policy:

I do not accept late work unless you have a serious, legitimate reason (as determined by me). For example, missing a deadline because your appendix has ruptured may be an acceptable justification but "computer problems" that miraculously occur in the wee hours of night (or any time for that matter) are not. Ultimately, I reserve the right to refuse late work.

Classroom Climate:

In order for discussion and learning to flourish, this class needs to foster a climate of respect. Whether dealing with opinions on culture or the literature itself, please listen respectfully to the views of others. This does not mean that discussion and argument should not take place; rather, discussion and argument are most useful when views are shared openly. If you feel that you are not being listened to or showed due respect, please come talk to me. For the university's official statement, see section 5.2.22 of the "Code of Student Conduct and Discipline."

Open Door Policy:

You are welcomed and encouraged to visit me whenever you wish to discuss a paper or a problem as it relates to this class. If you cannot come during my office hours, schedule an appointment with me. The easiest and best way to contact me outside of my office hours is to e-mail me. I try to read my e-mail on a daily basis and will send you a prompt reply.

Attendance Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance is imperative for your success in this course. If you miss more than three class periods, your grade will be lowered. Moreover, if you do not attend, you will miss our enthralling discussion and the ever-important quizzes. Thus, any absences will indirectly affect your grade. Note: tardiness of more than 10 minutes will be considered an absence.

Religious Holidays:

If you are going to miss class for a recognized religious holiday, please notify me in writing at least one week ahead of time. It will be your responsibility to make up all missed work within a reasonable timeframe.

Academic Dishonesty:

If you turn in a piece of writing all or part of which you have plagiarized, you will be dismissed with an "F" in the course. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of other people's work or ideas without proper citation. If you have any questions concerning this, please come to me. In cases of academic dishonesty, further action within the context of university guidelines may be considered. For more information, see SHSU's "Code of Student Conduct and Discipline."

Students with Disabilities:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with the Counseling Center & ADA Services to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation, you must advise me of your needs in writing no later than the end of the second week of class.

Weekly Schedule

Unit One: Thinking & Talking about Diversity

Week One: January 14th

TH: course introduction
Plan de Santa Barbara (excerpt)

Week Two: January 21st

T: Wills, "Who Needs Multicultural Education? White Students, U.S. History, and the Construction of a Usable Past"

TH: Omi and Winant "Racial Formation"
Lipsitz, "Possessive Investment in Whiteness"

Week Three: January 28th

T: Bell and Entin, "Teaching and Social Difference: Beyond Identity Politics"
Rosaldo "Cultural Citizenship and Educational Democracy"

TH: Freire *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (excerpts)
hooks, "Talking Race and Racism" & "Democratic Education"

Week Four: February 4th

T: West, "'It Takes Time': The Generative Potential of Transgressive Teaching"
Graff, "Teaching Politically Without Political Correctness"

TH: Lamming, *In The Castle of My Skin*, 9-108

Unit Two: Diversity and Pedagogical Strategies

Week Five: February 11th

T: Lamming, *In The Castle of My Skin*, 109-208

TH: Lamming, *In The Castle of My Skin*, 209-303
Short Paper #1 due

Week Six: February 18th

T: Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*, 1-116

TH: Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*, 117-217

Presentation #1Week Seven: February 25th

T: Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*, 218-310

TH: Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 1-80

Week Eight: March 3rd

T: Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 81-131

Presentation #2

TH: Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, 132-205

Week Nine: March 10th

T: **Spring Break**

TH: **Spring Break**

Week Ten: March 17th

T: Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*, 1-110

TH: Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*, 111-199

Presentation #3Week Eleven: March 24th

T: Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*, 200-277

Short Paper #2 due

TH: Portales and Portales, "Thinking About Our Spanish-Speaking Students in the Schools" & "Latino and Latina Students and the Schools We Could Create"

Unit Three: Rethinking the Canon & the Curriculum

Week Twelve: March 31st

T: Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus*, 1-90

TH: Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus*, 91-176

Presentation #4

Week Thirteen: April 7th

T: Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus*
Cofer, "The Myth of the Latin Woman"

TH: Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, 1-81

Proposal & Annotated Bibliography due

Week Fourteen: April 14th

T: Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, 82-158

TH: Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, 159-229

Week Fifteen: April 21st

T: Research Day

TH: Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*, 1-101

Week Sixteen: April 28th

T: Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*, 102-184

TH: Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*, 185-288

Week Seventeen: May 5th

T: Poster Workshop Day

TH: Poster Presentations

Week Eighteen: May 12th

finals week

Note: The readings for this course may be subject to change throughout the semester.