**English 235: Diverse American Voices**

**Spring 2024**

**Dr. Maria Mackas**

**Course Time: MW 1:30-2:45 p.m.**

**Classroom:** **Gordy 201**

**Office Location: Lawson 124-E**

**Email: maria.mackas@reinhardt.edu**

**Office Hours: By appointment**

**Required Reading**

*My Ántonia,* Norton Critical Edition, Willa Cather

*The Atlas of Reds and Blues,* Devi S. Laskar

Essays, articles, poems – to be supplied

**Required Watching**

*Minari*  - we will watch in class; available on Amazon Prime for $3.99 if you want to re-watch

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

* Identify the major themes of multicultural American literature
* Articulate how language impacts multicultural American literature
* Define significant terms related to multicultural American literature
* Discuss how cultural traditions such as religion, music, and food are reflected in multicultural American literature

**Program Objective 1:** **Writing Skills**

To ensure that students master sound writing skills, including the ability to craft correct and readable prose and to sustain a logical argument (College Objective 1: Communication)

Learning Outcome 1: Shows knowledge of and skills in the use of the English language

Learning Outcome 2: Shows facility with expository and argumentative writing

**Means of assessment:** Responses; family history project; research paper

**Program Objective 2:** **Reading Skills**

To prepare students to read, comprehend, and study independently (College Objective 2: Critical Thinking and Inquiry)

Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrates a close reading of the text(s) under discussion

Learning Outcome 4:  Exercises independent thought in the analysis and interpretation of texts

**Means of assessment:** Responses, family history project, research paper, class participation

**Program Objective 3: Research Skills**

To equip students with solid research skills, including the ability to use and cite both print and electronic primary and secondary sources (College Objective 2: Critical Thinking and Inquiry and College Objective 4: Values and Ethics)

Learning Outcome 5: Uses appropriate secondary sources to advance an argument

Learning Outcome 6: Integrates quoted and paraphrased material into essays

Learning Outcome 7: Demonstrates integrity and ethics in the attribution and citation of source material

Learning Outcome 8: Applies MLA style sheet to citations and Works Cited Page

**Means of assessment:** Research paper

**Program Objective 4: Literary and Historical Context**

To develop in students good interpretative skills in each of the major genres: poetry, fiction, and drama (College Objective 3: Society and Culture)

Learning Outcome 9: Understands the concept of genre and uses this knowledge in an effective analysis

Learning Outcome 10: Shows a sense of the cultural, biographical, and literary history of Western literature

Learning Outcome 11: Shows an understanding of the impact of diverse cultural backgrounds upon literature

**Means of assessment:** Responses, family history project, research paper, class participation

**Program Objective 5: Literary Terms and Theory**

To familiarize students with the terms and tools of literary analysis (College Objective 2: Critical Thinking and Inquiry)

Learning Outcome 12: Applies literary terms to the analysis of literary texts

Learning Outcome 13: Applies literary theory to the analysis of literary texts

**Means of assessment:** Responses, research paper, class participation

**Assignments and Grading**

1. Four reading responses (2 double-spaced pages each). You will respond to a question or concept I’ll provide – 20%
2. Reading journal – 15%
3. Family/friend oral interview/podcast – 10%
4. Proposal for research paper – 10%
5. Final research essay, 5-8 double-spaced pages – 30%
6. In-class writing – 15%

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

If you cheat on a post, paper or exam, I will fail you for the class, and I may choose to refer you to Judicial for punishment. Plagiarism is defined as presenting as your own any work that is not your own, whether it is work written by another student or parent or work copied from a written source or the Internet. DO NOT USE AI SOFTWARE TO DO YOUR WORK. I will know. If you use it for research, cite it – MLA now has a format to follow for it.

The university owns the anti-cheating software Turn It In, which matches student papers suspected of plagiarism with anything found on the Internet, including websites, term papers for purchase, and published books and articles.  Sometimes people plagiarize inadvertently by using another person’s words too closely without acknowledging the source. This is still considered to be cheating.  Be *extremely* careful to always acknowledge and cite your source in correct MLA format.  If you are using the exact wording of the source, it needs to be a direct quotation.

**Participation**

To earn a 100 for your participation grade:

* Show up on time
* Speak up and contribute to the conversation
* Be noticeably prepared – demonstrate that you’ve read the material and thought about it!
* Participate in activities
* Be professional and kind

Just showing up is not enough – you are expected to be engaged and prepared. This is college.

**Attendance and Tardiness Policy**

You’re allowed three unexcused absences. After that, your participation grade will begin to reflect your absences: five points will be deducted from your average for every unexcused absence. If you have a serious illness or family emergency and need to be out for an extended period (more than three absences in a row) please let me know and send me documentation.

Don’t be late. If it happens frequently, your participation grade will go down.

**Athletes and performers:** You are allowed excused absences, but I must have written documentation from your coach or advisor. Please give me advance notice and please turn in assignments ON TIME. Having an excused absence does not allow you to turn in late work.

**NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED.** If you have extenuating circumstances and cannot meet a deadline, you must communicate with me and receive permission to turn in a late assignment. Deadlines are important; this is a crucial life lesson.

**Reading Journal**

Your reading journal is extremely important to your success in this class. You’ll use it as a major reference when you write your essays. It will also illustrate your comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis skills. At the beginning of the semester, we’ll walk through the specifics about how to keep your journal, but here are the basics:

* Use a double-entry (side-by-side) format. Divide the page in half. On the left side, copy a passage from the book – one that you love/hate/relate to/don’t understand. On the right side, opposite that passage, explain why you love/hate/relate to/don’t understand the passage. Do this for at least three excerpts from the assigned reading.
* Note at least three “wonderings” (stuff you wonder about), three discussion questions, and three passages.

Don’t approach this as busy work; approach it as a real journal. I want to know how the material we’re reading relates to your life, to feelings you’ve had, or how you can’t relate to it at all. I want to know the passages you find beautiful/meaningful/odd/confusing, what you think the author is trying to convey, how it changed your thinking about something.

On due dates, you will take a photo/make a pdf of your journal entries for that week and upload to Canvas. Your journal will be graded on:

* Thoroughness
* Comprehension
* Critical thinking/analysis/thoughtfulness

You will be asked to share portions of your journal, including the discussion questions, in class.

**Participation**

Participation is an extremely important part of this class and can make or break your grade.   To receive an A or B in participation, you should contribute to the class on a regular basis. But listen as much as you speak; we’re here to learn from each other.

**Class Behavior**

1. Be on time. If you’re repeatedly late, your participation grade will be a C or lower.
2. If you need to miss class, let me know via email. Stuff happens, and I understand that, but please show up. If you don’t have to miss, don’t!
3. Come prepared with the appropriate books and written assignments.
4. Turn off cellphones and put them away.  No text messaging, checking email, surfing the net.  Be fully present when you’re in class. I will ask you to leave if I see you on your phone.
5. Be courteous and respectful.
6. Don’t eat in class (unless you bring enough for all of us).

**Course Calendar – this is a general guide that’s subject to change to accommodate class needs**

READ THE ASSIGNMENTS BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS ON THE DAY THEY ARE LISTED.

*Setting the Stage*

**Week 1: Multicultural America/Georgia**

**Mon., 1/8:** Introduction to course; why study multicultural lit; syllabus; Advice for Novel Readers (handout)

**Wed., 1/10:** “The Long Answer” by Yann Mounir Demange; “Two Ways to Belong in America” by Bharati Mukherjee; handout of terms/themes; reading journal instruction

**Week 2**

**Mon., 1/15: NO CLASS – MLK DAY**

**Wed., 1/17:** MA 7-25; in-class – Read foreword to *Emily of Deep Valley,* write response; reading journal #1 due

*Who Gets to Tell the Story?*

**Week 3**

**Mon., 1/22:** NY Times Bret Stephens article; Kevin Mims article in *The Federalist;* “Luck of the Irish” by Maeve Higgins; Adichie single story video

**Wed., 1/24:** MA 25-76; Reading journal #2 due; in-class essay

**Week 4**

**Mon., 1/29: Response #1 due;** reading journal review

**Wed., 1/31:** MA 77-126; “Mother Tongue” by Amy Tan; in-class essay

**Week 5**

**Mon., 2/5: Oral interview/podcast due – we will listen in class**

**Wed., 2/7:** finish MA; in-class essay

**Week 6**

**Mon., 2/12:** Lee Isaac Chung article; *Willa Cather Review* article; overview of how Cather inspired multicultural writers

**Wed., 2/14:** poems from *Seam,* Trethewey, Robin Coste Lewis; Reading journal #3 due

**Week 7**

**Mon., 2/19:** Reading journal review; Watch *Minari*

**Wed., 2/21:** Watch *Minari*

**Week 8**

**Mon., 2/26: Response #2 due;** intro to *Atlas*; watch Laskar video

**Wed., 2/28:** *Atlas* to 49; in-class writing

**MARCH 4-8 – NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

**Week 10**

**Mon., 3/11:** *Atlas* to 105; Reading journal #4 due

**Wed., 3/13:** Reading journal review; **Response #3 due**

**Week 11**

**Mon., 3/18:** *Atlas* to 170; in-class writing; reading journal #5 due

**Wed., 3/20:** Research review

**Week 12**

**Mon., 3/25:** Finish *Atlas*; **Response #4 due**

**Wed., 3/27:** Paper proposal workshop

**Week 13**

**Mon., 4/1: Research day – NO CLASS**

**Wed., 4/3: Paper proposal due**

**Week 14**

**Mon., 4/8:** MLA review

**Wed., 4/10:** Workshop

**Week 15**

**Mon., 4/15:** Work on papers

**Wed., 4/17: Draft review**

**Week 16**

**Mon., 4/21: Last day of class – papers due**