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ENG 4300-001: English Studies Capstone

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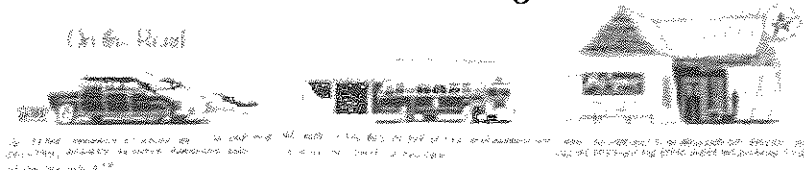
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ENGLISH 4300 Seminar in English Studies



ON THE ROAD

Course Description

In this Senior Seminar, we will lean on the title of Jack Kerouac's Beat Era novel *On the Road* to provide the central metaphor for our study of the journey motif in literary and cultural history. Easily one of the oldest and most dominant literary forms, the journey narrative goes by many names including quest, pilgrimage, bildungsroman (or coming of age story), and—perhaps the most terrifying for senior English majors—the résumé.

In the first part of the course, we will focus on two contemporary depictions of a journey—Towles's *The Lincoln Highway* (2021) and Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* (2016)—using them as anchor points in our survey of influential and abiding journey stories from past cultures. The guiding theme for our study will be how the journey narrative (in its many forms) captures the enduring conflict between the human search for an ideal and the unpredictability of changing social forces and historical circumstances.

In the second part of the course, we will pivot the seminar discussion to preparing for the next stage in your journey after EIU. While we will be working throughout the course on leadership, collaboration, and communication skills, the last part of the course will be structured to provide focused work on career preparation, where we will be doing a variety of activities in professional development to suit all concentrations in the major.

Course Goals & Learning Objectives

English 4300 is a required capstone course in the English major, and, as of Fall 2022, also satisfies EIU's Senior Seminar requirement. As such, the course goals and learning objectives align with EIU's General Education's guidelines:

- Develop, refine and improve writing skills
- Analyze issues critically and develop coherent and cogent arguments on controversial issues
- Engage in dialogue about issues pertaining to global citizenship
- Express in written and oral forms their synthesis of the essential arguments
- Learn to analyze their own views in light of readings and discussion in order to make informed civic and personal decisions

Fall 2022

Coleman Hall 1170
EM 11-00-12-15

Texts & Materials

- Texts: *The Lincoln Highway*
- Texts: *The Underground Railroad*
- Additional readings and course material will be available on D2L

Instructor: Prof. E. Smith
(smithem@eiu.edu)

Office: Coleman Hall

Office Hours:
EM 11-00-12-15 (in-person) & online
EM 11-00-12-15 (online)

Get Up & Go! Course

https://www.eiu.edu

REQUIREMENTS

Project 1	15%
Project 2	15%
Project 3	25%
In-Class Activities & Quizzes	15%
Weekly Writing	15%
Final Exam	15%

Writing Projects, In-Class Work, & Grading

- You will receive an assignment sheet for each major writing project, indicating due dates and expectations.
- We will be doing in-class activities — much of it group work — and so it's vital that attend every class session (see attendance policy below).
- All in-class activities and weekly writing will be given full credit, providing they are turned in on time and meet the assignment guidelines.

Attendance Policy

This course follows closely EIU's official policy on absences, which essentially means that you won't be penalized for excused absences (illness, emergency, participation in an official University activity, etc.). See EIU's attendance policy ([IGP #43](#)) for more information.

The semester is long and things happen. You may miss 2 classes for personal reasons without being penalized. Without any documentation or prior arrangements, you cannot make up any work missed. If you miss more than 2 days, your final grade will be docked accordingly — approximately one letter grade for every two days missed.

This really shouldn't be a problem, providing you talk to me ahead of time.

Electronic Writing Portfolio

This course is a writing-intensive course and, as such, your papers satisfy the requirements for the Electronic Writing Portfolio. EWP guidelines insist that you complete your submission prior to the last day of class. Talk to me if you have any questions about this or consult the EWP website.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

The Student Success Center

The Student Success Center- Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

Conferences

Individual conferences are crucial to writing courses. I encourage you to meet with me about any writing concerns you have. I'm happy to brainstorm with you, discuss writing strategies, or go over a draft of your writing. We can do this either before or after class or we can easily arrange a conference time on a different day. I'm happy to help. Just ask.

Speaking Assessment

All students in an EIU Senior Seminar must be assessed in at least one formal presentation, using the CAA-approved rubric. We will do this assessment as part of your final project. You will be given the rubric well ahead of this presentation, and we will discuss in in class extensively.