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# ENG 3903B 001: Women Literature and Language Post 1800

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**WOMEN, LITERATURE, AND LANGUAGE, POST-1800—BECOMING THE BEHOLDER: WOMEN WRITING WOMEN'S LIVES  
ENG 3903B sect. 001, CRN 93964**

**Dr. Jeannie Ludlow**

**Fall, 2017**

**10:00-10:50 a.m. MWF**

**in Coleman 3160**

**Office:** 3139 Coleman Hall

**E-mail:** for class-related communication, email me via D2L, please

**Mailbox:** 3351 Coleman Hall

**Office Hours:** M 3:00-4:30 p.m., T 2:00-4:30 p.m.,

R 10-11 a.m., and by appointment

The best way to reach me is via email (expect about 24 hours answer-time). If you really need to reach me immediately, please call either the English Dept. main office (581-2428) or my office (581-5947) and leave a message for me.

**Course Description for ENG 3903B from**

**Undergraduate Catalog:** "May focus on roles of women in literature, on literature by women, or on women's relation to language, post-1800." In this section of ENG 3903, we will focus on all three of these, paying particular attention to the ways contemporary authors of color from the U.S., Mexico, and the Dominican Republic have addressed women's roles and women's language in their work.

**Three notes about the class:**

**1)** This course counts as an elective for both the Latin American Studies minor and the Women's Studies minor. LAS minors will need to let your LAS advisor know you are taking the class for this purpose, so the course will show up in your DARS report for the minor.

**2)** Some of the works we are reading are bilingual or engage in linguistic code-switching (switching between English and Spanish and/or mixing English and Spanish words in the same sentence). It is not necessary to know Spanish to read these works (full disclosure: I do not read Spanish), although those of us who do read Spanish will have increased insight to share with those of us who do not. We will discuss why Chicana writers, particularly, include Spanish in their works and how those of us who do not read Spanish are invited to engage with the language play in these texts. Please do not worry—I will not test you on translating Spanish to English! I will try to help you learn how to enjoy and understand the texts even if you do not read Spanish.

**3)** Several of the works we are reading this semester include very frank representations of a variety of women's experiences, from the joyful (including sexual experiences, pregnancy decision-making, personal success) to the traumatic (including gendered violence, war, illness). I do not issue "trigger warnings"; please be aware that you will be reading these frank representations and do what you need to do to take good care of yourself both inside and outside of the classroom. If you need to talk, to debrief, to decompress with someone, I am 100% available to you for this. I care about your success and your ability to experience fully these amazing works of literature.

**Course Format:** This is a discussion- and participation-oriented course; assignments function as preparatory work for and the bases of the learning process, not as ends in themselves. Students have primary responsibility for the focus and tone of class discussions. Written work may be revised at the discretion of the professor and within a reasonable time frame.

**Course Expectations:** It is my educational philosophy that each of us is responsible for our own education; the role of the professor is to guide and facilitate learning, not to tell students what (or how) to think. Therefore, it is expected that students will come to class having done all assignments, fully prepared to engage in discussions, activities, etc., that revolve around the assigned materials. All opinions and ideas are encouraged in this class; it is *never* expected that students will agree with everything they read, see, or hear. Students will not be evaluated on their opinions but on their ability to analyze and evaluate texts and concepts and express their own opinions clearly and thoughtfully. Critical thinking and articulation of disagreements are encouraged.

**Student Learning Objectives—with successful completion of this course, students will:**

- a. further develop their skills in reading thoughtfully and critically in multiple literary genres, including critical analyses of literature;
- b. use their writing and speaking skills to demonstrate understanding of the ways culture, society, and artistic ideas shape literary works;
- c. express in written and oral forms how different literary works portray complex cultural concerns, such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality;
- d. analyze literary themes and forms in ways that reflect sensitivity to the cultural and historical contexts of specific primary texts.

**Special circumstances:** If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic

accommodations, please contact EIU's Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible. If you require assistance with any other circumstance that arises, please do contact me as soon as you can, so we can work out a good plan of action together.

**Required texts:**

You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. Seven texts for this course were ordered from Textbook Rental. (ISBNs are given, below, in case you would like to order personal copies from an on-line used bookstore.) Three plays will be available to you on D2L. Some required readings will also be available only on-line or via D2L.

**PRIMARY TEXTS, in order of use**

López, Josefina. "Real Women Have Curves," 1995, available on D2L

Erdrich, Louise (Turtle Mountain Chippewa), *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse*, 2001, ISBN: 978-0061577628

Esquivel, Laura. *Like Water for Chocolate*, 1989, tr. Carol Christensen and Thomas Christensen, 1992, ISBN: 978-0385420174

Jones, Gayl. *Corregidora*, 1975, ISBN: 978-0-8070-6315-6

Alvarez, Julia. *In the Time of the Butterflies*, 1994, ISBN: 978-04522774426

Shange, Ntozake. *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*, 1975/1997 ISBN: 978-0684843261

Moraga, Cherríe. "Heroes and Saints," 1994, available on D2L

Castillo, Ana. *So Far from God*, 1993/2005, ISBN: 978-0393326932

Parks, Suzan-Lori. "Fucking A," 2000, available on D2L

**TEXT ORDERED, NOT USED**

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy*, 1990, ISBN: 978-0374527358

**Other Requirements:**

You will need regular access to a computer and the ability to use D2L. If you need help with this, please make an appointment with me right away.

**GRADES** will be earned through the following components, each of which will be assigned a letter grade:

- 20% participation (includes attendance, in-class activities, discussion based on successful completion of all reading, and in-class writing)
- 40% eight learning activities (5% each). For a detailed description, see assignment information on D2L
- 5% one in-class presentation (individual or paired)
- 10% take-home midterm exam
- 15% course portfolio. For a detailed description, see assignment information on D2L
- 10% final exam

**NOTE:** There will be no makeups for in-class writing assignments. In-class writing will usually be the first activity in every class session; if you are late to class, you may miss it. Makeups for other assignments may be permitted in cases of

documented hardship or emergency. If you experience hardship or emergency, please let me know as soon as is reasonable.

IN ORDER TO PASS THIS CLASS,  
YOU MUST COMPLETE FOR GRADING:  
BOTH EXAMS; EIGHT LEARNING ACTIVITIES;  
ONE IN-CLASS PRESENTATION;  
AND THE COURSE PORTFOLIO.  
EXCESSIVE ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC  
FAILURE OF THIS COURSE.

**LATE POLICY: Late work is strongly discouraged.**

However, late is better than not at all. Work will depreciate in value one letter grade for each school day it is late, beginning at 10:00 a.m. on the day it is due, unless we negotiate an agreement in advance. All work is due at the time noted in the schedule.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** University students are adults and should make your own choices about attending class; do remember that any choice one makes comes with consequences. In this class, the consequence for absence may be a lower grade or failure of the course. I take attendance using a student sign-in sheet. If you are late, it is your responsibility to remember to sign the sign-in sheet at the end of class that day; if you forget, you are absent. In-class assignments are accepted for grading only on the day they are done and only if you are in attendance (no exceptions). If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed (from a peer or during my office hours) and for making sure that you get copies of handouts, worksheets, etc. Please do not e-mail me and ask, "did I miss anything?" and please do not interrupt the whole class to ask what you missed.

**E-mail guidelines:** (NOTE: this is good advice for e-mailing all your instructors) Communication with your instructors, whether by e-mail, by phone, or in person, is a professional exchange. Please be sure to reflect this professionalism in your communication. All e-mails must have: an appropriate salutation ("Dear Jeannie," "Hello, Dr. Ludlow," etc.); the course info in the subject line (e.g. ENG3705); and a recognizable signature. Your e-mails should be written with complete words and in complete sentences ("May I schedule an appointment with you?" not "Can I C U?"); this is true even if you are sending the emails on your phone. Also, please note that I check my e-mail two or three times each school day. It often takes me one full school day (24 hours, M – F) to answer any e-mail message. ALL COURSE-RELATED E-MAILS SHOULD BE SENT ON D2L.

**CLASSROOM BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**—the following

constitutes an agreement between the students and professor for this course.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to work in a harassment-free, hostility-free environment; harassment of others and explicit or deliberate hostility are not tolerated.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the right to be treated with respect and dignity at all times, even in the midst of heated disagreement.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to behave as a competent adult and to be open and polite to one another.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and academic guests) has the responsibility to come to every class fully prepared to listen, to participate, to learn and to teach.

Everyone in this class (students, instructors, and guests) has the responsibility to work together to create, in this class, an environment in which active learning, including responsible and respectful questioning, is encouraged.

The professor has the responsibility to treat all students fairly and to evaluate students' work accurately, in terms of the skills that any student in this course is expected to gain.

The professor has the responsibility to make assignment requirements and evaluation criteria clear.

Students have the right to feel confident that their work is being evaluated on its own merits, not on the basis of the students' personal opinions.

Students have the responsibility to view their professor as a partner in their education, not as bent on causing students anxiety and frustration.

Students have the responsibility to understand that the professor is not primarily responsible for making students understand; it is students' job to study, ask questions, and learn.

Students have the responsibility to keep an open mind and to try to comprehend what the professor and the texts are trying to get across to them.

Students have the responsibility to read the assignments carefully, noting important ideas and rephrasing information in their own words.

Students have the responsibility to work through examples in the assignments and in class discussions or lectures and to ask questions if they do not understand concepts or examples.

Students have the responsibility to do every bit of assigned homework with proper attention and thought.

Students have the responsibility to ask for help when they need it; help is available from the professor, from other students, from the Writing Center, the Student Success Center, and the Reading Center, and from other resources on campus.

Students have the responsibility to accept that their work will be evaluated in terms of the skills any student in this course is expected to gain.

Students have the responsibility to try to integrate the information from this course into other courses and into other areas of their lives.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** In this course, we will comply with EIU's academic integrity policy (see your catalog). I have no tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. Please note that "plagiarism or cheating" includes (but is not limited to):

1. **quoting** from a source without fully and correctly citing that source and/or without using quotation marks
2. **paraphrasing** from a source without fully and correctly citing that source
3. turning in a paper with an incorrect or incomplete **works cited list**
4. **falsifying** data
5. turning in **someone else's work** as your own—this includes (but is not limited to)
  - a. **copying** another's work from a quiz or assignment
  - b. turning in work that **someone else wrote**
  - c. using on-line or hard copy **paper mills**
6. turning in **your own work that was written for another course**, without prior permission from both professors.

Violations of EIU's academic integrity policy will result in an **automatic failing grade** in this course and notification of the Office of Student Standards. For more information, see [www.eiu.edu/judicial](http://www.eiu.edu/judicial). **In this class, all bibliographies/works cited listings must conform to MLA guidelines, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (2016).** Please note that MLA has changed quite a bit this time—be sure to check Purdue OWL or MLA online to make sure you are doing it correctly. If you need help with it, ask me! (I will look it up on Purdue OWL and help you—I'm still learning the new way, too.)

#### **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

All in-class writing for grade (quizzes, exams, daily writings) will be hand-written in ink. All out-of-class writing will be typed, double-spaced, in a standard font, with your name and page numbers on every page and submitted via D2L. **Please do not include cover pages and do not submit paper copies to me, if you can avoid it—it is all our responsibility to conserve natural resources.** When you submit work via D2L, please be sure that all parts of the paper are in one document, whenever possible; never submit the Works Cited as a separate document. I will do my best to acknowledge receipt of your submission very quickly, so you know that your emailing was

successful. If I forget, please ask! **Important: please remember that bibliographies/works cited listings in MLA are alphabetized by authors' last names. All bibliographies/works cited listings must conform to MLA guidelines, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (2016).**

### PARTICIPATION

Participation consists of regular attendance and productive participation in class discussions and in-class activities. The items in **bold** are the most important.

- A = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **active and substantive participation in class discussions, explicitly about the materials assigned for that day or unit**, involving obvious **critical thought** and making connections to other materials or examples; avoidance of "side" conversations in class; leadership role in group activities and discussion; professional interactions with others in class, even when disagreeing strongly, and in all communications with professor; consistent inattention to cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class, unless otherwise instructed.
- B = almost perfect attendance and almost never late; **consistent participation in class discussions and activities, even when confused or struggling with ideas**; professional behavior in class (including not carrying on "side" conversations and not being rude) and in all communication with professor and classmates; inattention to cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class, unless otherwise instructed.
- C = consistent attendance with full preparation of course materials but **little to no verbal participation in discussions** unless required; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; consistent "follower" role in group activities; OR consistent enthusiastic participation in discussions and activities, **with no explicit evidence of full preparation of course materials**; professional behavior in class and in all communications with professor; inattention to cell phones/electronic devices during class, unless otherwise instructed.
- D = frequent lateness or absence; unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior in class or on discussion boards (including, but not limited to, doing homework for other classes, reading

newspapers, occasionally attending to cell phones, "side" conversations, etc.).

F = absence; disruptive or hostile behavior in class or on discussion boards; frequent attention to cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class.

### ONE IN-CLASS PRESENTATION

For this assignment, you will present to the class background and contextual information that you determine to be important to our understanding of the text we are reading that week. Background an contextual information may include (but is not limited to): historical information that helps us understand the story better (e.g., if we were reading *Frankenstein*, you might present on the debates about science and theology that Mary Shelley was responding to when she wrote the novel); cultural information that helps us understand the story better (e.g., if we were reading *Warrior Woman*, you might present on the myth of Asians as the "model minority" and how this set of stereotypes informed Maxine Hong Kingston's development of her characters and presentation of their experiences); biographical information about the author; and/or reviews of the text. If you are presenting on the same text as another student, do not present the same information, please. Plan ahead and make sure.

### TWO EXAMS

Exams will cover all materials and concepts assigned and discussed in class. They are designed to test knowledge; hone critical thinking, reading, and writing skills; and reward students who keep up with and think critically about the issues raised in class. Exam essays must fully cite all works cited/paraphrased, using MLA 8<sup>th</sup> edition (2016) guidelines. Your Midterm Exam is take-home and will be due Fri., Oct. 13. Your Final Exam is a combination take-home essay and in-class short answer test. The take-home essay is due Tue., Dec. 12, at 10:15 a.m. The in-class short answer test begins Tue., Dec. 12, at 10:15 a.m.

**TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDENTS:** Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide me with a copy of the yellow "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester.