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ENG 3706-001: American Regional Literature

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American Regional Literature: Southwestern American Literature: Three Cultures & One People

**Description:** We shall look at the confluence of literatures and cultures from the Hispanic, Native American and Anglo-Americans in the Southwest as it shapes a singular sensibility in American history and culture. We'll begin by grounding the tension between explorers and nomads with settlers and the sedentary in a contemporary overview by Richard Grant while reading Cabeza de Vaca's *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* and the Navajo creation myth *Dine Bahane*. We will continue with selected Hopi Coyote Tales and Yaqui Deer Songs and then work through selected poetry by Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo to the novels *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko and *House Made of Dawn* by Scott Momaday; doing so, we shall seek to grasp native understanding of the arid spaces and enveloping silence of the Southwest. From Rudy Anaya's novel *Bless Me, Ultima*, selected poets and a consideration of the old Spanish codes, we shall continue de Vaca's journey into the 20th C. From Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Frank Waters' *The Woman at Otowi Crossing* and Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, we shall track Anglo settlers and nomads alike. Finally, we shall glance back at Georgia O'Keefe's paintings and D. H. Lawrence's versions of the Southwest in order to re-evaluate Grant's premises on the sedentary and the civilized and on the nomadic and the anarchic elements of the region and its culture.

**Course Format:** Lecture and discussion, preferably much more the latter, dependent on your willingness and preparation to contribute to discussions. We will take a break mid-way through the evening—and feel free to call for one, if we run on too long.

**Required Texts:**
- Anaya, Rudy. *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972; Time Warner, 1994)
- Lawrence, D. H. *Mornings in Mexico* (1933; Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2009)
- De Vaca, Cabeza. *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* (1542; University of New Mexico P-Zia Books, 1983)

**Course Requirements and Grading:** Discussion (participation, reading quizzes as necessary)—20%; midterm essay examination—10%; two essays (6-8 pp, 25% each)—50%; and a final essay examination—20%. Prerequisite: English 1002C, or 1092C, or the equivalent.
The Close Reading Cooperative (CRC): Every student enrolled in ENG 3706 must subscribe to the Close Reading Cooperative, a podcast in literary studies produced here at Eastern in order to help you stay in practice with some of the nuts-and-bolts skills you'll build this semester. Practice makes perfect, and the CRC is intended to keep you in practice by pushing to your iPod, iPad, laptop, or other iTunes-equipped device a weekly lesson in literary analysis. You should watch these episodes, practice the skills they impart, and understand that these skills are important to the development of critical reading and thinking skills. Instructions for subscribing to the Close Reading Cooperative appear on the English Department’s website: http://www.eiu.edu/~english/.

General Policies:
Grading Standards: I shall follow the EIU English Department Guidelines, distributed in class. I shall use the plus and minus to distinguish, say, a high B from a low one.

Attendance: I do take roll, and I evaluate attendance only indirectly in the context of your participation in the course, but absences do preclude any participation.

Conferences: These are at your request unless I ask to see you. Please ask for help as soon as you feel you need it; please don't wait until the last couple of weeks of class.

Submission of work: Essays should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only, titled and indicate the following: name, date, and course and section number. Exercises and quizzes must be legible.

Late Essays: For each day that the essay is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an A essay due on Friday will be an F by the next Thursday. If there are particular difficulties, please see me.

Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP):
English 3706 is a writing intensive course. This means that you may need to submit an essay from this course for your EWP. If so, you must inform me no later than the last week of class—EWP submissions are not accepted after completion of the course, and you are responsible for consulting the web site of Center for Academic Support and Achievement for instructions. See http://www.eiu/~assess for more information and to download submission forms.

Plagiarism: The English Department Policy
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and the representation of them as one’s own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

If I discover an act of plagiarism, I shall exercise the right to the fullest extent possible. (See http://www.eiu/~judicial/code.html for more information.)

Please note: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
**Syllabus: American Regional Literature:**  
Southwestern American Literature—Three Cultures & One People

*August*
T 24: Course Introduction

T 31: Cabeza de Vaca, *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* (1542)

*September*
T 7: *Dine Bahane*: The Navajo Creation Story

T 14: Willa Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927)

T 21: John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)

T 28: John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (film version—screening in class)  
[Essay #1 assigned]

*October*
T 5: Richard Grant, *American Nomads*  
[Take-home midterm examination assigned]

T 12: Hopi Coyote Tales and Yaqui Deer Songs [handouts]  
Selected poems from Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo  
[Take-home midterm examination DUE]


[Essay #1 DUE]

*November*
T 2: Rudy Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972)  
[Essay #2 assigned]


T 16: (continued)

Thanksgiving Break

T 30: Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977)

*December*
T 7: D. H. Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico* (1933)  
[Essay #2 DUE]

**Final Examination:** Tuesday, December 14, 7:30-9:30 pm in Coleman 3160