

# ENG 2333: Multicultural literature

## Assessment guidelines Spring 2019

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Scherr

### Course Structure:

The course consisted of 12 weeks of seminar; we discussed the books and articles listed below, as well as some additional articles I added along the way. All students wrote a 5-page obligatory essay (Pass/Fail) in order to take the examination.

### Required reading (Spring 2019):

#### Books:

- *Passing*, Nella Larsen
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston
- *The Fire Next Time*, James Baldwin
- *Ceremony*, Leslie Marmon Silko
- *American Born Chinese*, Gene Yang
- *Dictee*, Theresa Cha
- *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz
- *Moonlight*, Barry Jenkins

#### Articles and excerpts:

- "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," Peggy McIntosh
- "Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress," Howard Zinn
- "Talking About Race, Learning About Racism," Beverly Tatum
- Excerpt from *Playing in the Dark*, Toni Morrison

### Exam and general assessment criteria:

#### Exam

This is a 3-day take home exam, consisting of 2 parts. Part 1 is short answer and Part 2 is essay.

#### **Description of Part 1 (Short answer):**

Students are required to answer 4 short answer questions (they choose 4 out of 12), at least one of which must be a question from the "theory" list, although they can write about more than 1 theoretical piece if they wish to. These answers should be  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 page in length, and therefore this section of the exam should be 3-4 pages total. 50% of grade.

### **Description of Part 2 (Essay):**

The second part of the exam is a short essay. Students choose 1 question and write a 3-4 page response in standard academic essay form. They are not required to consult secondary sources for this, although many will choose to do so. This section of the exam should be 3-4 pages total. 50% of grade.

Total length of exam is 6-8 pages (short answer and essay together.) Students will not be penalized for writing more than 8 pages, although writing too little can be grounds for failure. Exams that are significantly shorter than the 6 page minimum will most likely fail.

Students must turn in both parts of the exam (short answer and essay) in order to pass. If only one part is turned in, the exam receives a failing grade.

### General assessment

The academic quality/grade of the exam is measured by the common expectations for literature studies:

- The level of analytical skills
- The student's grasp of the significance of the primary and secondary materials
- The student's ability to relate the texts to the course topic and to the questions they are answering
- The clarity and organization of their writing (essays should follow standard essay format)
- The use of the English language

**Note on language:** Language counts as part of a total assessment and but not given any specific percentage of the final grade. Students are expected to write clearly, concisely, and in an appropriately academic style. Common language errors include subject-verb concord, verb tense, prepositions, comma usage, genitives, idioms, spelling, and incomplete sentences with no finite verb. You need to ask if these errors are so numerous and serious that they impair the student's ability to communicate. Poor language skills are grounds for lowering grades, or even failure.