



Prof.: Dr. Rebecca Harrison
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Office: TLC 2225
 Office Hours: M/W 2-4:00
 & by appointment.

Course Description: The relationship between individuals, language, and culture is complex. Language is certainly a tool for communication, but it is also a mechanism used in conveying, maintaining, and resisting cultural borders. Canadian author Margaret Atwood once stated that “war is what happens when language fails.” Her words point to the profound and political tie between what we say and who we are, and the need to develop fluent and broad cross-cultural literacies. This class will explore representations of language and culture on film and in literary texts in a broad variety of contexts (literal and cultural)—the languages of gender, sexuality, science, faith, peoples, and the environment.

Specific Course Goals: Students will

- ✚ demonstrate the ability to recognize and understand the multifaceted connections between language and culture across a variety of texts.
- ✚ cultivate skills aimed at analyzing and synthesizing the relevant social, historical, political, philosophical, and aesthetic contexts of these connections through diverse, interdisciplinary analytical lenses.
- ✚ produce written work (informal and formal) that effectively evidences their achievement of the course goals via sound, analytical composition practices.

Core Area C Goals: Students will

- ✚ demonstrate knowledge of the foundational concepts of artistic, intellectual, or literary achievement.
- ✚ recognize and make informed judgments about the fine, literary, or performing arts from various cultures.

Required Texts: As a film oriented course, you will need *consistent* access to the films that we will be studying this semester, and you will need to prescreen each *before* the assigned class date and rescreen each after class for the written assignments. The films you will need access to are:

- ✚ *Arrival* (Directed by Denis Villeneuve).
- ✚ *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Directed by Benh Zeitlin).
- ✚ *I Origins* (Directed by Mike Cahill).
- ✚ *The Piano* (Directed by Jane Campion).

Film Access: Most of these films are available on common streaming services (such as Hulu, Amazon Prime, and Netflix), many of which have student rates. Of course, you can also purchase new or gently used DVD copies through a variety of on-line venues (like Amazon). How you choose to access them is up to you, but having access to these texts is a course requirement.

FYI—Some of these films are available in the English Department library (2nd floor of TLC, see Jonette Larrew), the Ingram library, and/or the Georgia Public Library system. However, remember the number of copies housed in each of these entities is limited; so, you want to be cautious about relying on these avenues as your primary access to the films.

Other Required Materials: We will be reading some select poems, articles, and short fiction which will be distributed electronically. In addition to being able to print those, each student will need

- ✚ McCullers, Carson. *The Member of the Wedding*. New York: Mariner, 2004.
- ✚ a bound note book for the reading journal.
- ✚ an organized system for taking class notes.
- ✚ a two pocket folder for turning in and keeping up with graded work.

Attendance: Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and key to your success in this course. Arrive to class on time having completed any reading/writing assignments and be prepared to participate in class discussions and group work. As this class meets twice per week, a student is allowed *three (3) absences* over the course of the semester. Upon the fourth absence, the student *will no longer be able to pass the class*. Be aware that no distinction exists between excused and unexcused absences. In addition, should you choose to withdraw, students should be aware that if the withdrawal date falls before the midpoint, the student will receive a “W.” If the withdrawal date falls after the midpoint, the student will receive a “WF.” Please note that tardiness counts against your two allotted absences at a rate of 0.25 per day late. In other words, if you are late to class four times, it will count as one missed class period. Tardiness may also negatively affect your class participation grade and may result in missed in-class work that cannot be made up. FYI—University policy regarding severe weather and emergency closings is posted at <https://www.westga.edu/police/policies.php> under the “Emergency Plans” link; official announcements about class and/or examination cancellations will be made by the university President and posted on the UWG homepage.

Assignments & Grade Distribution: In-class presentations, group work, and other activities will complement class discussions on a regular basis. As the semester progresses, I will discuss and/or distribute specific guidelines for each written assignment. Please Note: You must complete *all* assignment to pass this course.

- ✚ (15%) Reading Journal.
- ✚ (30%) Essay I and II: 15% each.
- ✚ (25%) Final Project.
- ✚ (20%) Festival of Voices Project.
- ✚ (10%) Class Participation & Group Work.

Grading Summary:

See <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/learning-outcomes.php> for the upper-division grading rubric.

Papers will be graded according to the following scale:

A+ = 98	B+ = 88	C+ = 78	D+ = 68	F = 50
A = 95	B = 85	C = 75	D = 65	
A- = 92	B- = 82	C- = 72	D- = 62	

Paper Format: All work for this class must be typed, double-spaced, use standard 1 inch margins, and conform to standard MLA guidelines. Please use Times New Roman 12 point font. Papers must be submitted in a clearly labeled two pocket folder.

Make-Up Work, Late Work, & Recycled Papers:

- ✚ In-class work *cannot* be made up and may count as zeros in the daily grade component.
- ✚ If you miss a class, it is up to you to check with a classmate in a timely fashion concerning missed notes and any homework assignments due the next period.
- ✚ All formal assignments are due at the start of class on the date specified in the course schedule. If you must miss a class on a date when an assignment is due, you need to make prior arrangements with me to submit your work on time.
- ✚ Late assignments are subject to a *five point deduction* for *each day* submitted after the due date, including weekend days.
- ✚ Recycled work (i.e. turning in material written for other professors) is not permissible in this class and will result in a non-passing grade on the assignment.

Plagiarism: The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The use of another individual's words, phrases, or ideas without proper citation will result in the following *at my discretion* (no questions):

- ✚ a zero on the assignment.
- ✚ possible failure of this course.
- ✚ an official academic dishonesty report filed with UWG, which could lead to suspension from the university.

In short, as members of the UWG community, I expect you to fully abide by the university honor code, which can be found at <http://www.westga.edu/handbook/59.php>

Conferences: Each student is *required* to attend *at least one* conference with me during the course of the semester about the voices project. Having that said, my office door is always open to you. Please come by during the hours noted on this syllabus whenever you have questions concerning class discussions, need advice or help with reading/writing assignments, etc. If you cannot attend my scheduled office hours, email me for an appointment.

Class Decorum: Throughout the semester, we will examine controversial topics, materials, and our critical reactions to them. Everyone in this class has both the right and the responsibility to express his or her critical reads of the texts in class discussions and to treat one another's ideas respectfully and seriously, even if – or especially if – you disagree. Consequently, ill-spirited discussions, unmerited comments, and intolerance are not permitted in the classroom. Also,

please raise your hand when you would like to have the floor. This format facilitates structured discussion and equal participation.

Controversial Content: Some of these texts contain offensive language, violence, nudity, and a host of adult themes. It is my expectation that you approach and discuss the content of each piece in class with intellectual maturity and professionalism. FYI—There are no text substitutions; all films are required.

Disruptive Behavior: Students may be dismissed from any class meeting at which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, *sleeping* (or the appearance of it) in class, allowing cell phones to ring, *text-messaging*, frequently leaving class, and speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and *will be applied* toward the attendance requirements policy above.

Breaks: There are none. Our class meets for only seventy-five minutes. As such, I expect that you go to the restroom, get tissues, and grab coffee *before* class starts. If you have emergency situations that may require you to leave and return during my class, you must make prior arrangement with me.

Email: In accordance with university policy, all email correspondence must take place through the UWG email system. I will email the class often; therefore, please be sure that your default address is set for your westga account in the Banner student system and that you check it regularly. Also, please keep in mind that email is professional correspondence; thus, remember to properly address your audience, use the same standards of writing that you would in any paper you write, and sign your email.

Writing Center (TLC 1201): The Writing Center is a valuable student resource and, while, consultants will not proofread, they will question, respond to, offer choices, and encourage revision in student essays. This is a free university service for you to take advantage of as often as you need. To schedule an appointment call the center at 678-839-6513. See <http://www.westga.edu/~writing/> for more information.

Special Accommodations: Students in the UWG community have a right to equal access to classes and materials, regardless of special needs, whether temporary or permanent. Students with needs on file with Accessibility Services will be accommodated in this class per West Georgia regulations. Please see me immediately for arrangements. Accessibility services may be reached at (770) 839-6428 or see <https://www.westga.edu/accessibility/>

Students should review the full common syllabus policies for UWG at

<https://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/>

Information about the regulations governing campus carry at UWG can be found at

<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>

Reading Schedule

This schedule provides a *tentative* layout of in-class and out-of-class activities and assignments. As it is based on the estimated progress of our class, some modification (including additions, postponements, or deletions) will be necessary as we move through the semester.

Class Date	Assignments	Due Dates & Notes.
W 8/15	Class Overview & Introductions.	
M 8/20	Language Extinction Read “A World of Many (Fewer) Voices” by K. David Harrison (e-copy) before class. We will discuss it in concert with our in-class screening of segments of <i>The Linguists</i> .	
W 8/22	Continued in-class screening & discussion of <i>The Linguists</i> .	
M 8/27	Contact & Translation Discussion of <i>Arrival</i> . Prescreen film before class.	
W 8/29	Discussion of <i>Arrival</i> (continued).	
M 9/3	Labor Day; No Class.	
W 9/5	Language, Place, and Identity Read “A Vermont Writer from the Dominican Republic” and “A White Woman of Color” by Julia Alvarez (e-copy) before class	
M 9/10	Read “Lullaby” by Leslie Marmon Silko (e-copy) before class.	
W 9/12	Read the poetry selection by Rhina Espaillat (e-copy) before class.	
M 9/17	Discourses of Truth and Proof: The Coexistence of Science and Faith Discussion of <i>I Origins</i> . Prescreen film before class.	
W 9/19	Discussion of <i>I Origins</i> (continued).	Due: Essay One
M 9/24	Art and the Act of Speech Discussion of <i>The Piano</i> . Prescreen film before class.	
W 9/26	Discussion of <i>The Piano</i> (continued).	
M 10/1	Catch up day; assignments tbd.	FYI—Last day to apply for spring graduation.
W 10/3	Read Judith Sargent Murray “On the Equality of the Sexes” (e-copy) before class.	Due: Journal Check One.
M 10/8	Read the poetry selection by Margaret Atwood (e-	FYI—Last day to

	copy) before class.	withdraw with a grade of W from Full Term (non-eCore) 16 week courses.
W 10/10	Read Carson McCullers <i>Member of the Wedding</i> (1-81).	
M 10/15	Read <i>Member of the Wedding</i> (82 to end).	
W 10/17	Read Theory on McCullers (e-copy) before class.	
M 10/22	Language Climate and Climate Extinction Discussion of <i>Beasts of the Southern Wild</i> . Prescreen film before class.	
W 10/24	Discussion of <i>Beasts of the Southern Wild</i> (continued).	Due: Essay Two.
M 10/29	In-class screening & discussion of <i>The Cove</i> ; contextual reading distributed electronically.	
W 10/31	In-class screening & discussion of <i>The Cove</i> .	
M 11/5	Voices Project Conferences; No Class. <i>FYI—Appointments for today arranged via SignUp Genius.</i>	
W 11/7	Voices Project Conferences; No Class. <i>FYI—Appointments for today arranged via SignUp Genius.</i>	
M 11/12	Rhetoric and Race Read William Apess “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (e-copy) before class.	
W 11/14	Read Natasha Trethewey and Alice Walker selections (e-copy) before class.	Due: Journal Check Two.
M 11/19	No Class; Thanksgiving Break.	
W 11/21	No Class; Thanksgiving Break.	
M 11/26	Research project in-class workshop; assignments tbd.	
W 11/28	Voices project in-class workshop; assignments tbd.	
M 12/3	Festival of Voices Multimodal Presentations.	
W 12/5	Festival of Voices Multimodal Presentations & Evals.	
M 12/10	Festival of Voices Multimodal Presentations. Class will meet during the Final Exam Period 11:00 to 1:00.	Due: Final Papers.

Please Note: In the event West Georgia closes due to inclement weather, you should continue your out-of-class assignments according to this schedule.