ENGLISH 216—SURVEY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE (1850-PRESENT)
(Winter, 2012)

Instructor: Mary Wood
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Office: 445 PLC, 6-3010
Office Hrs.: W 9-12 am

GOALS OF COURSE: To introduce students to American literary history, encourage an appreciation of literary works, and develop skills in literary interpretation. To further these goals, we will pay particular attention to the relationship between literary movements and larger social realities, including the legacy of slavery and racism in America and the tensions between American democratic ideals and ideologies of inequality.

TEXTS: Oxford Book of American Short Stories (ed. Joyce Carol Oates)
       Alain Locke, The New Negro: Voices of the Harlem Renaissance
       James Baldwin, Giovanni's Room
       Helena Maria Viramontes, Under the Feet of Jesus
       Tillie Olsen, Yonnondio
       Hart Crane, White Buildings
Texts are available from the University of Oregon Bookstore

REQUIREMENTS:
Class attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed three unexcused absences. More than that may affect your final grade. Please come to class having read the material listed for that day. If I feel students aren’t keeping up with the reading I may institute reading quizzes. Writing and other work requirements are as follows:
1) 4-5-sentence reading response brought to class every Monday, focussed on that week’s reading;
2) three 2-3-page Writer’s Remix exercises, due the fourth, sixth, and eighth weeks;
3) a 5-6-page interpretive essay on one or two texts, due the Monday of Finals Week;
4) draft of first two pages of the final essay, due the 9th week.
4) Grading: participation—10%; reading responses—10%; Writer’s Remix—30%;
draft—15%; final essay—35%.

Writer’s Remix: In these exercises students choose a scene from a novel or short story (or a section of a poem) and rewrite it, changing something central to the piece. For example, you could rewrite the scene from the point of view of a minor character, rewrite it as a contemporary movie-script, or give it a completely new setting. You may use visual and/or audio media (graphic novel, podcast, video) for ONE of these assignments if you like. I will give prompts for each of the three assignments. Each assignment must include a one-paragraph analysis of how the changes transform the original text.
SCHEDULE:
What Is American Literacy? What Is American Literature Given Legacies of Inequality?
Monday, Jan. 9th—Introductions.
Fri., Jan. 13th—Langston Hughes continued, and poems by Claude McKay (133-5).

The New Negro Movement
Mon., Jan. 16th—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. No class
Wed., Jan. 18th—Locke, “The New Negro” and poems by Cullen (129-31),
    Spencer and Grimke (148), in The New Negro
    Paradox of Color,” in The New Negro.

American Short Story
Mon., Jan. 23rd—Johnson and White continued.
    Both in Oxford.

American Identity and Nation in Poetry
Wed., Feb. 1st—Crane, continued.

Literature of the Thirties
Mon., Feb. 6th—Olsen, Yonnondio
Wed., Feb. 8th—Olsen, continued.
Fri., Feb. 10th—Olsen, continued.

Writing American Histories
Friday, Feb. 17th—Begin Baldwin, Giovanni’s Room.

Mon., Feb. 20th—Baldwin, continued.
Wed., Feb. 22nd—Baldwin, continued.
Fri., Feb. 24th—Baldwin, continued. Film on Baldwin.

Writing American Identity Across the Atlantic
Mon., Feb. 27th—Baldwin, continued. Writer’s remix due.
Wed., Feb. 29th—Baldwin, continued.
Writing American Literary Form and Identity in the Late Twentieth Century
Friday, March 9th—Begin Viramontes, Under the Feet of Jesus.

Mon., March 12th—Viramontes, continued.
Wed., March 14th—Viramontes, continued.
Fri., March 16th—Conclusions.

Final Essay due Monday, March 19th, under my office door—445 PLC