ENG 316: Women Writers and Coming of Age in America
ENG 316: CRN 41034  Summer 2019  WEB

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What Students Say

➢ “Taking this course and reading these novels has really helped me get back into the mindset of what it means to close read and be a deeper thinker. As an academic college-level reader, you cannot gloss over, you cannot rush. You have to be able to take your time and really investigate all the weird things that literature can do.”

➢ “The complex questions that were posed in our class discussions, such as what a particular symbol means, allowed me to move past a surface-level reading of the text and truly analyze it, which will also push me in other academic readings to think more deeply.”

➢ “In Dr. Clevinger’s class, we help each other. Hearing other students’ perspectives and using them to shed light on topics relating to the text has made me a stronger reader.”

➢ “This course has likely been the most reading dense class I’ve taken throughout my undergrad this far. It has taught me a lot about who I am as an academic reader. I find myself a significantly better reader now than at the beginning of this term.”

Instructor: Dr. Kara B. Clevinger
Office: 22 PLC (6-1514)
Office Hours (on campus or virtual): by appt.
Email: kclev@uoregon.edu (allow 24 hours and except weekends)
Course Overview: Why am I here?

I hope you’re here because you enjoy reading and writing and want to have lively intellectual conversations with others who enjoy reading and writing as you work on honing your literary analysis and written communication skills. I also hope you’re interested in learning more about women’s coming-of-age narratives. We’ll look at how women tell coming-of-age stories in the novel form, and how they experiment with this form.

The big questions I’m excited to discuss with you over the course of our readings are: How do women use the coming-of-age narrative to portray diverse experiences of growing up in the U.S.? What do their stories tell us about identity, difference, and gender roles? What is their relationship and responsibility to active feminist movements? What are the range of possibilities for “girl” and “woman”?

To pursue this inquiry, we’ll read four novels by women about women’s coming of age: Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women (1868), Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye (1970), Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior (1976), and your choice of either Helena Maria Viramontes’ Under the Feet of Jesus (1995) or Alison Bechdel’s graphic narrative Fun Home (2006).

As we examine the possibilities and limitations of the novel form to express American women’s coming of age, you will have opportunities to strengthen your critical reading and analytical writing skills. I invite you to learn the narrative elements of the coming-of-age story and apply these along with knowledge of historical, cultural, and feminist contexts to develop your literary interpretations.

Deep reading and cognitive patience, skills we gain with reading long-form fiction, are valuable skills on the job market and in life. They are skills that are becoming increasingly rare in the age of superficial internet reading. I hope you’re willing—maybe excited—to develop cognitive patience and your deep reading practice.

Read me! The following pages introduce you to our learning outcomes, the four novels we will be reading this term, our labor and production and how it will be assessed, my policies on participation and late work, as well as guidelines and support for succeeding in an online course.
Our Course Readings

What will we be reading in this course? We will read and discuss four novels by women about growing up girl. Plan to read a novel a week! I'll refer to page numbers from the editions listed here, and these are the editions that are available through the UO Duckstore.

Can you purchase a different print or digital edition from a different seller or can you use a free full-text edition? Yes! In class discussions, please refer to chapter numbers instead of page numbers to help us find passages you reference.

- Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women* (9780393976144)
- Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (9780307278449)
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (9780679721888)
- Helena María Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (9780452273870)
  OR Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (9780618871711)

To help you plan and manage the reading load (based on the average of reading 250 words per minute):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Estimated Reading Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Little Women</td>
<td>88,371</td>
<td>plan for about 5 ½ hours of total reading time; or, if English is your second language or you’re a slower reader like me, plan for about 7 hours of total reading time hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Bluest Eye</td>
<td>65,575</td>
<td>4 ½ hours, or 5-6 hours of slower reading time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Woman Warrior</td>
<td>69,267</td>
<td>4 ½ hours, or 5-6 hours of slower reading time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Under the Feet of Jesus OR Fun Home</td>
<td>47,387 OR ?</td>
<td>3 hours, or 4-5 hours of slower reading time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments + Grading

The following is a brief overview of the work for the course. I provide more detailed guidelines with each assignment on Canvas.

**Quizzes** (10%) are how I keep the course paced. They ask multiple choice questions on the reading. You have two chances to earn your desired score. Quizzes should be completed each week by Sunday at 11:59PM, and each week’s quiz must be completed in order to unlock the next week’s module and content.

**Discussion Board Posts** (30%) are the lifeblood of our course. Refer to the “Guidelines for Discussion” for instructions on primary and secondary posts and peeps. Primary posts are due each week by Friday at 11:59PM. Secondary posts and peeps are due by Sunday at 11:59PM.

**Weekly Writing Assignments** (30%) will help you work through course concepts and readings, test interpretations, and practice close reading skills. WWAs are approximately 500 words and will be due each week by Sunday at 11:59PM.

For the **Final Writing Project** (30%) you will have the option to choose an exam or essay. The exam is cumulative and asks multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. The essay is an extended literary analysis of 1-2 major texts we’ve read, approximately 6-8 pages. The last day to begin the final exam will be Saturday, August 24, and the last day to submit the final essay will be on Sunday, August 25 by 11:59PM.

**How do I assess your work and contributions to the course and our community?** Discussion board posts, weekly writing assignments, and the final writing project have a list of core criteria each week. If your work meets the core criteria, then it will earn a “B.” Assignments that are not adequately meeting the criteria will earn a “B-.” Assignments that are missing any of the criteria will earn a “C.” Contact me if you are struggling to meet criteria, and want help improving your work.

**Discussion Board work.** To achieve our goal of lively, interesting discussions, I ask students to post a “primary post” each week. A primary post each week will earn students a “C” for the discussion board grade. A primary post each week and three secondary posts across the course will earn students a “B” for the discussion board grade, provided posts meet core criteria. A primary and secondary post each week, plus 8 “peeps” across the course will earn an “A” for the discussion board grade, provided posts meet core criteria. Refer to the “Guidelines for Discussion.”

**“How do I get an A?”** So you want to strive for Jedi mastery, do you, my young padawan? Along with the core criteria for discussion board posts, weekly writing assignments, and the final writing project, I list criteria for excellence. In some cases, this will include advanced labor tasks intended to show you how students achieve mastery. Attempting advanced labor tasks is not the same as meeting the criteria for excellence and does not guarantee an “A”! Contact me if you would like help achieving excellence.
Late Work
Submitting assignments on time helps you to manage your time and the workload. It helps your colleagues, who will benefit from your voice and perspective in the discussions. It helps me give you timely and useful feedback on your work. However, life happens... and sometimes technology happens, too. Please review the items below for how late work affects the final grade.

What is “Late” work? Late work is defined as any quiz, post, or assignment that is submitted after the due date/time BUT within 48 hours of that due date/time. To keep things fair and equitable for everyone, I do not accept work beyond 48 hours after the due date/time; it gets a zero.

Every student is allowed 2 late assignments without penalty. To earn an “A” in the course, you cannot have more than 1 late assignment. Late assignments are marked in blue on Canvas.

Exceeding the number of “Late” assignments allowable will lower your final grade by -3% (1/3 of a letter grade) for each quiz, assignment, or post. Example: A student with a B in the course who has 3 late assignments will earn a B-.

Students must submit all assigned work to earn a passing grade.

Exemplary Labor
If by the end of the course, you have no late assignments, posts, or quizzes, have posted 10 peeps on the discussion boards throughout the term, and have not exercised the clemency clause, then your course grade will increase by 1/3, e.g. from a B to a B+.

Clemency Clause
A student may request clemency for any reason that is related to rare and unusual circumstances out of their control, but only once in the term. The clemency plea is NOT an “opt out clause” for anyone who happens to not fulfill the course requirements in some way.

My job is to make sure that whatever agreement we come to will be fair to others in class. I will decide in consultation with the student whether clemency is warranted. The student must contact me as soon as possible, usually before they are unable to meet the course requirements, so that we can determine an equitable arrangement, one that will be fair to all in the class and still meet the university’s expectations for student engagement hours, conduct, and workload.
Academic Honesty, Authorship, and Plagiarism

What is plagiarism? It’s important to understand ‘authorship’ and ‘ownership of ideas and words’ in academic writing. This helps writers give the correct credit to other writers, thinkers, and sources for their words and ideas. When you use someone else’s or another source’s words or ideas without telling your reader where they come from, you are PLAGIARIZING. Common examples of plagiarism include incorrect citation of sources and copying and pasting parts of an assignment from the internet or other students. Copying from unauthored webpages is plagiarism. Getting too much help from someone editing your writing is also a form of academic dishonesty.

Submit original work and cite the sources you consult! All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course without permission. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please refer to our e-handbooks as well as the Library Citation and Plagiarism guide and the Student Conduct Code on the Office of the Dean of Students website.

What are the consequences of plagiarizing? In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the assignment earns a zero, and in some cases an award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English Department. Please see me BEFORE you submit your work if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Resources for Success

I am here to help you succeed; don’t hesitate to e-mail or visit me! I will make every effort to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours. In addition, you have many resources on campus to help you with writing and studying. Many of these offices have summer hours and most provide online tutoring via email on an individual basis: contact them directly to set that up.

• The Teaching and Learning Center’s Writing Lab located on the fourth floor of the Knight Library provides drop-in sessions with a writing tutor for any subject.

• The Writing Associates Program offers free, one-on-one peer tutoring appointments for students in English classes. Writing Associate tutors are advanced English majors who have been trained to tutor writing. They are available to help students with any aspect of their writing for this course, from learning how to write about literature and media to crafting clearer and more effective analysis.

• The Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence (CMAE) offers writing support on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00pm in the Coquille Room EMU #104 during the regular school year. They also offer many other mentoring services for students from all backgrounds in the utilization of all resources available regarding financial aid, scholarships, internships, career development, professionalization, and ultimately academic success!

• Student Support Services (SSS) is also taking qualified students. They offer advising, tutoring, a study lounge with computers and free printing, as well as personal counseling.

• You can find additional sources of academic support on the Undergraduate Studies webpage.

• Writing handbooks: Purdue OWL, UNC Writing Center Tips + Tools, Writing for Success
Navigating this Course

This course is fully online. You will be able to complete all work remotely. I have an office and office hours on the University of Oregon campus in 22 PLC, to which you are welcome, but you will not be required to attend class on campus or submit hard copies of work.

Paced Modules: The course is organized in 4 modules, following the 4-week summer session. We will read a novel a week and complete a quiz, discussion board posts, and writing assignment each week. Although some online courses can be completed in a flurry of activity at the very end of the term, this course asks for consistent and regular participation in different activities and assignments each week. You cannot wait until the end of the term to complete the work for the course. To succeed in the course, you will need to follow the weekly schedule of readings and assignments.

To help you manage your time, each week’s content unlocks on Sundays (at midnight), and only if you’ve completed the weekly quiz by then. E.g. if you’ve finished the quiz for Week 1 on time, then Week 2’s module will become available on Sunday, July 28 at midnight. The course follows that pattern each week.

Turn on Canvas Notifications + Check your UO Email! Remaining engaged also requires you to check your university email at least once a day. In an online course, that will still be my primary method of contact with you, and announcements made to the entire class will also notify in your university email’s inbox. Double check your Canvas notification settings, and make sure if you have your university email forwarded to a personal email client that all relevant emails from me and/or Canvas are making it to your inbox. “I didn’t receive that email” or “I didn’t see that announcement on Canvas” will never be an excuse for missed work in this class. Let me know if you have questions or concerns about communications and notifications for this class.

I care about your success! Since your final writing project (exam or essay) will develop from our discussion board conversations and your weekly writing assignments, your success and the success of the course depend on your timely participation and submission of assignments.

Success in any online course requires keen time management and organization, as well as the ability to work both diligently and independently. If at any time you find yourself struggling to keep up with the readings and assignments, reach out to me as soon as possible. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. The quicker you make contact with me, the more helpful I can be.

Other Policies + Expectations

Can I make up work I have missed? I am happy to work with students on a case-by-case basis for using additional discussion board posts or an elective activity as make-up work while the course is in session. Beyond that, we would need to discuss using the Clemency Clause.

Incompletes: A request for the grade “Incomplete” must be placed in advance of the end of the term. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by a student through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

Access: The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoae@uoregon.edu.
**Observance of Religious Holidays:** Students who observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with the teacher.

**Technical Requirements + Knowledge**

If you are taking a course online you will need to have Internet access and a basic knowledge of computer and Internet skills in order to be successful.

- Knowledge of terminology, such as *browser, applications, upload, download,* etc.
- Understanding of basic computer hardware and software; ability to perform computer operations, such as:
  - Using keyboard and mouse
  - Managing files and folders: save, name, copy, move, backup, rename, delete, check properties
  - Software installation, security and virus protection
  - Using software applications, such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, email clients
  - Knowledge of copying and pasting, spell-checking, saving files in different formats
  - Sending and downloading attachments
- Internet skills (connecting, accessing, using browsers) and ability to perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Ability to use online communication tools, such as email (create, send, receive, reply, print, send/receive attachments), discussion boards (read, search, post, reply, follow threads), chats, and messengers.
- Access to a webcam and microphone (usually built in to laptops and computers) to participate in conferences, chats, and for some assignments.

***Technology problems:** Technology can be tricky, but you need to be organized enough to anticipate computer problems. The university has provided ample computer labs, so if your personal technology has failed, you need to find an alternative on campus or near your residence. Because everything will be turned online, be sure to back up your hard drive regularly.

**Need Canvas help?** See the **Student Technology Support** page.

**Netiquette**

To create a safe, productive working environment, be mindful when you communicate with both your colleagues and professors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

- Respect the privacy of your classmates and what they share in class. It is prohibited to screenshot and repost posts or material from this course on social media.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks.
- Ask classmates for clarification if you find a discussion posting offensive or difficult to understand.
- Avoid sweeping generalizations. Back up your stated opinions with facts and reliable sources. Keep your focus on the literary text.
• Understand that we may disagree and that exposure to other people’s opinions is part of the learning experience.
• Be respectful of each other. We’re all in this together. Before posting a comment, ask whether you would be willing to make the same comment to a person’s face.
• Keep in mind that you are taking a college class. Something that would be inappropriate in a traditional classroom is also inappropriate in an online classroom.
• Remember that all college-level communication should be in complete sentences and proofread for clarity. Tip: Start in Word and use the spell and grammar check.
• Be careful with humor, sarcasm, acronyms (LOL) and emoticons (smiles). All can easily be misunderstood!
• Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you”.
• Be careful with personal information (both yours and other’s).
• Use a descriptive subject line and don’t forget to sign your message with your name.
• Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
• Be aware that typing in all capital letters indicates shouting.

Course Schedule

Week 1  
Introductions + Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women  
Discussion: The Classic Coming-of-Age Story  
Introduction Post due by Wednesday, July 24  
Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, July 26  
Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 28

Week 2  
Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye  
Discussion: Coming of Age 100 Years After Little Women  
Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, August 2  
Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, August 4

Week 3  
Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior  
Discussion: Second-Wave Feminism and the Coming-of-Age Story  
Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, August 9  
Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, August 11

Week 4  
Helena María Viramontes’ Under the Feet of Jesus OR Alison Bechdel’s Fun Home  
Discussion: Coming of Age on the Fringes of Society  
Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, August 16  
Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and elective assignment due by Sunday, August 18

Final  
Final Writing Project (exam or essay) due by midnight on Sunday, August 25