

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY  
University Honors Program  
One University Drive  
Orange, CA 92866

COURSE SYLLABUS

HON 336  
New Voices in U.S. Literature

Spring 2010

Catalog Description:

Prerequisite, acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor. This course explores new works in U.S. fiction with particular emphasis on forces of globalization, responding to new literary scholarship that recast works of American Literature within a larger transnational framework. Writers: Jhumpa Lahiri, Junot Diaz, Rabih Alameddine, Dave Eggers, Lorrie Moore, and Cormac McCarthy. (Offered as needed). 3 credits.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce students to a new literary landscape and basic key concepts in literary studies.
- Build an intellectual community.
- Develop students' abilities as a careful reader, critical thinker, and an assertive writer.

Content:

This intensive seminar takes on new works by major writers of contemporary U.S. fiction, contextualizing voices rooted in U.S. domestic history through those emerging from new experiences of transnational migration. What are the stories that U.S. writers find urgent to tell as we cross into the twenty-first century? We will engage with contemporary novels by celebrated writers of Hispanic, Middle-Eastern, and Asian-American descent alongside writers seen as "unmarked" by ethnicity, to think through the changing possibilities and responsibilities of U.S. writers in a globalized world. The course will engage with each text's relationship to both multiculturalism and globalization, while also thinking about the relationship between legacies of western imperialism and histories of U.S. immigration legislation, class conflict, racial violence, and theories of racial and ethnic formation. As the course progresses, we'll discuss how these vastly different writers' texts might speak to each other.

Current Required Texts:

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*  
Junot Diaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*  
Rabih Alameddine, *The Hakawati*

Dave Eggers, *Zeitoun*  
Lorrie Moore, *Gate At the Stairs*  
Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

Instructional strategies:

The class revolves around a seminar discussion, envisioned as an important site that allows for a collaboration to engage with the wealth of material at hand, to explore further the questions and conversations which may arise, and to provide a space for making discoveries and rediscoveries together, each as an active and helpful participant. At the same time, the course seeks to encourage the process of critical thinking involved in the search itself, honing the skills needed to be a careful reader and an assertive writer. Students are expected to be active class participants; to write two short papers and a longer final paper.

Methods of Evaluation:

The final grade will consist of midterm and final papers (50%), in-class presentation of formal and comparative analysis (15 %), a group interpretive/ creative project for the final day of class (15%), the student's useful contribution to class, active participation, and positive engagement with discussions (20%). Quizzes may be administered during the semester and may count towards final grade.

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:

The course syllabus should include the following statement:

Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university

Students with Disabilities Policy:

The course syllabus should include the following statement:

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

**Prepared by:**

Rei Magosaki, Spring 2010

**Last revised:**

Rei Magosaki, Spring 2010