

**ENGL 4185/5185: Studies in Literature by Women**  
American Intersections  
Sect. 01W, CRN 83106, MW 11:00-12:15, PAF 102

Professor: Dr. Rebecca Harrison  
Office: TLC 2225  
Office Hours: W 9:30-10:30, 2:15-3:15,  
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**Class Description:** How does the construction of “woman” intersect with issues of race, class, sexuality, and nation? In what ways do female authors respond to the pressing issues at the core of systematic, interconnected, and co-constitutive oppression in America? This class will examine the complex intersections of race, class, sexuality, and nationality in the multi-cultural literatures by and/or about American women (historical and contemporary), and the multifaceted ways in which these writers, as Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill articulate, “challenge systems of domination, not merely as gendered subjects but as women whose lives are affected by . . . [their] location in multiple hierarchies.”

**Required Texts:** Please purchase listed editions.

- ✚ Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*, Algonquin (978-1565129757).
- ✚ Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*, Penguin (978-0143038092).
- ✚ Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*, Mariner (978-0156028356).
- ✚ All poetry, short fiction, and non-fiction essays will be provided electronically via CourseDen. Students are expected to print the material and bring hardcopies to class. FYI—Graduate students will be added to the 4185 page.
- ✚ Access to the *MLA Handbook* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed).

**Required Materials:**

- ✚ Spiral notebook for taking notes.
- ✚ A bound notebook (spiral or journal style) for your reading journal if you are handwriting, and a folder or plastic sleeve if you are typing it.
- ✚ A folder for submitting essays and keeping up with graded work.

**Course Learning Outcomes:** Students will learn to

1. Examine the aesthetic and cultural issues pertinent to the production of literature by women;
2. Analyze literature by women in the context of the culture(s) in which that literature was produced;
3. Author thesis-driven, analytical prose that investigates issues of gender identity and the production of the female aesthetic that arise in literature by women.

**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 & other homework as assigned. (Learning Outcomes 1 & 2.)
- ✚ (30%) Essay I and II: 15% each. (Learning Outcomes 2 & 3.)
- ✚ (25%) Final scaffolded research project. (Learning Outcomes 2 & 3.)
- ✚ (15%) Participation. (Learning Outcomes 1 & 2.)
- ✚ (15%) Festival of Stories Multimodal Presentation. (Learning Outcomes 1, 2, & 3.)

**Grading 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	

*FYI—The English program mission statement and outcomes are available at <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/english-program-assessment.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. In the event West Georgia closes due to inclement weather, you should continue your out-of-class assignments according to this schedule and check your email regularly for class updates.

Class Date	Assignments	Due Dates & Notes.
W 8/14	<b>Class Overview</b> Thinking through and ahead to our work as an inquiry class.	FYI—Our three anchor texts are meaty novels; plan ahead with your reading.
M 8/19	<b>Case Study One: Julia Alvarez</b> “A White Woman of Color” (e-copy). “A Vermont Writer from the Dominican Republic” (e-copies provided).	
W 8/21	“Antojos” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	<b>Due:</b> Your reading journal checks start today. Bring them to class daily.
M 8/26	“The Kiss” & “The Four Girls” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
W 8/28	“Joe” & “The Rudy Elmenhurst Story” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
M 9/2	<b>Labor Day; No Class.</b>	
W 9/4	“A Regular Revolution” & “Daughter of Invention” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
M 9/9	“Trespass,” “Snow,” & “Floor Show” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
W 9/11	“The Blood of the Conquistadores” & “The Human Body” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
M 9/16	“Still Lives,” and “An American Surprise” (from <i>How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents</i> ).	
W 9/18	Finish Alvarez’s novel via a discussion of “The Drum” and conduct our in-class Writing Workshop (assignment tbd).	
M 9/23	<b>Native American Voices</b>	

	Leslie M. Silko “Yellow Woman,” and Erdrich “Dear John Wayne” and “Fleur” (e-copies provided).	
W 9/25	<b>Case Study Two: Amy Tan</b> “The Joy Luck Club” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
M 9/30	“Scar” and “The Red Candle” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
W 10/2	“The Moon Lady” and “Rules of the Game” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	<b>Due:</b> Essay One & Journal Check One.
	<i>FYI—UWG’s fall break is 10/3 and 10/4.</i>	
M 10/7	“The Voice from the Wall” & “Half and Half”(from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
W 10/9	“Two Kinds” and “Rice Husband” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	<b>FYI—Last day to withdraw with a grade of W from Full Term (non-eCore) 16 week courses.</b>
M 10/14	“Four Directions” and “Without Wood” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
W 10/16	Best Quality,” “Magpies,” and “Waiting Between the Trees” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
M 10/21	“Double Face” & “A Pair of Tickets” (from <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ).	
W 10/23	<b>Case Study Three: Alice Walker</b> <i>The Color Purple</i> (pages 1-79).	
TR 10/23	<i>Department of English Undergraduate Conference</i> <i>(Extra Credit Opportunity Provided.)</i>	
M 10/28	<i>The Color Purple</i> (pages 79-127).	
W 10/30	<i>The Color Purple</i> (pages 127-177).	<b>Due:</b> Essay Two.
M 11/4	<i>The Color Purple</i> (pages 178-225).	
W 11/6	<i>The Color Purple</i> (pages 226-End).	
M 11/11	In-class group presentation workshop 1 day.	<b>Due:</b> Journal Check Two.
W 11/13	Student Project Conferences; No Class. A Signup Genius link will be sent out to schedule the meetings.	<b>Due:</b> Bring your completed conference packet to your assigned meeting time.
M 11/18	<b>In-class mystery unit; assignment tbd.</b>	

W 11/20	In-class mystery unit (continued).	
M 11/25	No Class; Thanksgiving Break.	
W 11/27	No Class; Thanksgiving Break.	
M 12/2	In-class group presentation workshop 2 day. Assignments tbd.	
W 12/4	Festival of Voices (session I). Please read the material for today on the following authors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cherrie Moraga</li> <li>• Toni Morrison</li> </ul>	
W 12/11	Festival of Voices (session II). Please read the material for today on the following authors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charlotte Perkins Gilman</li> <li>• Ryka Aoki</li> <li>• Gloria Anzaldúa</li> </ul> Remember, class will meet during the <i>full</i> Final Exam period 11:00 to 1:00.	<b>Due:</b> Final Essay and Optional Revision.
<i>Reading schedule updated on 11/21/2019.</i>		

### Course Policies

**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 a student choose to withdraw, she/he will receive a “W,” if the withdrawal date falls before the midpoint. 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—Official decisions about campus closings and/or examination cancellations due to severe weather or emergency will be made by the university President and posted on the UWG homepage.

**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.

**Paper Format:** All work for this class must be typed, use Times New Roman 12 point font, be double-spaced, use standard 1 inch margins, and conform to standard MLA guidelines as outlined in the *MLA Handbook* (8<sup>th</sup> edition). 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>

**Optional Revision Policy:** You may revise either of the first two essays for resubmission. If the revised assignment receives a higher grade, it will be used in your final grade calculation in place of the original. The revision *must be meaningful* and submitted *along with the original, graded assignment* in order to be considered. Revised papers are due no later than the start of the final exam period; however, you may turn them in at any point before that date as well.

**Conferences:** Each student is required to attend at least one conference with me during the course of the semester about the research 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 Language:** At least one of the texts we will be reading contains offensive language as it reflects a racially charged and prejudicial period of American history; this

language does not necessarily reflect the personal opinion of the author. While we will squarely address these issues, I prefer that you do not employ this language in class discussions.

**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.

**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. FYI—While I normally respond to student emails within 48 hours during the work week, please note that I do not regularly answer emails sent after noon on Friday until Monday morning.

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center (TLC 1201) 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.

**Student Support:** The UWG community cares deeply about student welfare and is committed to providing a variety of support mechanisms for those who need additional academic support or who are experiencing distressing situations. The following resources may be helpful if you have specific needs that arise:

- Center for Academic Success—<http://www.westga.edu/cas/>
- Counseling Center—<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php>
- UWG Cares—<http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>

**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 send me your packet and meet with 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>