

**English 5307**  
**Literature and Class in America**

Term and Year: Spring 2022

Location: Online

Meeting Times: Online, Wednesday 6:00 – 8:45 pm

Professor: Dr. Ian Peddie  
MAB 111

Open Door Times: TBA and by appt

Email: [ian.peddie@sulross.edu](mailto:ian.peddie@sulross.edu)

Phone: 432-837-8154

**Required Texts**

Algren, Nelson. *The Man With the Golden Arm* (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition). Seven Stories Press, 1999  
Allison, Dorothy. *Bastard Out of Carolina*. Plume Press, 2005.  
Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickled and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. Holt, 2008.  
Hughes, Langston and Arnold Rampersad. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Vintage, 1995.  
Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. Plume Press, 2000  
Wacquant, Loic. *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Duke UP, 2009.  
Le Blanc, Adrian Nicole. *Random Family: Love, Drugs, Trouble, and Coming of Age in the Bronx*. Scribner's Press, 2004.

There will also be online texts. These are free and I will supply URL information.

**Course Description**

In this course, we will explore the relationship between contemporary American culture and the world we live in. That is, and broadly speaking, we will examine how literature is affected by social concerns. In this sense, the class will address currently topical concerns such as injustice, exclusion, elitism, prejudice etc., especially how these concerns are portrayed, elucidated, disguised, championed and traduced through a variety of cultural lenses that include literature, history, film, music and social analysis. Needless to say, this course offers much scope for interdisciplinary enquiry.

**Course Objectives:** Students in English 5307 will:

- examine the processes of poetry, drama, fiction and other writing through the academic lens;
- analyze creative methodologies;
- understand the interaction between culture and society
- appreciate and comprehend interdisciplinary analysis and approaches
- understand and be able to analyze culture as part of a socio-political spectrum

**ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act)**

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services.

Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu .

**Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements to ensure the most hospitable and enhancing (cyber) learning environment as possible**

*Course Journal:* The course journal will consist of your thoughts, responses, questions, and ideas pursuant to the texts of elements generated by the texts. Your journal/weekly responses should be about half to three quarters of a page, single spaced. Your responses could run from something that catches your eye to a problem or a concern, to a textual, social, political adumbration etc. Remember that you are not expected to have all of the answers but if you have then let us have them! Note that these responses are **not** summaries or descriptions. Be frugal with the use of “I” and be wary of “I think” and its variations too. **Do no research;** I am interested in what you have got to say rather than the opinions of another. Needless to say, correct syntax, grammar and so on is expected.

#### **Assignments**

Annotated Bibliography	20%
Course Journal	20%
Research Paper	30%
Presentations	20%
Final Exam	10%

#### Academic Integrity

Sul Ross students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and are expected to encourage others to do the same. Further, students are expected to take responsible action when there is reason to suspect dishonesty on the part of others. While it is not possible to list all acts of academic dishonesty, examples include knowingly performing, attempting to perform, or assisting another in performing any act of academic dishonesty; cheating; plagiarism; collusion; submitting previously submitted material; misrepresentation or falsification of material; misrepresentation of circumstances such as illness, conflicting responsibilities. Additional details on academic integrity are found in the college catalogue. Academic dishonesty carries severe penalties ranging from a grade of “0” on the affected assignment to dismissal from Sul Ross State University.

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center is an academic support service available to all Sul Ross students. I strongly encourage you to make the center an integral part of your writing process by visiting the tutors frequently during the semester. The benefits of such visits are readily apparent in your work. The Center is located on the first floor of MAB, room 102, and its phone number is 432.837.8270.

#### **Miscellaneous yet Important:**

If, for any reason, you require accommodations for the successful completion of this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements.

I require that all discussions of our creative/scholarly work remain tactful, sincere, and highly ethical. Take the time with one another's work that you would wish taken with your own. If you do not feel up to this challenge, please find another course.

My office hours are, of course, "cyber" hours, although I will be available on campus at Sul Ross during those hours as well. Please do not hesitate to call the office phone. Or, I can provide further numbers and arrange more convenient times to speak as necessary. I will answer emails within 48 hours of receiving them (with the exception of weekends), so please do not wait until the last moment to ask questions. Also, please check the announcements for the class each day—I often address course issues and give suggestions and directions there, as they affect all students.

- Week One** Algren, *The Man With the Golden Arm*, 1-155; Wacquant, Ch 1, "Social Insecurity and the Punitive Upsurge."
- Week Two** Algren, *The Man With the Golden Arm*, 155-223; Wacquant, Ch 2, "The Criminalization of Poverty in the Post-Civil Rights Era; Ch 3, "Welfare 'Reform' as Poor Discipline and Statecraft"
- Week Three** Algren, *The Man With the Golden Arm*, 223-end; Rotella, "The Story of Decline and the October City," Bettina Drew, "The Heart of the Matter," James Giles, "Nelson Algren: The Value of Dissent," 423-443
- Week Four** Hughes, poems (TBA); Wacquant, Ch 6, "The Prison as Surrogate Ghetto: Engaging Black Subproletarians."
- Week Five** Hughes, poems (TBA); Morrison (Sections "Autumn" and "Winter")
- Week Six** Morrison (remainder of text)
- Week Seven** Mid-Term Exam
- Week Eight** LeBlanc, *Random Family*, first third
- Week Nine** LeBlanc, *Random Family*, second third
- Week Ten** LeBlanc, *Random Family*, final third; Allison (first third of text)
- Week Eleven** Allison (second third of text)
- Week Twelve** Wacquant, Ch 7 "Moralism and Punitive Panopticism: Hunting Down Sex Offenders." Allison (remainder of text)
- Week Thirteen** Ehrenreich ("Serving in Florida" and "Scrubbing in Maine")
- Week Fourteen** Ehrenreich (remainder of text)
- Final Exam**

