

Fall 2014
English 648-01; CRN: 12496

Instructor: Dr. Theresa L. Burriss
W 6:30 – 9:30, Russell 025

COURSE SYLLABUS
Appalachian Literature

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Crabtree, Lou V. *Sweet Hollow: Stories*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State UP, 1984.
Giardina, Denise. *Storming Heaven*. New York, NY: Fawcett Books, 1987.
Greene, Amy. *Bloodroot*. New York, NY: Vintage, 2010.
Kingsolver, Barbara. *Prodigal Summer*. New York: Harper Collins, 2000.
Pancake, Ann. *Strange As This Weather Has Been*. New York: Shoemaker & Hoard, 2007.
Pancake, Breece D’J. *The Stories of Breece D’J Pancake*. New York: Back Bay Books, 1977/1983.
Settle, Mary Lee. *The Scapegoat*. Columbia, SC: U of SC P, 1996.
Still, James. *River of Earth*. Lexington, KY: UP of Kentucky, 1940/1978.
Taylor, M. Glenn. *The Ballad of Trenchmouth Taggart*. New York, NY: Ecco, 2009.
Wilkinson, Crystal. *Water Street*. London: Toby P, 2002.

HELP: Office, 512 Davis Street Apartments, Suite G (by appointment). Phone, 831-6857.
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COURSE OBJECTIVE: As we read the assigned novels and short stories, we’ll apply standard literary theories to critique and gain insight into each work. Moreover, we’ll discuss whether an Appalachian aesthetic exists and if so, what that looks like. We’ll examine how the authors deal with the tension between creating Appalachian literature(s) and avoiding essentialism. Are there common characteristics uniting the literature? Can these characteristics be found in other writing, whether “regional” or not? What does regional writing even mean? Why do some pieces of literature have that “regional” label attached, while others don’t? These and other questions will guide our class discussions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading Critique Exploration Logs (5 over the 14-week semester) = These 3 – 5 page logs (typed, double-spaced) provide an opportunity for you to question various theoretical approaches to the literature, apply the theories and criticisms, and explore how they inform your readings of the novels. As the semester progresses, you are welcome to draw comparisons and contrasts between the current reading and past readings. I do not have due dates for these, but instead am leaving the submissions up to each student. When you are submitting, the logs are due at the beginning of the class period. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to turn in all five logs. If, periodically, you’d like me to supply writing/reading prompts, I’ll do so.

Total points = 200 (40 points/log)

Reading Question Prompts = Students will bring at least two open-ended and probing questions to each class based on the week’s reading assignment. At the beginning of each class period, I’ll

ask for a volunteer to share his/her questions to get us started on the discussion. The questions can draw from literary theory, Appalachian-themed interests/values, or anything else students find relevant in the material. Please bring these on an index card each class. You can recycle index cards by using both sides, one side for one day and the other side for another day. I'll collect them after you've used both sides. Please be sure to print the title of the text at the top.
Total Points = 200

Teaching & Leading One Class Discussion = Each student will teach, lead discussion, and generally engage the class for half the class period (about an hour and fifteen minutes). I'll distribute a sign-up sheet with dates and authors so students can choose someone they know nothing about, may already be interested in, or want to know more about in further detail. I do not wish to dictate how you design your teaching presentation, but instead want you to be as creative as possible. The main objective is to delve deeply into the subject matter and provide information not included in our assigned readings. Therefore, outside research will be necessary. If you'd like to consult with me about ideas and possibilities, I'm more than happy to meet with you.
Total points = 200

Final Literary Criticism Paper = The final assignment is an article-length (10 – 12 pages) literary criticism paper on a topic of your choosing. Although it's not necessary to select the author and work you chose for your teaching day, such a selection would make sense from a time perspective. After all, you'll have already begun the research. In essence, you'll choose one or two, as appropriate, literary theories to apply to a novel or short story collection assigned in the class. As with the other assignments, I'll be available to consult with you. Often times, talking about and sharing your ideas with someone help jumpstart the writing process. I've added "built-in" due dates on the calendar to aid you with accountability and avoiding procrastination. As with all writing assignments for the class, I expect this paper to follow MLA format.
Total points = 400

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:

The University Affairs Council has asked all faculty members to include the following statement in our course policies:

By accepting admission to Radford University, each student makes a commitment to understand, support, and abide by the University Honor Code without compromise or exception. Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. This class will be conducted in strict observance of the Honor code.

I do hereby resolve to uphold the Honor Code of Radford University by refraining from lying, from the stealing or unauthorized possession of property and from violating the Standards of Student Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism, including the use of work submitted to another course without consent of both instructors, the use of work by another person, or the use of someone else's words, ideas or arrangement of ideas without giving proper reference to the author, is a serious violation of the

Honor Code. This applies to any materials on the World Wide Web or electronic sources in the library. Please see the section on plagiarism in your Student Handbook.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are seeking classroom or testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Disability Resource Office (DRO). Please email the DRO at dro@radford.edu or call 540-831-6350. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please submit your documentation to the DRO in the lower level of Tyler Hall Suites 54-69 or by fax at 540-831-6525, meet with your Disability Services Specialist and schedule a time to pick up your DRO accommodation package. Once you have your accommodation package, you will need to meet with your course professor during office hours. For more information and for documentation guidelines, visit www.radford.edu/dro.

Writing Help:

The Learning Assistance and Resource Center (LARC), located in 126 Walker Hall, is open to all students Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Certified, trained tutors provide help with basic study skills, writing, reading, and content-specific material. An appointment is necessary and can be made by calling 831-7704.

Emergency Planning:

In the event of a University-wide emergency, course requirements, classes, deadlines and grading policies and procedures are subject to change. Potential changes that could occur include alternative delivery methods, alternative methods of interaction with the instructor, accessing class materials and/or classmates, a revised attendance policy, and a revised semester calendar and/or grading schedule. For specific information about an emergency situation, please refer to the RU website: www.radford.edu. For general information regarding RU emergency preparedness go to: <http://oep.asp.radford.edu/>.

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Please have the work read when you come to class on the day noted.

W Aug 27: Introductions, syllabus review, beginning class questions and prompts, overview of various literary theories. READ Crabtree's *Sweet Hollow*.

W Sept 3: READ Taylor's *The Ballad of Trenchmouth Taggart*.

W Sept 10: READ Settle's *The Scapegoat*.

W Sept 17: READ Giardina's *Storming Heaven*.

W Sept 24: READ Still's *River of Earth*.

W Oct 1: READ first half of Ann Pancake's *Strange Weather*.

W Oct 8: READ second half of *Strange Weather*.

W Oct 15: READ Breece Pancake's *Stories*.

W Oct 22: READ first half of Green's *Bloodroot*.

W Oct 29: READ second half of *Bloodroot*. Sue Massek performance, *Sweet Memories* (about Sarah Ogan Gunning), in the Bonnie Auditorium at 7 p.m.

W Nov 5: Meet in McConnell for library instruction for first half of class. READ first half of Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer*.

W Nov 12: Final paper proposal due, along with 10-entry working bibliography. READ second half of *Prodigal Summer*.

W Nov 19: Five-entry annotated bibliography due. READ Wilkinson's *Water Street*.

Thanksgiving Break Week of 11/24 – 11/28.

W Dec 3: Writing workshop/peer review.

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Wednesday, December 10, at 7:30 p.m. Final paper due.