

## ***LIT 3326: Literature of the American South*** **Spring 2013**

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### **Course Information**

LIT 3326.001  
JSOM 2.804 TR 2:30 – 3:45

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### **Professor Contact Information**

Dr. Ingrao  
Office: JO 5.306  
Office Hours: T 11:30 - 1:30, W 2:00 - 4:00, and by appointment  
Office Phone: 883 – 6089  
Email: [jingrao@utdallas.edu](mailto:jingrao@utdallas.edu)

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### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

HUMA 1301 or equivalent.

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### **Course Description**

LIT 3326 (3 semester hours) offers students the potential to examine major writers of the American South. Concerning this subject, this semester we ask, "Will the real South please stand up?" But what is the "real South"? In *My Tears Spoiled My Aim*, John Shelton Reed cites Hamilton Horton's "Hell, yes!" definition of the South. When asked if you are a southerner or if you are in the South, the previous response gives clear and enthusiastic evidence of identification with a region and a literature that are both nevertheless slippery to define. Beginning with encounters with modernity and looking progressively forward at the South globally, is the South a place, a behavior, or a certain attitude and loyalty? Instead of presuming to pin down a "real," singular definition of the South, this class will consider a variety of perspectives. In many cases, characters in works we will discuss wrestle with these same perspectives in pursuit of self-definition.

## Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

This course seeks to offer students the potential to: 1) Demonstrate an understanding of expressions of regional definition and identification in southern literature, primarily during the 20th century; 2) Complete a paper as part of a research project that demonstrates the ability to research effectively and synthesize research into an argument that offers analytical insight into the literature of the American South; 3) Demonstrate familiarity with key writers of the American South; 4) Demonstrate an understanding of how the "regional" literature of the American South fits into the larger scope of American literature.

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## Required Textbooks and Materials

Textbooks are available at the UTD Bookstore, Off Campus Books, and commercially. Use only the following editions:

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (Norton)  
Randall Kenan, *A Visitation of Spirits* (Vintage)  
Lee Smith, *Saving Grace* (Ballantine)  
Barry Hannah, *Ray* (Grove)  
Alden Bell, *The Reapers are the Angels* (Holt)

A selection of articles, essays, and short fiction will be available through e-reserve. These selections are marked as "e-reserve" under "Assignments & Academic Calendar." The course will also incorporate selections from documentary film and Duvall's *The Apostle*.

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## How to Access E-Reserve Materials

Several readings for this course will be accessed through e-reserve. A syllabus is also available as a Word document (.doc) through e-reserve should a printed copy be misplaced. To access e-reserve:

1. Go to the following URL:

<http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/courseindex.aspx?page=instr>

2. Search by instructor's last name: "Ingrao."

3. A list of courses should appear. Click on the link for "LIT 3326."

4. Next, you will be asked for a password. The password (case sensitive) is "Faulkner." After you enter the password, click "Accept."

A list of e-reserve materials should appear. Click on the needed reading for a PDF version.

Please contact the instructor at [jingrao@utdallas.edu](mailto:jingrao@utdallas.edu) if you experience problems opening materials placed on e-reserve.

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## Assignments & Academic Calendar

*Jan. 15:*

- Introduction to Regional Definition and Identification in Southern Fiction
- Complete survey
- Sign up for presentations

*Jan. 17:*

- Discuss survey results
- Discuss Mencken's "The Sahara of the Bozart" (e-reserve)
- Discuss Gilman's "from *Recollections of a Southern Matron*: 'Old Jacque'" (e-reserve)
- Discuss Grady's "The New South" (e-reserve)

*Jan. 22:*

- Introduction to the Agrarians: Response to Modernity
- Discuss Rubin's "Introduction to *I'll Take My Stand*: Torchbook Edition (1962)" (e-reserve)
- Discuss Wade's "The Life and Death of Cousin Lucius" (e-reserve)
- Discuss Stuart's "Modernity" (e-reserve)

*Jan. 24:*

- Introduction to Faulkner: Movement Toward Modernity
- Discuss Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, pages 3-43

*Jan. 29:*

- Discuss Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, pages 44-104

*Jan. 31:*

- Discuss Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, pages 105-149

Feb. 5:

- Discuss criticism of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*
- **Read one of the following from the Norton *As I Lay Dying* and write a 250-500 word response to bring to class (this will count as the day's attendance):**
  - a. Vickery's "The Dimensions of Consciousness"
  - b. Brooks's "Odyssey of the Bundrens"
  - c. Fowler's "Matricide and the Mother's Revenge: *As I Lay Dying*"
  - d. Gray's "A Southern Carnival"
  - e. Limon's "Addie in No Man's Land"
- Review research paper proposal

Feb. 7:

- Introduction to Demonic Possession: The Demons of Past and Present
- Discuss Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*, pages 3-44

Feb. 12:

- Discuss Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*, pages 45-103
- **Research paper proposal due**

Feb. 14:

- Discuss Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*, pages 107-168

Feb. 19:

- Discuss Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*, pages 171-257

Feb. 21:

- Discuss Wilson's "The Southern Religious Culture: Distinctiveness and Social Change" (e-reserve)
- View selections from Duvall's *The Apostle*
- Research paper proposal returned

Feb. 26:

- Discuss Duvall's *The Apostle*
- Discuss O'Connor's "On Her Own Work" (e-reserve)
- Discuss O'Connor's "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (e-reserve)
- Review for midterm exam

Feb. 28:

- **Midterm exam**

March 5:

- Introduction to Signs Following/Serpent Handling: The Angels of Future Past
- Life of George Went Hensley
- Discuss Burton's "Some Questions," "The Anointment," "The Music," and "Serpent Handlers in Tennessee Courts" (e-reserve)
- View selections from and discuss *In Jesus' Name*

March 7:

- Discuss Smith's *Saving Grace*, pages 3-65
- Midterm exam returned

March 12 – 14:

- **NO CLASS: Spring Break**

March 19:

- Discuss Smith's *Saving Grace*, pages 65-149

March 21:

- Discuss Smith's *Saving Grace*, pages 149-204

March 26:

- Discuss Smith's *Saving Grace*, pages 207-273

March 28:

- Introduction to Hannah: The Global South
- Discuss Hannah's *Ray*, pages 3-52
- **Research paper rough draft due**

April 2:

- Discuss Hannah's *Ray*, pages 52-113

April 4:

- **NO CLASS: Office hours to answer questions concerning presentations**

April 9:

- **Presentation on Economy/Climate**
- **Presentation on Politics**

April 11:

- **Presentation on Religion**
- **Presentation on Food**
- Research paper rough draft returned

April 16:

- **Presentation on Music**
- **Presentation on Violence**

April 18:

- **Presentation on Lifestyle**
- **Presentation on Sports**

April 23:

- Introduction to Zombies: The Zombie Apocalypse as Ontology of Southern Literature
- Discuss Bell's *The Reapers are the Angels*, pages 3-65

April 25:

- Discuss Bell's *The Reapers are the Angels*, pages 65-110
- Discuss Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" (e-reserve)

April 30:

- Discuss Bell's *The Reapers are the Angels*, pages 113-192
- Discuss selections from McCarthy's *Child of God* (e-reserve)

May 2:

- Discuss Bell's *The Reapers are the Angels*, pages 195-225
- Course conclusion
- **Research paper due**

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## Grading Policy

Semester grades will be calculated in accordance with the following percentages:

Midterm exam	25%
Presentation	25%
Research project	25%
Attendance	25%

Letter grades correspond to the following numerical values in calculating a student's semester grade:

A+	4.00	C+	2.33	F	0.00
A	4.00	C	2.00		
A-	3.67	C-	1.67		
B+	3.33	D+	1.33		
B	3.00	D	1.00		
B-	2.67	D-	0.67		

In general, letter grades are determined by the following criteria:

A--represents outstanding participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed on time, with very high quality and original thought in all work produced for the course.

B--represents excellent participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed on time, with consistently high quality in course work.

C--represents good to average participation in course activities; all assigned work completed, with generally good overall quality in course work.

D--represents uneven participation in course activities; some gaps in assigned work completed, with inconsistent quality in course work.

F--represents minimal participation in course activities; serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work.

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## Course & Instructor Policies

In addition to regular attendance, this course requires three major assignments that will be used in determining a semester grade:

1. Students will make a thirty-minute presentation to the class on an aspect of southern culture and its relation to and representation within southern literature. Presentations should include the following information:
  - a. Context: Provide a brief, focused cultural-historical overview of the topic within the South. Students will need to be selective; for example, the group presenting food might focus upon barbeque instead of trying to discuss barbeque, grits, fried chicken, and other subjects during the course of the presentation. The group presenting weather might focus on how the South's climate influenced the rise of the plantation economy.

- b. Analysis: Present a reading of the topic's representation in literature. Students may draw upon works not assigned for this course, but should focus upon an assigned work or works. For example, the group presenting music might discuss its significance in Smith's *Saving Grace*, while the group presenting food might address the communal preparation of food in Kenan's *Visitation*.

Sources researched for the presentation should be mentioned by author and title during the presentation. In addition, students should submit a Works Cited page with their presentation. The presentation requires a minimum of three sources primarily applicable to "Context."

Tips for presentations:

- Contact the instructor with any questions that arise during preparation of the presentation.
- Practice and time the presentation prior to the assigned presentation date.
- Do not constantly look at notes.
- Speak slowly.
- Speak clearly.
- Speak with confidence.
- Be prepared to answer questions.
- Be prepared to give further explanation.
- Have fun and be creative.
- Students presenting on religion might begin with Wilson's "The Southern Religious Culture: Distinctiveness and Social Change." This reading is available on e-reserve, and will be discussed in class on February 21st.
- Students presenting on music should contact the instructor for a copy of Wilson's "Digging Up Bones: Death in Country Music."

**Presentations cannot be made up. Failure on behalf of a student to be present on the day that he or she has been scheduled to present will result in a grade of F for the assignment. Please plan ahead and contact the instructor with any concerns.**

Note that some students might present as part of a group. Students who present in this manner should share the work, speak about an equal amount of time during the presentation, and announce any transitions between speakers or subject matter.

Students who present as part of a group will still be graded individually. Moreover, each student presenting in a group will submit a one-page, typed, double-spaced evaluation of his or her group members on the day of the presentation. This evaluation should assess the contribution of members to the group.

**Failure to submit an evaluation on time (at the beginning of the class period on the date that the student has been scheduled to present with his or her classmates) will result in a deduction from the student's presentation grade. For example, a student receives an A on the presentation but fails to turn in an evaluation at the beginning of class. The grade will drop to an A-.**



2. Midterm exam (not comprehensive)—Consists of a series of short answer questions. Students will need to provide a blue book for the exam. Blue books are available at the University Bookstore, Off Campus Books, and through the SGA.
3. Research project—Students will be asked to submit a proposal, rough draft, and final draft. All work should observe the rules of Standard Written English and all requirements of current (seventh edition) MLA format.

**At no stage of this process will late work be accepted without a valid excuse, and students should note that failure to submit either or both a proposal and rough draft on time without a valid excuse will result in a penalty to the final research project grade at the rate of ten points. For example, a student turns in the rough draft and final paper but not the proposal. The student receives an A- on the paper, but this grade drops to a B- for failure to submit the proposal. Moreover, failure to submit a final paper on time without a valid excuse will result in a grade of F for the assignment.**

The research project should meet the following criteria:

- a. The paper proposal should be approximately 250 words. This proposal should include:
  - The student's proposed argument.
  - The importance of this argument in relation to the criticism of other scholars.
  - A brief statement of how the argument will be developed in the later draft and final paper. Both the draft and the final paper should be eight to ten typed pages not counting bibliographic information.
- b. Both the draft and the final paper should present a clear thesis and developed analysis/argument that draws on specific examples from both primary and secondary sources for support.
- c. A student should resubmit both the paper proposal and rough draft commented on by the instructor with the final paper.
- d. Students are welcome to develop their own topics and arguments. Do consult the instructor if you need help with this process. Do not wait until late in the semester to begin this process.
- e. Though students are welcome to develop their own topic and argument, this argument should concern at least one of the primary authors to be discussed in class during the course of the semester.

**Be sure to note all due dates under "Assignments & Academic Calendar."** A midterm exam cannot be made up without a valid excuse, nor will late proposals, drafts, or papers be accepted. Inform the instructor—in advance if possible—if a valid reason for being absent exists, and be prepared to document all legitimate excuses. Legitimate excuses for missing class include only the following:

1. Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their instructor in writing by January 22nd and should discuss with him, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

2. Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed assignment for making up the work. Students who must travel in association with a University activity should plan on completing any work prior to travel.
3. A documented illness. Documentation should clearly state that the student was instructed by a physician not to attend class on a specific date(s) for his or her health and/or for the health of others. The date(s) missed should be specifically stated in the note, as should physician contact information. Undocumented illness will not constitute a valid excuse for missing class.

Vacation plans, travel plans, work-related absences, and so on do not constitute excused absences under this policy.

Students seeking to make up the midterm exam or submit a proposal, draft, or paper late must first present documentation of a valid excuse before the make-up exam can be scheduled or the proposal, draft, or paper will be accepted. Students will have one week (seven days; this does include weekends) from the original assignment date to take the make-up exam or submit the proposal, draft, or paper. Students should be aware that the make-up exam will differ from the in-class exam in content. Though the format of the exam will be the same, students seeking to make up the midterm should expect to be asked different short answer questions than those presented on the in-class exam.

Concerning attendance, a student will be allowed two unexcused absence for the semester. These allowed absences cannot be used on a date when an assignment—such as the midterm or a paper draft—is due. Any further unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade for the semester. For example: a student with four unexcused absences receives a B+ in the course. Two unexcused absences are allowed. Due to the remaining unexcused absences, this final grade will be lowered to a B-. Be warned; this does raise the potential for failure due to absences. For example: a student with five unexcused absences receives a D in the course. Two unexcused absences are allowed. Due to the remaining three unexcused absences, this final grade will be lowered to a F.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Students who are not present at this time will be counted absent unless a documented valid excuse is presented. Leaving during the class will also constitute an absence for the day unless a documented valid excuse is presented.

Extra credit will not be given. Moreover, this course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of cheating will be fully investigated. Penalties for cheating may include failing an exam, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University's policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.

Please contact the instructor with any questions concerning these policies.

## Technical Support

If students experience any problems with their UTD accounts they may send an email to: [assist@utdallas.edu](mailto:assist@utdallas.edu), or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

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## Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, the professor cannot drop or withdraw any student. Students must do the proper paperwork to ensure that they will not receive a final grade of F in a course if they choose not to attend the class once they are enrolled.

**Note: January 30th is the last day to drop this course without incurring a W.**

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## Additional Important Policies

It is the student's responsibility to review additional University policies concerning Office of AccessAbility services, avoiding plagiarism, resources to aid in the potential for success, incomplete grades, student conduct and discipline, academic integrity, technical support, email use, copyright notice, grievance procedures, and religious holy days at <http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>



***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.***

