

**ENGLISH 344 Contemporary Native American Literature Fall 2014**  
**Tuesday and Thursday 8:55-10:05 Zinzendorf 103**

**Instructor: Dr. Nicole Tabor, taborn@moravian.edu**

**Office Hours: Mon 2:30-3:30, Tue 2:30-3:30, Wed 1:30-3:30, Thu 1:30-3:30, and by appointment**

**Office Location and Phone: 304 Zinzendorf Hall, (610)625-7842**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This 300 level course will provide students with an opportunity to closely read poetry, fiction, drama, and essays written by and about Native Americans. To truly understand these literary texts, we will need to learn about native peoples' history, cultural contexts, oral traditions, and identity. Developing and interrogating questions regarding Native American identity will complicate our understanding of fixed literary genres and the power relations they encode. Our readings, discussions, and writing assignments will offer the opportunity to develop questions at issue for our discourse community. Writing especially will provide the chance to develop your own line of inquiry regarding specific texts.

**COURSE GOALS:**

- Develop a sophisticated vocabulary of key terms to closely read, discuss, and write about contemporary Native American literature
- Enrich our textual experience of Native American literature by critically engaging with its historical tradition(s)
- Deepen our understanding and appreciation of multicultural contributions to American literature
- Work collaboratively to generate challenging questions at issue for our discourse community
- Design and implement an intellectually substantial research project drawing on original argumentation, writing, and research which substantiates claims utilizing contemporary Native American literature as textual evidence
- Utilize life experiences to make connections between contemporary Native American literature and personal identity

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*Ceremony*, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition by Leslie Marmon Silko

*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* by Sherman Alexie

*The Cambridge Guide to Native American Literature* edited by Porter and Roemer

*Nothing But the Truth* edited by Purdy/Ruppert

*The Rez Sisters* by Tomson Highway

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**PERCENT OF FINAL GRADE:**

First Essay	15
Second Essay	20
Third Essay	20
Reading Journal	20
Oral Presentations	10
Class Participation	10
Final Portfolio	5

**ESSAYS:** You are required to compose three argumentative essays. The first essay will be 5-6 pages, essay two will be 8 pages and the final essay will be 15-20 pages in length. You will develop the final essay from an abstract, annotated bibliography, and rough draft. These essays will be thesis-driven and follow MLA guidelines. Essays will be evaluated primarily on the quality of your ideas and the thoroughness of your critical argument (including appropriate citations of the text). Organizational, grammatical, and other writing matters will, however, also affect your grade. We will discuss these essays in further detail throughout the term.

**READING JOURNAL<sup>1</sup>:** You will write a two-page journal entry for each date's assigned primary literary reading(s). This entry will consist of two parts. In part one you will summarize the plot and/or main ideas of the primary text(s) and part two will consist of a discussion question. When several poems/texts are assigned the reading response will equal two pages total, composed of short summaries of all poems and a discussion question about one poem of your choice. Secondary readings from the *Cambridge Companion* will consist of a one page response - in part one you will summarize the chapter's main ideas and part two will focus on a discussion question. These questions are useful in generating class discussion and essays from our readings. Please refer to the handout "Discussion Questions as Post-reading." You may be asked

---

<sup>1</sup> Three reading responses of your choice will reference Oxford English Dictionary (OED) citations.

to read from your response in class. These journals will be checked each class period and collected twice during the term. You will submit a final portfolio of the semester's work during finals week.

**ORAL PRESENTATION:** You will be required to give a group presentation. Your group will summarize, historicize, ask the class significant discussion questions related to your assigned texts and its genre, and create/photocopy/distribute a handout. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in class.

**PARTICIPATION:** Our classroom comprises a *discourse community*, in which we gain knowledge and insight through mutual inquiry as a result of both verbal and written interaction with others in the class. This interaction will take the form of co-operation as well as respectful disagreement. As a member of this discourse community, you will be expected to contribute intelligently and frequently to the discussion. Along with speaking, effective participation requires active and open-minded listening to others. Respond to and interact with your peers, not just with me. The more you participate, the more interesting, exciting, and rewarding this class will be. Always bring your textbook and notes to class. Expect to read passages aloud and closely investigate details of the texts we are studying. There will be unannounced quizzes and in-class writings throughout the term. I highly encourage you to visit me during office hours (or make an appointment) to discuss your paper ideas or any other questions or concerns related to the course.

**POLICIES:**

**Grades.** It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignments and for the final course grade.

**Format.** All written work should include your name, the course number and instructor (Tabor), the date, and the assignment in the upper right-hand or upper left-hand corner. Any pages after the first should be numbered and stapled. All work must be typed using a reasonable 12-point font, double-spaced, and conventional margins (one inch). No electronic assignments accepted without special arrangement.

**Deadlines.** Reading responses, quizzes, and other daily assignments will not be accepted late including assignments due to absence. Assignments are due during the class period of the due date. Extensions may be given on essays, provided that a student asks for the extension at least one week in advance. Unless an extension is given, late essays will be reduced by one letter grade for each day that passes after the due date, e.g. an A becomes a B if one day late.

**Access for Students with Disabilities.** Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Academic and Disability Support in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center. Also, the Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to students with mobility impairments. If you have any impairments and need the services of the Writing Center please call 610-861-1392.

**Plagiarism.** All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please see the Student Handbook if you have any questions about your use of sources.

**Attendance.** It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet at each class. Your final course grade will be dropped by 10% for each unexcused absence after the third. Arriving to class more than 2 minutes late will count as 1/3 of an absence. A note from a doctor's office is required for an excused absence.

**Tentative Reading Schedule.** Readings are to be completed on the day assigned. A star (\*) next to page numbers signifies that a reading journal entry will be due in class that day for those assigned pages. The schedule is subject to change.

**Week One**

Tue Aug 26 Introduction

**POETRY**

Thu Aug 28 Anthology: "Rattle" pp. 446-449\*, "Dear John Wayne" pp. 471-472\*, "The Bear" p.511\*  
"There Is No Word for Goodbye" pp. 554-555\*, "In Praise of Texas" pp. 557-558\*  
Cambridge: "Historical and Cultural Contexts to Native American Literature" pp. 39-68  
Cambridge: "America's Indigenous Poetry" pp. 145-160

**Week Two**

Tue Sep 2 Anthology: Joy Harjo poems pp. 474-486\*  
Cambridge: "Joy Harjo's Poetry" pp. 283-295\*

Anthology: N. Scott Momaday poems pp. 510-515\*  
Cambridge: "N. Scott Momaday: Becoming the Bear" pp. 207-220\*

Thu Sep 4 Anthology: Simon Ortiz poems pp. 515-520\*  
Cambridge: "Simon Ortiz: Writing Home" pp. 221-232\*

**Week Three**

Tue Sep 9 Library Visit: Meet at Reeves Library  
**Essay One Due**

Thu Sep 11 Moravian College Convocation

**Week Four**

**FICTION**

Tue Sep 16 *Ceremony*, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition by Leslie Marmon Silko\*  
Cambridge: "Fiction: 1968 to the Present" pp. 173-188\*  
Cambridge: "Leslie Marmon Silko: Storyteller" pp. 245-256\*

Thu Sep 18 *Ceremony*, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition by Leslie Marmon Silko

**Week Five**

Tue Sep 23 Anthology: "The Red Convertible" pp. 232-239\*  
Cambridge: "Louise Erdrich's Storied Universe" pp. 271-282\*

Thu Sep 25 Anthology: "Report to the Nation" pp. 333-344\*  
Anthology: "Indian Humor" pp. 39-53\*  
**Thesis Workshop: Thesis Statement Due**

**Week Six**

Tue Sep 30 Alexie: *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, pp. xi-xxii, pp. 1-242\*  
**Reading Journal Due**

Thu Oct 2 Alexie: *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, pp. xi-xxii, pp. 1-242  
Alexie: "This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" pp. 59-75\*

**Week Seven**

Tue Oct 7 Alexie: "This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" pp. 59-75  
Alexie: "Smoke Signals"

Thu Oct 9 Alexie: "Smoke Signals"  
**Essay Two Due**

**Week Eight**

Tue Oct 14 Fall Recess: No Class

Thu Oct 16 Mihelich "Smoke or Signals? American Popular Culture and the Challenge to Hegemonic Images of American Indians in Native American Film" (H)\*  
<http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/aist320/1409611.pdf>  
Cambridge: "Translation and Mediation" pp. 69-84\*  
Cambridge: "Sherman Alexie: Irony, Intimacy, and Agency" pp. 297-310\*

**NONFICTION**

**Week Nine**

Tue Oct 21 Spotlight - Technology and the Indigenous Experience:  
"Noongwa e-Anishinaabemjig" [www.umich.edu/~ojibwe/](http://www.umich.edu/~ojibwe/) \*  
"Navajo Women's Energy Project" (H)\*

Thu Oct 23 Spotlight - Technology and the Indigenous Experience:  
Special Guest: Mr. Scott Hughes, Chief Information Officer, Moravian College

**Week Ten**

Tue Oct 28 Anthology: "The Woman Who Loved a Snake" pp. 141-158\*  
Anthology: "An Old-Time Indian Attack" pp. 166-171\*  
**Abstract Due & Annotated Bibliography Due**

Thu Oct 30 Trask: "From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii" (H)\*  
Kneubuhl: "Hawaii Nei: Island Plays" (H)\*

## DRAMA

### Week Eleven

Tue Nov 4 Cambridge: "American Indian Theatre" pp. 189-206\*  
Highway: "The Rez Sisters" pp.vi-118\*

Thu Nov 6 Highway: "The Rez Sisters" pp.vi-118  
**Draft Workshop: Rough Draft Due**

### Week Twelve

Tue Nov 11 Conferences

Thu Nov 13 Conferences

### Week Thirteen

Tue Nov 18 Glancy: "The Woman Who was a Red Deer Dressed for the Deer Dance" (H)\*  
Patrice Pavis: "Dictionary of the Theatre – Soliloquies" (H)\*

Thu Nov 20 Thanksgiving Recess – No Class

### Week Fourteen

Mon Nov 24 Lunchtime meeting with Mr. Michael Jacobs, Cherokee recording Artist

Tue Nov 25 Geiogamah: "49" (H)\*  
*Los Angeles Times*: "The Lone Ranger: Divisive"  
<http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/09/entertainment/la-et-mn-tonto-20130709>

Thu Nov 27 Anthology: "Harold of Orange" pp. 591-619\*  
Cambridge: "Gerald Vizenor: Postindian Liberation" pp. 257-270\*  
**Reading Journal Due**

### Week Fifteen

Tue Dec 2 Anthology: "Harold of Orange" pp. 591-619

Thu Dec 4 "Navajo Women's Energy Project" (H)  
Conclusions and Evaluations  
**Essay Three Due**

### Final Week

Mon Dec 8 Portfolio Due