“For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There isn’t any other tale to tell. It’s the only light we’ve got in all this darkness.”

James Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues”

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Office Hours: Mondays 1-3
(and by appointment)

General Course Description

The purpose of English 222 is to introduce prospective middle and high school English Language Arts teachers to the richness of the expanding canon of American literature in the 21st century. Texts you encounter in this class will invite you to travel to worlds beyond your own, to engage in a conversation among cultures, to explore unfamiliar traditions, and to evaluate human relationships in an attempt to understand the meanings of community in our multicultural society. We will examine political, socio-cultural, and multicultural aspects of literary debate that includes issues of class, race, ethnicity, and sexual preference. Together, we will explore human experience as it is imagined, interpreted, and made significant in early and recent fiction, essays, and poetry by Native American, Asian American, African American, Mexican American, and Gay and Lesbian writers from the United States. You will analyze these works through small and large group discussion and informal and formal writing in order to develop your understanding of the ways language makes us know, think, feel, and act. Throughout the term, you will become familiar with a variety of instructional strategies for teaching multicultural literature in an interactive classroom, and be introduced to assignments that invite students to think critically and use textual evidence to support their viewpoints.

Why 222?

Okay, there's always the pragmatic reason: English 222 fulfills the Comparative/Cultural strand requirement of the English Language Arts Teaching Major. But there are other reasons, too. Granted, the study of literature can hardly be called 'practical' in the most common use of the term; not many of us make our living reading books these days. But when you learn to read and appreciate literature, you acquire invaluable resources that you never lose: ways of observing, means of evaluating, reasons for believing and acting, modes of thinking, opportunities for sharing the experiences of those like you and unlike you with whom you share a common human bond despite historical and cultural differences. In short, literature teaches you empathy--how to feel with and for others, and it teaches you judgment--how to evaluate options and make decisions in a world of complexity and ambiguity. Literature changes you, and it changes the world.

Required Texts

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
*Sandra Cisneros in the Classroom* by Carol Jago
Learning Outcomes

In this class, you will:

--Read and respond to literary works from various cultures—including Native American, Asian American, African American, Mexican American, and Gay and Lesbian
--Read and respond to multicultural literary works of various genres—including poetry, fiction, essay, and film
--Demonstrate understanding of how literary elements such as plot, character, theme, setting, tone, and figurative language relate to literary meaning
--Demonstrate the ability to read closely, interpret effectively, and analyze and synthesize literary works in their cultural contexts
--Participate in both small and large group discussions on issues of class, race, ethnicity, and sexual preference in American literature
--Identify critical themes of American multicultural literature, such as Origins and Insights, Gender and Identity, Race and Difference, and Individualism and Community
--Develop methods for teaching multicultural literature, including assignments and assessment strategies that invite students to think critically and use textual evidence to support their viewpoints
--Submit at least seven pages of writing that is assessed for content and mechanics (organization, grammar, spelling, and punctuation) in accordance with the General Education Writing Requirement

English/Language Arts Endorsement Competencies

4.1  Read and understand a broad range of texts (nonfiction and fiction, historical and contemporary), including:
4.1.1 Works representing and authored by a range of cultures and ethnicities globally and within the United States.
4.1.3 Works providing both male and female representation and authorship.
4.2 Understand the elements of literature (plot, character, theme, setting, tone, point of view, etc.)
7.5 Model higher level thinking skills and scaffold metacognitive processes for a wide variety of literacy tasks.
7.6 Create reading, writing, and discussion opportunities which promote respect for and support of individual differences (e.g. ability, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race).
7.8 Engage students in making meaning of texts through the students’ own responses and reflections.

What Will Be Expected of You

Some people struggle with literature because they try to read it in the same way that they read their textbooks. Literature requires reflecting and questioning, problem finding as well as problem solving. In this class, you will:

--Read the assigned short stories, poems, essays, and novels and view the assigned films/videos.
--Keep a reading journal, in which you respond in writing to assigned readings and films, prior to group discussions.
--Participate in whole-class discussions and activities related to what you read.
--Participate in small group discussions where you will formulate interpretive questions about literature, and respond to them. From time to time, you will be responsible for leading the discussion on a particular piece.
--Write one literary analysis paper responding to questions about your reading and participate in peer editing/response groups.
--Present ideas for teaching selected works.
--Demonstrate *academic integrity* in all written projects. (The use of someone else's work without citation is plagiarism. It's unethical. Don't do it, for it will result in a failing grade).

### Grading

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Poem presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literary essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Story/Essay presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/viewing journal</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Participation/Professionalism</td>
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(90% = A, 80% B, 70% = C, 60% = D)

### Attendance

Show up for class. Since this is a discussion and activity class, it's essential that you keep up with your reading and writing, attend class, contribute to discussions, and participate in activities. Remember—this is not a 'just get someone's notes' kind of class; what you miss can't be made up. You can miss up to three class days with no explanations; after 3 absences your final grade will drop one full letter grade for each day missed. If you miss 6 or more sessions, for whatever reason, you will not receive credit for the class.

### Diversity

In my classroom, diversity is welcomed and celebrated. I will not tolerate any forms of prejudice or discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. We are here to learn in a climate of civility and mutual respect.

### Late Work

All papers must be submitted in class on the date they are due. Papers turned in after this will be marked down one letter grade for each day late. Final papers for the class will not be accepted late.

### Incompletes

Incompletes are given only for catastrophic events or severe extended illness. They are not an acceptable solution for poor time management. While I understand that occasionally there are unforeseen events and circumstances beyond your control, I believe you can, and should, finish this class in the quarter you take it.

### Disability-Related Accommodations

If you need disability-related educational accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. Give me a copy of your “Confirmation of Eligibility for Academic Adjustments” from the Disability Support Services Office and then we can discuss how the approved adjustments will be implemented in this class. For more information, contact Disability Support Services, Bouillon 205, 963-2171.