



**St. Catherine University**

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2021

# ENGL WOST 2290 syllabus 2021

Patricia Montalbano, *St. Catherine University*



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/patricia-montalbano/1/>

## ENGL/WOST 2290 - Women and Literature: American Immigrant Stories

Spring 2021  
Section D02, T Th 8:00-9:40  
Synchronous Meetings via Zoom

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### Course description:

This course will explore novels and short stories by women that illustrate the diversity of voices within the immigrant experience in the United States. The focus of the course will be the critical reading of literary texts toward the development of effective writing about these texts. The overall goal of the course is the development of an increased awareness and deepened understanding of the experiences of American women immigrants.

### Course objectives:

This course is designed to help you:

- develop an appreciation and understanding of women's experiences as portrayed through literature
- develop an appreciation and understanding of artistic and aesthetic elements as well as social and cultural elements of literature written by American women
- develop confidence in writing and your ability to communicate effectively
- develop essays that are unified around a central thesis or controlling idea related to the course texts and in which the purpose of each paragraph and the transitions between paragraphs are clear
- develop proficiency in using literary vocabulary to discuss and write about literature

### Required primary texts:

*Dream Country*, Shannon Gibney  
*Lucy*, Jamaica Kincaid  
*The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan  
*The House on Mango Street*, Sandra Cisneros  
*The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir*, Kao Kalia Yang  
*Immigrant Voices: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Stories*, Achy Obejas and Megan Bayles, editors

### Requirements:

You are expected to attend all synchronous class sessions and participate actively in class discussions. Timely completion of all writing assignments is also expected. To earn a passing grade for the course, you must complete all writing assignments. Writing assignments must be word-processed, double-spaced, carefully proofread and corrected. Please do not use larger (or smaller) than a 12-point font.

### Technology Requirements and Tools

St. Kate's [minimum computer requirements for students](#).

- Learning management system: [Brightspace D2L](#)

Technology help is available through the Help Desk (located in the Tech Hub in the Library) at 651-690-6402 or by submitting a [help ticket](#).

## Assignments:

**Reading:** This is a literature course, so the primary assignment for the term will be the careful and critical reading of the selected course texts. See the course schedule for the reading assignment due for each class.

**Writing:** Putting your ideas into words on paper is one of the most effective ways to deepen your critical thinking about what you have read. The following assignments are designed to get you to think more critically and deeply about the course texts as well as build your skills of analysis and effective communication in writing.

**Literary Analysis Papers (3-4 pages):** You will choose two dates on which to submit and briefly present in class two literary analysis papers related to the novel excerpt or short story assigned for those class dates. If you would like help developing your thesis or structuring your paper, please feel free to conference with me in advance of your paper's due date (after you have read the work assigned), and I would be happy to talk your ideas through with you. There is also a detailed worksheet template under Content on D2L to help you outline and plan your paper. See further details and criteria below related to the assignment for these analysis papers.

**Critical Reading In-Class Writing (6):** These short in-class essays will be assigned in class periodically throughout the term as a way to help you think critically about the course texts and launch the day's class discussion. You will respond in writing to a short essay prompt based on the novel excerpt or short story, highlighting your insights and observations in a few well-composed paragraphs. To earn full credit for your response, you will need to post your writing by the deadline (typically by 8:30 a.m. on specific synchronous class days during which a following virtual discussion is scheduled).

**Online Discussions (6):** In lieu of synchronous class sessions periodically throughout the term, you will participate in online discussions with your classmates, responding to discussion prompts and then posting replies to your classmates' responses. These online discussions will be through the Discussions (under Communication) on D2L and like a virtual discussion, will take place within a specific window of time on the day a synchronous class would have taken place. No late posts or replies will be accepted after the discussion has ended.

**Final (take home) Exam (3-4 pages):** You will respond in writing to a series of prompts related to the course themes. Further details about the exam as well as copies of the essay prompts will be available the week before the exam is posted.

The point distribution will be approximately as follows:

Critical Reading In-Class Writing (6 x 10 points each)	60 points
Literary Analysis Paper #1	50 points
Literary Analysis Paper #2	50 points
Online Discussion Posts (6 x 10 points each)	60 points
Online Discussion Replies (12 x 2.5 points each)	30 points
Final (take home) Exam	50 points
<b>Total points</b>	<b>300 points</b>

Grading scale:

285	A (95%)	234	C+ (78%)	180	D- (60%)
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270	A- (90%)	225	C (75%)	Below 180	F
264	B+ (88%)	210	C- (70%)		
255	B (85%)	204	D+ (68%)		
240	B- (80%)	195	D (65%)		

### Course Policies:

**Attendance:** Your attendance is essential and expected at every class. I am aware that such things as emergencies, illnesses, unavoidable conflicts, etc., do occur, but please be in touch with me as soon as possible if you foresee having to miss class. Excessive absence (more than the equivalent of two weeks of class) could result in a failing grade for the course. When it comes time to tally final grades, if a grade is borderline, a student who has shown regular attendance and active class participation will be given a positive grade adjustment, while final grades of those students with a poor attendance record and spotty participation will be negatively affected. Attendance means not merely physical presence but coming to class prepared with the reading assigned read carefully and critically and being ready to contribute positively to class discussion. Sleeping during class does not count as attendance.

Because we do not have the luxury of in-person class together this semester as we would during non-Covid times, I will insist that for the duration of each synchronous class, **your video is turned on** and you are fully present and engaged in the course.

**Late Papers:** Written work is to be turned in on the due date indicated in the course schedule (an updated version of the sign-up sheet with your assigned due dates based on the dates you signed up for the literary analysis papers will be posted on D2L). Attendance on the day your paper is due is critical, as presenting your insights informally as a means of stimulating class discussion constitutes an important part of the assignment.

**About grading:** First, grades will be based on the quality of the product submitted, not on the amount of effort that went into that product. It is impossible for me to judge the amount of effort, and the fact that a lot of effort went into a bad paper doesn't necessarily make the paper a good one.

Second, academic integrity is expected in all work. Plagiarism, cheating, and other acts of misconduct will result in a failing grade for the assignment, and possibly the course. Please see the resources related to Academic Integrity on the course page on D2L for complete policies and procedures.

The course will focus on primary texts (novels and short stories). I am mainly interested in your own ideas and insights about the stories in this course, not those of other literary scholars and critics. However, depending on your topic, the use of secondary source material for historical background and context may make sense. If you do consult outside source material, please be mindful of the following:

St. Catherine University assumes that all students strive to attain the highest level of academic writing and academic honesty. To help you assure the originality of your writing and proper use of citations, St. Kate's provides Grammarly. All students can set up a free account. See the Grammarly Help Guide:

[<https://docs.google.com/a/stkate.edu/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=c3RrYXRILmVkdXxoZWxwLWd1aWRlc3xneDoyZTg5ZTU4NTgyNDBjM2E3&pli=1>] for set-up and use instructions.

Third, if you think your writing skills could use some further polishing, please seek assistance in the O'Neill Center for Academic Development. The Writing/Reading Center offers free one-on-one assistance with your paper. Trained peer tutors are available throughout the semester, and they can help

you in any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to writing the final draft. Workshops, handouts, and resources on a variety of topics, such as MLA and APA style, thesis construction, and grammar/punctuation rules are also available for you.

The Writing/Reading Center is located in the O'Neill Center for Academic Development in the lower level of the CdC. More information can be found at <https://www.stkate.edu/life/student-assistance/tutoring>

## **Learning Resources**

Learning Management System (LMS)

The course site in Brightspace D2L houses course announcements and resources such as course documents, websites, and course content.

## **Student Success Support Resources**

Student Success is a platform that offers students access to various support services that help them engage, connect, and succeed at St. Kate's. Visit the [Student Success platform](#) to view and schedule an appointment for support services such as Academic Advising, Disability Resources, Tutoring, and more.

## **Counseling Resources**

Balancing the demands of college, academics, work, and life responsibilities can be stressful. This year, there is the additional stress resulting from all of the fears and constraints of a global pandemic. St. Kate's offers counseling services to students at no charge. Please visit the Counseling Center website for more information: <https://www.stkate.edu/life/health-and-wellness/counseling-center>. You are also welcome to reach out to me if you'd like to talk things through and/or request that I refer you to one of the counselors for support. Please don't hesitate to seek help. We want you to succeed!

## **Maintaining an Inclusive and Accessible Class**

Your success in this class is important to me. I am committed to inclusive, universal learning that values the differences that students bring to the class. This means that our classroom, virtual spaces, practices, and interactions must be as civil and inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others thoughtfully are crucial to learning together.

This course is intended for all students, including those with mental or physical disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that tends to negatively affect one's equal access to education. If, at any point in the term, you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (but not required) to contact me. It is never too late to request accommodations -- our bodies and circumstances are continuously changing. I also encourage you to contact [Disability Resources](#). By making a plan through this office, you can ensure accommodation without disclosing your condition to course instructors.

## **Religious Holiday Accommodation**

In order to welcome students of diverse religious backgrounds, St. Catherine University recognizes that students must be absent from class to observe a religious holiday. You may observe a religious holiday without academic penalty, as long as you provide advance notice regarding the dates requiring absence from class, negotiate a plan with me for the coursework required during the absence, and complete the

work. Please contact me as soon as you know a religious holiday will conflict with one of our class sessions. Additional information on the policy is available on any course page on D2L (scroll down to bottom right corner). [Religious Holiday Accommodation Policy](#).

If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet your needs and the course requirements, working in conjunction with other campus offices to create a more accessible and inclusive learning environment, as appropriate.

Additional information about University policies are available through the Registrar's [Academic Catalog and University Policies webpage](#). The University's [Inclusive Excellence](#) and [Inclusive Excellence Resources for Students](#) provide full statements and resources.

### Course Schedule:

T	2/2	Introduction to the course; sign up for literary analysis paper due dates
Th	2/4	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch. 1-5
T	2/9	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch. 6-12
Th	2/11	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch. 13-18
T	2/16	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch.19-24
Th	2/18	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch. 25-34
T	2/23	<i>Dream Country</i> , Ch. 35-43
Th	2/25	<i>Lucy</i> , pp. 3-58
T	3/2	<i>Lucy</i> , pp. 59-108
Th	3/4	<i>Lucy</i> , pp. 109-164
T	3/9	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "The Joy Luck Club" "Scar"
Th	3/11	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "The Red Candle" "The Moon Lady"
T	3/16	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "Rules of the Game" "The Voice from the Wall"
Th	3/18	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "Half and Half" "Two Kinds"
T	3/23	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "Rice Husband" "Four Directions"
Th	3/25	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : "Without Wood"

“Best Quality”

T	3/30	[No class – Spring Break]
Th	4/1	[No class – Spring Break]
T	4/6	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : “Magpies”; “Waiting Between the Trees”
Th	4/8	<i>The Joy Luck Club</i> : “Double Face”; “A Pair of Tickets”
T	4/13	<i>The House on Mango Street</i>
Th	4/15	<i>The House on Mango Street</i>
T	4/20	<i>The Latehomecomer</i> , Prologue and Ch. 1-3
Th	4/22	<i>The Latehomecomer</i> , Ch. 4-7
T	4/27	<i>The Latehomecomer</i> , Ch. 8-11
Th	4/29	<i>The Latehomecomer</i> , Ch. 12-15 & Epilogue
T	5/4	“The Stations of the Sun,” Reese Okyong Kwon, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i> “Letting Go to America,” M. Evelina Galang in <i>Immigrant Voices</i>
Th	5/6	“Grandmother’s Garden,” Meena Alexander, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i> “The Science of Flight,” Yiyun Li, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i>
T	5/11	“Hot-Air Balloons,” Edwidge Danticat, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i> “Wal-Mart Has Plantains,” Sefi Atta, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i>
Th	5/13	“Mother the Big,” Porochista Khakpour, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i> “No Subject,” Carolina de Robertis, in <i>Immigrant Voices</i>
Th	5/20	<b>Final</b> (take home) <b>Exam due</b> ; submit to the Dropbox on D2L by 11:59 p.m.

**Guidelines for Literary Analysis Papers**

- (1) **Observe:** After you’ve read the literary work (novel excerpt or short story) thoroughly at least once, take note of your observations and questions about it. What things struck you about the setting, character development, portrayal and depiction, plot, use of language, or choices the author made stylistically? What things puzzled you and caused you to think further? Make note of quotations or short passages from the text to illustrate what struck you or which details you noted. Choose one aspect or element of the work for careful, in-depth study. For example, you may choose one character, one scene, or one symbol or image that you’ve observed.

- (2) **Analyze:** Think about your chosen element of the work from the perspective of women and immigrants. What makes this element significant or important to note? What themes emerge about the characters or the work based on your observations that contribute to your understanding of women’s experiences as women and immigrants?
- (3) **Interpret:** After you have analyzed your chosen element of the literary work, try to make sense of this analysis as it contributes to the overall meaning within the text. How does your interpretation contribute to your understanding of the literary work? Articulate your interpretation into a clear thesis statement.
- (4) **Compose:** When the work of analysis and interpretation has been done (when you’ve organized your notes), put your ideas together in a coherent framework with your thesis stated clearly followed by evidence supported by concrete examples (quotations and direct references) from the text. For any successful literary analysis, you will want to prove your claim about the text through the use of concrete evidence and support from the text itself. Locate your remarks within the text specifically and in detail. Please use MLA format for your citations. Consult the criteria below as a checklist for your paper.

Criteria for Paper Assignments (sample paper evaluation form)

ENGL/WOST2290 Paper Assessment

Paper title: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Writer’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

This paper

clearly articulates a main thesis & sustains it logically & coherently	<b>excellent</b>	<b>very good</b>	<b>adequate</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>
presents argument in a coherent, organized manner with transitions	<b>excellent</b>	<b>very good</b>	<b>adequate</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>
supports argument using carefully selected concrete examples from the primary text	<b>excellent</b>	<b>very good</b>	<b>adequate</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>
cohesively and accurately contextualizes & integrates selected quotations from the primary text	<b>excellent</b>	<b>very good</b>	<b>adequate</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>
contains a sense of the writer’s voice &	<b>excellent</b>	<b>very good</b>	<b>adequate</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>



an appropriate tone

follows conventions of standard written English, including correct grammar, mechanics, word choice & format

**excellent**

**very good**

**adequate**

**fair**

**poor**

follows literary conventions including using present tense, avoiding plot summary, using proper citation for author and title

**excellent**

**very good**

**adequate**

**fair**

**poor**

uses proper MLA parenthetical citation format

**excellent**

**very good**

**adequate**

**fair**

**poor**

includes an engaging title that identifies the paper's focus

**excellent**

**very good**

**adequate**

**fair**

**poor**