



Course Syllabus: Texas Literature
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
ENGL 5953
Fall 2024: August 26-December 6, 2024

Contact Information

Instructor: Greg Giddings
Office: BW 235
Office hours: TR: 8:30-9:30 and W: 9:00-12:00
Office phone: (940) 397-4476
E-mail: greg.giddings@msutexas.edu

Course Goals

- Through a close reading of Texas authors, the class will connect motifs and themes among the varied texts, and students will better understand the culture of those who have lived, contemplated and written about life in the Lone Star state.
- Students will write extensively, honing both their critical thinking and compositional skills.

Required Books

- Larry McMurtry: *Horseman, Pass By*
- Jim Black: *River Season*
- Jan Reid: *The Bullet Meant for Me*
- Sandra Scofield: *Mysteries of Love and Grief* and *Swim*
- John Graves: *Goodbye to a River*
- John Williams: *Stoner*
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Student Handbook

Refer to the [Student Handbook](#).

Final Exam

This course has no final exam.

Extra Credit

The instructor does not accept extra credit assignments.

Late Work

You may submit a late paper or assignment at a penalty of 10 points. The late-submission period ends 24 hours after the deadline.

Grading

This class will not use the plus/minus grading system. In this class, the following numerical equivalents for final grades are used: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59-0 Letter grades have the following significance: A indicates excellent work, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D indicates passing work, F indicates failing work. Consequently, an essay that meets the basic requirements earns a C, not an A or B. If you wish to earn As and Bs, you will have to work hard to produce better than satisfactory, or average, writing.

Assignments	Percentage
Class Participation (Discussion Boards)	20
Eight short, response papers	40
Two formal, academic essays	30
One presentation	10
Total	100

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 29, 2024

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 25, 2024 (4:00 PM)

Refer to [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#).

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, the drop boxes for submitting papers, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program.

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty is cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation in the text and a listing in "Works Cited")—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. At the least, plagiarism will result in an F on an assignment. At the worst it will result in an F in the course. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

Use of AI (ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc.) is forbidden. I want to know what you think, not what a machine says. Because AI-generated work is clearly plagiarized, an AI submission will earn a zero for that assignment.

Attendance and Participation

ENGL 5953 is obviously an online class. Despite our inability to meet regularly in person, I will host a weekly Zoom call each Tuesday evening at 6:00 pm. While this class is not required, please make every effort to join me and your classmates as we discuss the week's readings and assignments.

Midterm Grades

In order to help you keep track of your progress toward course objectives, the instructor provides a Midterm Progress Report through Navigate. Your Midterm grade is not reported on your transcript, nor is it calculated in your cumulative GPA. It simply gives you an idea of where you stand at the midpoint of the semester. If you are not doing satisfactory work at the midway point you should make an appointment with the instructor and consider visiting TASP.

Safe Zone Statement

The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are

informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage:

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Course Schedule

The course schedule is a separate document.