Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S. Syllabus

ENGL 260 Summer 2022

# Class Details

Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM and Thursdays from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM Eastern.

Class will meet via Zoom.

# Instructor

Dr. Hayley Stefan (she/her/hers). Feel free to refer to me Dr. Stefan or Professor Stefan.

My email is hstefan@holycross.edu. I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours. If you don’t hear back from me after 48 hours, please feel free to send me a nudge or follow-up email.

# Office Hours

Monday & Wednesday 2-3 PM via Zoom and other times by appointment.

Office hours are designated weekly times for you to come chat about class, your work, or any questions you might have. If my standing hours don’t work for you, please email me if you’d like to meet & we can find a time that works for you.

# Course Description

This course centers literature by writers whose identities have marked them as historically “other” to a predominantly white European body of works, including African American, Asian American, Indigenous, & Latinx authors, among others. Through our reading, discussion, & student research, our class will consider how literature influences & responds to complex conversations about race, ethnicity, nationality, & identity. Together we will ask what brings together “multi-ethnic literature” as a field, as well as how variations across authors, content, & form resist easy categorization. Alongside discussion of major & lesser-known works of multi-ethnic literature, we will contextualize our reading with the crucial role of activism in the development of this field & of ethnic studies programs. Our class will bridge the field’s history & contemporary moment through multi-ethnic U.S. writers’ reflections of their roles in education & publishing today via trends like #OwnVoices & the We Need Diverse Books organization. We will examine these concepts through & with attention to various forms, including but not limited to comics, creative nonfiction, novels, poetry, & short stories, from multiple genres.

# Learning Goals

* Learn about the creation & development of Ethnic Studies as a discipline
* Think critically about how education, arts, & activism relate to each other
* Practice archival research
* Strengthen your critical comprehension & close reading skills
* Engage with literature intersectionally, examining texts in conversation with multiple identity categories, including race, gender, sexuality, disability, & class
* Reflect on the role of literary form as it shapes meaning
* Enjoy reading & engaging with multi-ethnic literature

# Meeting Your Basic Needs

We will be learning a lot this semester, but your wellbeing remains the most important. If you are having difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, please talk with me (if you are comfortable doing so), so that I can put you in touch with resources to help you, including the Student Emergency Aid Committee, which you can learn more about here: <https://www.holycross.edu/student-affairs/resources/student-emergency-aid-committee>. We are still in the middle of a pandemic, so let’s extend care to one another when we can.

# Required Texts

1. Octavia Butler, Kindred

2. Julie Otsuka, When the Emperor Was Divine

I will provide additional texts for you online via Canvas.

You can use any publisher or edition of these texts. You're also welcome to engage with our texts in whatever format works best for you (e.g., audiobook, paperback, eBook, etc.), so long as you actively question as you read and are prepared to discuss how its format influences the way you read it.

If you are unable to afford course materials, please reach out to Financial Aid or request books via the Holy Cross Lending Library, where they may be able to help. Books can be purchased through the Holy Cross Bookstore or other retailers. Pro tip: You can search for books on bookfinder.com to see the varied prices and places you can buy copies. You can also borrow books through your local library via the OverDrive app.

# Mutual Respect

This class is founded on the basis of mutual respect & shared humanity. In line with respecting others, we will use the names and pronouns that members of this class ask us to use. [If these change across the semester, please also share with me and/or the class (as you feel comfortable) the name & pronouns you would like for us to use for you.]

Over the semester, we will read texts that introduce complex, multiply diverse, and occasionally controversial subjects. I want this class to be a space in which we all feel safe sharing our thoughts, ideas, and opinions—even when these conversations are uncomfortable. We will practice thinking about what it means to sit with this discomfort as we engage ideas that stretch our experience or knowledge.

Regardless of how you approach class content, your thoughts and ideas as developing scholars are important and valuable. One of the goals of college is to challenge us to apply pressure about what we know (and all that we don’t know). I will never ask you to change your mind, but I will expect it will remain open in this course.

That said, dehumanizing others stops us all from learning, and students who make implicitly violent or dehumanizing remarks will be asked to leave immediately & will forego engagement credit for that day’s work.

# Technology

* Email: Major announcements from me will be sent via your Holy Cross email. I recommend checking your email in the morning before class, just in case there are any changes or cancellations.
* Hypothesis: We will use the browser extension Hypothesis to analyze & annotate texts together. It works best with Google Chrome, but there are options for other browsers.
* Zoom: Our classes will be held via Zoom in the beginning of the semester. You can use the microphone or chat to participate, but you will never be required to have your camera on.
* Canvas: Homework will be listed & submitted on Canvas. To prepare for class or to review a class, check the Weekly Modules available on our Canvas class shell. Each week will have an overview of the activities for each class & will list any homework due or upcoming. If homework is scheduled to be submitted on a day when we have class, please submit it on Canvas by class time. If homework is scheduled to be submitted on a day when we do not have class, please submit it on Canvas by the "end of the day," which Canvas considers 11:59 PM.

# Submitting Work

If you need to hand in something after its planned due date, that is okay. I do not give penalties or deduct "points" for late work. Each assignment is designed for you to practice or learn new ideas, not to measure how busy you are or how to "manage time." If you’re planning to submit your work one day or so beyond the due date, please consider your extension already granted. If you need an extended due date beyond two days after the due date, please email me. I'll have us meet to set up a plan of action and coordinate a new date for you to submit the assignment. I want to make sure that we both have a copy of these plans of action so that you have a clear sense of what you need to accomplish and so I know best how I can help you and when to expect the work.

# Policies and Resources

## Academic Integrity

Developing your ideas is the basis of our class. Make sure that your work authentically represents your ideas and credits others for theirs. Submitting others’ ideas as your own without crediting them is plagiarism, even if it is unintentional. All work in our class should be formatted and cited according to MLA’s 9th edition guidelines. Please review Holy Cross’s Academic Integrity Policy here: <https://catalog.holycross.edu/requirements-policies/academic-policies/#academicintegritytext>. You can also view the Holy Cross English Department’s statement on “Academic Honesty” here: <https://www.holycross.edu/academics/programs/english/academic-honesty>.

## Attendance and Absences

Our class will largely run synchronously via Zoom. Your presence in class is crucial to learning and engaging with your classmates’ ideas. Your classmates and I will depend on you to be in class. If you are unable to attend a session for any reason, please send me an email to let me know and reach out to your classmates to get a sense of what you missed. See Holy Cross’s policies here: <https://catalog.holycross.edu/requirements-policies/academic-policies/#coursepoliciestext>.

## Resources for Students

Holy Cross offers a variety of resources to help you learn & navigate college life. While the Writer’s Workshop is closed during the summer, you can access their many guides here: <https://www.holycross.edu/academics/support-and-resources/center-for-writing/student-resources>. At any point, you can reach out to your Class Dean for guidance and support. You can find their contact information here: <https://www.holycross.edu/mentored-learning/class-deans>. And if there's ever anything I can do to help, I'm more than happy to listen.

## Accessibility and Accommodations

I know that we each learn through diverse methods, and my goal is to make our course as accessible as possible. This means we will work with methods and documents that prioritize how we process information, following the guidelines of the Universal Design for Learning. I know that our daily life directly affects how we engage in our education. This past year has shown us how true this is. Please email or meet with me, as you feel comfortable, to discuss possible adjustments or alternative arrangements, as needed for homework, exams, or class.

Students may also request formal academic accommodations, housing and dining accommodations, modifications to college policies, procedures, and rules; environmental adjustments, and auxiliary aids and services through Holy Cross. Additional policies and procedures regarding accommodations can be found on the Office of Accessibility Services webpages here: <https://www.holycross.edu/health-wellness-and-access/office-accessibility-services>.

# Course Components & Assessment

## Engagement-Based Grading

Our grading style evaluates students based on engagement & completion, in which students earn credit for the work they complete, rather than losing credit for work not completed. The goal here is to encourage students to practice the skills baked into each assignment, rather than submit rushed work to meet a deadline. You will complete work for each of the four components of our course below, each worth a percentage of your course grade. Rather than a grade for each assignment, I will send you a detailed note with my feedback on your work. I will distribute updated progress reports after each assignment to give you a sense of your grade for each of the four components across the summer.

## Participation, worth 20%

Participating in our class can take many shapes. I've outlined some options for getting credit for participating in our class on the syllabus. Each week, I ask that you submit a Participation Self-Checkout form. This asks you to report back on how you engaged in & were a part of our class community this week. Reflecting on the week and how you thought about our course content is a great way to process information and strengthen your understanding of it.

## Discussion Assignment, worth 25%

You will each be in charge of generating discussing topics and questions for one class session. This will involve analyzing a specific portion of the text from our class & guiding discussion through questions about the text & bringing in a current event, historical references, critical resource, or popular artifact that contextualizes our class discussion. You will share these questions/topics with the class and separating submit a short paper to me outlining what you hope you & your classmates might take away from this class session and how you have brought ideas and information together. We will schedule these in the first week of class so that they are set for you in the future*.*

## Compositions, worth 30%

We will practice critical analysis & research this summer in writing assignments that explore the popular reception of multi-ethnic fiction and discuss how the reviews and original text itself position it as a work of “multi-ethnic” or “ethnic” fiction. We will build up to a longer composition with practice reading popular book reviews, a proposal, and draft workshops that help you synthesize information & put forth your own ideas.

## Creative Engagement Assignments, worth 25%

Twice over the summer you will complete a project that asks you to critically & imaginatively engage with multi-ethnic literature in a way that differs from the conventional college essay.

## Grade Breakdown

An A grade is a 96.

An A- grade is a 92.

A B+ grade is an 89.

A B grade is an 86.

A B- grade is an 82.

A C+ grade is a 79.

A C grade is a 76.

A C- grade is a 72.

A D+ grade is a 69.

A D grade is a 66.

An F grade is 65 and lower.

# **SCHEDULE**

Below is a tentative weekly outline of what we will be focusing on in each class. I will notify you in advance of any minor changes. The most accurate daily assignments and reading will be on Canvas.

## Week 1

Mon., June 6: Overview of semester & development of the genre.

Weds., June 8: Toshio Mori’s “Tomorrow Is Coming, Children.”

Thurs., June 9: The beginning of Multi-Ethnic Literature & Ethnic Studies.

## Week 2

Mon., June 13: Creative Engagement Assignment #1.

Weds., June 15: Julie Otsuka’s When the Emperor Was Divine.

Thurs., June 16: Short Story Circles.

## Week 3

Mon., June 20: Julie Otsuka’s When the Emperor Was Divine.

Weds., June 22: Julie Otsuka’s When the Emperor Was Divine.

Thurs., June 23: Short Story Circles.

## Week 4

Mon., June 27: Octavia Butler’s Kindred.

Weds., June 29: Octavia Butler’s Kindred.

Thurs., June 30: Short Story Circles.

Week 5

Mon., July 4: No class!

Weds., July 6: Octavia Butler’s Kindred.

Thurs., July 7: Short Story Circles.

## Week 6

Mon., July 11: Writing Workshops.

Weds., July 13: Creative Engagement Assignment #2.

Thurs., July 14: Reviewing the semester.