

Literature of the **A** **AMERICAN** **MIDWEST**

Syllabus (brief version)

Session 4: March 11, 2019 – May 2, 2019

Instructor: Kim Groninga

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Thursdays 5:30 to 10:00 p.m. — Waterloo Center

Online Component: By noon each Friday the instructor will post an additional reading or video on uiu.learn in response to the Thursday topic(s) of discussion. Students will be responsible for reading/viewing the post and responding to it on the discussion board. Individual instructions will be included with each post.

Required Textbooks

My Antonia by Willa Cather (isbn: 978-1-583-48509-5)

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote (isbn: 978-0-679-74558-7)

Four Plays by William Inge (isbn: 978-0-8021-3209-3)

Winesburg, Ohio by Sherwood Anderson (isbn: 978-0-533-21439-0)

Giants in the Earth by o.e. Rolvaag (isbn: 978-0-06-093193-3)

Participation/Attendance

200 points (25 points per class)

Much of the work done in class is hands-on and in groups and cannot be made up. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor or one of your fellow students to borrow notes and/or catch up to speed. Attendance will be taken twice nightly: at the beginning of class and after break. You must be present and engaged at both halves in order to retain full participation points. You must also check for and complete the Friday post assignment.

Please note: There are potential pop quizzes in this class which will most likely cover the assigned readings.

ASSIGNMENTS

Group Author Presentation: 100 points

Students will be divided into four groups, and each group will be assigned one of the following authors: Gwendolyn Brooks, Joy Harjo, Robert Hayden, Theodore Roethke. Your group will present a 20-minute introduction to the author. Do not fill your presentation with boring facts (birth and death dates, list of books written, parents' names). Instead, share 8 of their poems with us and, in between poems, make the author come alive somehow. Some ideas: Portray interesting facets of their personality. Print out a giant portrait of them to place up front. Find some footage of them reading one or two of their eight poems you chose. (You must read the rest.) Dig to see if there was any scandal in their biography. Three-dimensional visual aids are strongly encouraged. Avoid powerpoint, please.

Gwendolyn Brooks: Taryn & Tracey

Robert Hayden: Yesenia & Renee

Theodore Roethke: Travis & Sarah

General Education Task/Poetry Explication: 100 points

The General Education Task Assignment will consist of a 4- to 5-page poetry explication using proper APA style format on one work of the student's choice from one of the following Midwestern poets: Gwendolyn Brooks, Joy Harjo, Robert Hayden, Theodore Roethke. The explication should not only address theme and craft choices made by the author but should also address the historical context of the poem and the poem's specific Midwestern characteristics.

Group Dramatic Reading: 100 points

Each student will be assigned a role in *Bus Stop*. They will be responsible for putting together a "rehearsal costume" for their character and reading their character's lines at the assigned time for their play. Students will complete a character worksheet for their assigned character. No "blocking" or "props" are required, and students need not memorize their lines. An effective reading will be one that is engaging and smoothly presented with characters speaking their lines with conviction.

CAST

Elma Duckworth	Yesenia Carillo
Grace	Taryn Colby & Renee Carpenter
Will Masters	TBD
Cherie	Tracey Gibson & Sarah Temple
Dr. Gerald Lyman	Joe Frenna (guest local actor)
Carl	TBD
Virgil Blessing	Anthony John (guest local actor)
Bo Decker	Travis Langdale
Stage Directions	Sam Mensinger (guest local actor)

((Additional assignments may be announced in class.))

*Note: Late work will drop 10 points for each week it is past due.

EXAMS: A final exam in essay format will be given and will be worth 200 points.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: March 14

Go over syllabus

Assign Author Presentation Groups

Go to script reading of local film production company's newest project IngrID

Week 2: March 21

Go over brief syllabus

Read: *My Antonia* (introduction and books 1-2)

Introduction to Midwestern Literature

Work time for groups

Week 3: March 28

Read: *My Antonia* (books 3-5)

View: *My Antonia* (film)

Group Author Presentations Due

Week 4: April 4

Read: *In Cold Blood* (parts 1 and 2)

View *Fargo* and discuss

Week 5: April 11

Read: *In Cold Blood* (parts 3 and 4)

View: *Capote* (film)

General Education Paper Due

Read-through scenes from *Bus Stop* (in-class activity)

Week 6: April 18

Staged Reading of Bus Stop Due

Week 7: April 25 (Kim gone—sub or alternate assignment)

Read: *Winesburg, Ohio* (all)

Week 8: May 2

Final Exam