

FICTION OF THE AMERICAN WEST

English 351

Course Objectives and Procedures

Fiction of the American West will introduce students to literature genres and authors who write and contribute to our literary tradition. In our study of these writings, we will use the fundamental tools of literary interpretation in the discussion, analysis, and evaluation of the literature. We will incorporate some principal interpretative theories: formalism, psychological, gender studies, reader-response, and new historicism.. Each of these theories will provide specific insights into literary texts that invite analysis from many different perspectives. We will also engage in thoughtful writing and dialogue to arrive at a richer understanding of the literary tradition of the American West.

□ Course Goals

- ❖ Apply BYU-Idaho Learning Model to prepare, teach one another, and ponder/prove.
- ❖ Appreciate literary texts as sources of intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic experiences.
- ❖ Explore critical theories that inform the ways experienced readers respond to literature.
- ❖ Develop critical reading skills to analyze short and long fiction
- ❖ Understand the conventions of literature.
- ❖ Apply the critical vocabulary describing literature.
- ❖ Use textual evidence to support literary interpretations.
- ❖ Develop skills for literary research and present information accurately.
- ❖ Document formal writing according to 2009 MLA guidelines.
- ❖ Adapt literary interpretations to a general, non-academic audience.

A.B. Guthrie's *The Big Sky*

OR

A.B. Guthrie's *The Way West*

Mark Twain's *Roughing It* (chp. 1-41)

OR

Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*

OR

John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*

Louis L'Amour's *The Daybreakers*

OR

Larry McMurtrey's *Horseman, Pass By*

Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima*

OR

James Welch's *Fools Crow*

OR

Ruth McCunn's *A Thousand Pieces of Gold*

□ Texts

Students frequently may choose between two books for the week's reading. The choices will be connected with the word "OR." Any book edition will be fine.

Whole Class Readings

John Jake's *A Century of Great Western Stories*, Forge, 2000.

Individual Reading Choices

Owen Wister's *The Virginian*

OR

Wallace Stegner's *Angle of Repose*

Zane Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage*

OR

Maureen Whipple's *The Giant Joshua*

□ Organization of English 351

English 351 has the following major assignments:

Spori Literary Review Articles

Students will write three articles for the class magazine *Spori Literary Review*. Each article will be 750-1000 words). The articles demonstrate critical analysis directed towards a non-academic audience.

These articles can be written with a partner. These articles will become a class magazine representing students' interactions with the literature.

Critical Literary Annotated Bibliography

Students will read scholarly criticism on any of the works we read for class. Students will write an annotated bibliography entry (150 words) on each article.

Students will combine five annotated bibliography entries three times a semester. These bibliographies can be written with a partner. (10 points for each entry—150 points total).

Literary Discussion Questions

For every class period, each student will generate from that day's readings a total of 5 discussion questions. These questions will be a combination of factual, interpretive, and evaluative questioning. These questions will start each class activity. Students will assemble these questions into a packet to submit at three times a semester (5 points for each day's questions).

Reading Responses

Students will regularly respond to their readings through informal writings. Often these will occur during class and double as attendance and preparation checks. These cannot be made up. (5 points for each response.)

LATE ASSIGNMENTS **NOT ACCEPTED**

❑ Grading and Evaluation

The teacher will evaluate all formal assignments and comment on what works well and offer suggestions for improvement. The teacher will assign a letter grade and record a number grade in the roll book. Most often the number grade follows the breakdown below

A = 95%	C = 75%
A- = 92%	C- = 72%
B+ = 88%	D+ = 68%
B = 85%	D = 65%
B- = 82%	D- = 62%
C+ = 78%	F = 59%

The teacher reserves the right to slightly alter the number points depending on the student's performance. For example, instead of recording a 92% for an A-, the teacher may record a 90%.

❑ Teacher Conferencing

Most student questions and concerns are handled in the classroom through class or individual discussion. Students may schedule an appointment with the teacher for more extended conferencing. Rarely will the teacher read an entire document during a conference but rather will assist the student in identifying the writing frustration and in developing options to solve the communication problems.

Students who wish to conference with the teacher about a graded paper must meet the following two conditions (there are no rewrite options to improve a graded assignment):

1. Wait 24 hours before making an appointment with the teacher.
2. Come to the appointment with a list of suggestions to improve the paper. The teacher will discuss those options with the student.

❑ Attendance Requirements

The student has the responsibility to attend class and to be prepared for class. If the student misses class, the student should contact the teacher out of courtesy via office phone-mail or email **prior** to class.

This is a highly interactive course. The success of this course and your individual success depends on your regular presence and promptness, your thorough preparation for class, and your active participation within class. You may have **three class absences without a grade penalty.**

Please note: I make no distinction between "excused" and "unexcused" absence. You are responsible for saving your absence leave to accommodate unexpected illness or personal / family need.

Excessive absence will result in *deduction from final average of 1 percentage point per hour of absence over the limit.* If you miss more than four class periods, you will not be able to earn an A in the course. If you miss more than six class periods, the highest grade you can earn in the course is a C. If you miss eight or more classes, you will earn an F in the course.

At the end of the semester, if you have **perfect attendance**, you will have a **bonus of 1 percentage point added to your final average.**

❑ E-mail

Students must have access to BYU-Idaho e-mail. If students prefer other email servers, students should arrange with their carriers to forward their campus email directly to them.

❑ Academic Honesty

"BYU-Idaho students should seek to be totally honest in all their dealings. They should complete their own work and be evaluated for that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism,

fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.”

This course will adhere to procedures for handling incidents of academic dishonesty found in the *BYU-Idaho Catalog, 2009-2010*, pp. 52-53.

❑ Special Limitations

To accommodate students with special learning, physical, emotional, mental, social, or other limitations, the student must notify the teacher the first week of class. By law, BYU-Idaho is only required to assist those students who make these issues known during the first week.

❑ Course Content

If students find an assigned reading offensive or objectionable for any reason, students have the option to choose the other reading.

❑ Caveat

The teacher reserves the right to make changes in course content and policy at any time during the semester.

**FICTION OF THE AMERICAN WEST
ENGLISH 351:1
R. KELLER
SPRING 2010**

Week 1

Apr 21 W Introduction to English 351

23 F Cunningham, “The Tin Star,” 35
London, “All Gold Canyon,” 89

Week 2

26 M Bower, “The Lamb of the Flying U,”
105
Kelton, “The Burial of Letty Strayhorn,”
132

28 W Estleman, “Hell on the Draw,” 141
Swarhout, “The Attack on the
Mountain,” 152

30 F *High Noon* (film)

OR
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
(film)

Week 3

May 3 M Wister, *The Virginian*
OR

Stegner, *Angle of Repose*

5 W Wister, *The Virginian*
OR
Stegner, *Angle of Repose*

7 F Wister, *The Virginian*
OR
Stegner, *Angle of Repose*

Week 4

10 M *Red River* (film)
OR
Man from Snowy River (film)

12 W Pronzini, “Fear,” 162
Curry, “Geranium House,” 170

14 F Rhodes, “The Trouble Man,” 179
Beach, “The Weight of Obligation,” 194

Week 5

17 M Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage*
OR
Whipple, *The Giant Joshua*

19 W Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage*
OR
Whipple, *The Giant Joshua*

21 F Article 1 Draft Due
Grey, *Riders of the Purple Sage*
OR
Whipple, *The Giant Joshua*

Week 6

24 M **Article 1 Due**
The Searchers (film)
OR
The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance
(film)

26 W Schaefer, “Sergeant Houck,” 222
Hunter, “The Killing at Triple Tree,” 258

28 F **Discussion Questions I Due**
Muller, “Sweet Cactus Wine,” 270
Garfield, “Peace Officer,” 279

Week 7

31 M Memorial Day

Jun 2 W **Annotated Bibliography I Due**
Guthrie, *The Big Sky*
OR
Guthrie, *The Way West*

4 F Guthrie *The Big Sky*
OR
Guthrie, *The Way West*

Week 8

7 M *Shane* (film)
OR
The Magnificent Seven (film)

9 W Swain, "Gamblin' Man," 381
Haycox, "Stage to Lordsburg" 413

11 F Savage, "King of the Buckskin Breed,"
426

Week 9

14 M Twain, *Roughing It*, Chps. 1-41
OR
Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*
OR
Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

16 W Twain, *Roughing It*, Chps. 1-41
OR
Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*
OR
Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

18 F Twain, *Roughing It*, Chps. 1-41
OR
Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*
OR
Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

Week 10

21 M **Annotated Bibliography 2 Due**
Bonham, "Burn Him Out," 447
Gulick, "The Shaming of Broken Horn"

23 W **Discussion Questions 2 Due**
Steinbeck Film—Choose ONE
Cannery Row
East of Eden
The Grapes of Wrath
Of Mice or Men
Red Pony

25 F Article 2 Draft Due
Hamilton, "The Guns of William
Longley," 472
Brand, "Wine on the Desert," 484

Week 11

28 M **Article 2 Due**
L'Amour, *The Day Breakers*
OR
McMurtrey, *Horseman, Pass By*

30 W L'Amour, *The Day Breakers*
OR
McMurtrey, *Horseman, Pass By*

Jul 2 F L'Amour, *The Day Breakers*
OR
McMurtrey, *Horseman, Pass By*

Week 12

5 M Independence Day Observed

7 W *Hud* (film)
OR
O Pioneers (film)
Gorman, *Wolf Moon*, 291-335

9 F Gorman, *Wolf Moon*, 335-380

Week 13

12 M Anaya, *Bless Me Ultima*
OR
McCunn, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*
OR
Welch, *Fools Crow*

14 W **Annotated Bibliography 3 Due**
Anaya, *Bless Me Ultima*
OR
McCunn, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*
OR
Welch, *Fools Crow*

16 F Article 3 Draft Due
Anaya, *Bless Me Ultima*
OR
McCunn, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*
OR
Welch, *Fools Crow*

Week 14

19 M **Article 3 Due**
Grey, "Tappan's Burro," 490

21 W **Discussion Questions 3 Due**
Wister, "Timberline," 79

22 TH Final (2:00-3:30)
