

# F ICTION OF THE AMERICAN IMMIGRANT

English 351

## Course Objectives and Procedures

Fiction of the American Immigrant 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, new historicism, and ecocriticism. 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 Immigrant.

### □ Course Goals

- ❖ Apply BYU-Idaho Learning Model to prepare, teach one another, and ponder/prove.
- ❖ Understand and appreciate how literary elements work within a text.
- ❖ Explore critical theories that inform the ways experienced readers respond to literature.
- ❖ Apply literary elements and critical theories to personal interpretations of literature.

### □ Texts

Students frequently may choose between two books for the week's reading. The choices will be connected with the word "OR." I recommend you browse summaries online to determine which book interests you. Any book edition will be fine.

#### Whole Class Readings

Maria Mazziotti Gillan, and Jennifer Gillan, eds.  
*Growing Up Ethnic in America: Contemporary Fiction About Learning to Be American*. New York: Penguin, 1999. Print.

#### Individual Reading Choices

##### *American Immigration*

Abraham Cahan, *Yekl* OR *The Imported Bridegroom*  
 OR  
 Tina de Rosa, *Paper Fish*  
 OR  
 Nahid Rachlin, *Foreigner*

##### *Asian American*

Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*  
 OR  
 Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*  
 OR  
 Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart*

##### *Hispanic American*

Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*  
 OR  
 José Antonio Villarreal, *Pocho*  
 OR  
 Estela Trambley, *Trini*

##### *Jewish American*

Anzia Yezierska, *The Bread Givers*  
 OR  
 Isaac Bashivez Singer, *Enemies, A Love Story*  
 OR  
 Bernard Malamud, *The Assistant*

##### *European American*

Ole Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*  
 OR  
 Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*  
 OR  
 Mario Puzo, *The Fortunate Pilgrim*

##### *Caribbean American*

Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*  
 OR  
 Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*

## ❑ Organization of English 351

English 351 has the following major assignments:

### ***Spori Literary Review* Articles**

Students will write three analytical insight articles for the mock class magazine *Spori Literary Review*. Each article will be 750-1000 words). The articles demonstrate critical analysis directed towards a non-academic audience. Each article is 100 points (300 points total).

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).

### **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 write 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**.



OR  
 Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*  
 OR  
 Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart*

Feb 2 W Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*  
 OR  
 Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*  
 OR  
 Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart*

4 F Article 1 Draft Due  
 Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club*  
 OR  
 Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*  
 OR  
 Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart*

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### Lesson 5

7 M **Article 1 Due**  
 Mary Bucci Bush, "Drowning," 136  
 Liz Rosenberg, "Magic," 149

9 W Daniel Asa Rose, "The Cossacks of Connecticut," 156  
 Sandra Cisneros, "Mericans," 169

11 F **Discussion Questions I Due**  
 Gish Jen, "What Means Switch," 175  
 Laura Boss, "Myrna and Me," 197

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### Lesson 6

14 M Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*  
 OR  
 José Antonio Villarreal, *Pocho*  
 OR  
 Estela Trambley, *Trini*

16 W **Annotated Bibliography I Due**  
 Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*  
 OR  
 José Antonio Villarreal, *Pocho*  
 OR  
 Estela Trambley, *Trini*

18 F Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*  
 OR  
 José Antonio Villarreal, *Pocho*  
 OR  
 Estela Trambley, *Trini*

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### Lesson 7

21 M President's Day (no class)

23 W Bruce Jacobs, "Dinner with Father," 200  
 Beena Kamlani, "Brandy Cake," 205

25 F Enid, Dame, "Drowning Kittens," 227  
 Diane Glancy, "Portrait of the Lone Survivor," 238

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### Lesson 8

28 M Anzia Yezierska, *The Bread Givers*  
 OR  
 Isaac Bashivez Singer, *Enemies, A Love Story*  
 OR  
 Bernard Malamud, *The Assistant*

Mar 2 W Anzia Yezierska, *The Bread Givers*  
 OR  
 Isaac Bashivez Singer, *Enemies, A Love Story*  
 OR  
 Bernard Malamud, *The Assistant*

4 F Anzia Yezierska, *The Bread Givers*  
 OR  
 Isaac Bashivez Singer, *Enemies, A Love Story*  
 OR  
 Bernard Malamud, *The Assistant*

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### Lesson 9

7 M **Annotated Bibliography 2 Due**  
 Joseph Geha, "Holy Toledo," 242  
 Maria Mazziotti Gillan, "Carlton Fredericks and My Mother," 260

9 W **Discussion Questions 2 Due**  
 Afaa Michael Weaver, "Honey Boy," 268  
 Sherman Alexie, "This is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona," 287

11 F Article 2 Draft Due  
 Veronica Chambers, from *Mama's Girl*, 302  
 Diane di Prima, from *Recollections of My Life as a Woman*, 307

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**Lesson 10**

- 14 M **Article 2 Due**  
 Ole Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*  
 OR  
 Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*  
 OR  
 Mario Puzo, *The Fortunate Pilgrim*
- 16 W Ole Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*  
 OR  
 Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*  
 OR  
 Mario Puzo, *The Fortunate Pilgrim*
- 18 F Ole Rølvaag, *Giants in the Earth*  
 OR  
 Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*  
 OR  
 Mario Puzo, *The Fortunate Pilgrim*

**Lesson 11**

- 21 M Naomi Shihab Nye, "Red Velvet Dress,"  
 312  
 Fred I. Gardaphé, "Grandpa's  
 'Chicaudies,'" 320
- 23 W Roshni Rustomji, "Thanksgiving in a  
 Monsoonless Land," 326  
 Simon J. Ortiz, "To Change in a Good  
 Way," 342
- 25 F Article 3 Draft Due  
 Helena María Viramontes, "The Moths,"  
 349  
 Sylvia A. Watanabe, "Talking to the  
 Dead," 356

**Lesson 12**

- 28 M **Annotated Bibliography 3 Due**  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*  
 OR  
 Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*
- 30 W **Article 3 Due**  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*  
 OR  
 Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*
- Apr 1 F **Discussion Questions 3 Due**  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*  
 OR  
 Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*

**Week 13**

- 4 M Personal Immigrant Stories  
 Review for Final
- 6 W Personal Immigrant Stories  
 Review for Final
- 8 F Final (2:00-3:30:45-10:15)