

Fall 2015

## ENGL 2041

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**English 2041  
Fall 2015  
Major American Writers**

**Dr. Janet Barnwell Smith**

**ENGL 2041 Sec 02: Tues Th 9:30 – 10:45 LA 326**

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Office Hours: **Monday 2:00 – 3:00**

**Tuesday 1:00-2:30**

**Thursday 1:00 2:30**

**Friday 2:00 – 3:00**

Also by appointment (Please do not hesitate to ask if you need an alternative time to meet)

**Course textbooks:** Whether you plan to buy the books from the UNO bookstore or not, please log on to the UNO Bookstore website via the A-Z list on the UNO homepage. **Please buy specific paperback editions;** no electronic versions of texts

Baym, *Norton Anthology of American Literature*: Shorter Paperback version. W. W. Norton & Company

Edition: 8th

ISBN: 9780393918854

Fitzgerald, *Great Gatsby*. Simon & Schuster

ISBN: 9780743273565

I will provide handouts on **Moodle** for *additional readings* which you'll be asked to print and bring to class

**Introduction to 2041**

Welcome to English 2041. Please be sure that you are eligible to be in this English course. You should have completed all the composition requirements, including passing ENGL 1158 or receiving adequate transfer credit with approval from the English department. Please ask me if you have questions about your placement. If you are not eligible, you may be purged from the course.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

English 2041, Major American Writers, is an introductory course designed to acquaint students with methods for reading and interpreting great American short stories and novels. Very soon you'll receive a unit assignment sheet that gives a day-by-day breakdown of every reading, every examination, and every paper you'll need to write.

Prior to each class meeting, you'll be expected to do a close reading of an assigned text in order to form interpretive judgments and make claims regarding textual significance. During every class, students participate in class discussion. In fact, class discussion is so important, it is counted toward a participation grade. A set of questions we'll use to guide discussions will be posted **on Moodle before each class**, and you'll need to print it to bring to class. By the end of the semester, you should feel

confident that you are able to read with comprehension, think critically about texts, and analyze texts. Informal discussions, passage identification exams, and formal written essays will demonstrate your skills of literary analysis. Together, we'll explore cultural, historical and biographical contexts for reading some of our country's great literature.

### **Course Requirements**

Students will take **three Passage Identification Examinations**. Each examination tests your ability to identify passages and make claims of over-all significance, based on what is said in class and your own educated interpretation.

Additionally, students will write **two essays**. Each essay (4 - 5 pages) will focus primarily on one text. I encourage students to form interpretive judgments, think critically, and make claims, but I ask students to base claims on evidence they draw primarily from texts. Essays for the course are literary interpretations; *they are not researched essays where the student has relied heavily upon outside sources*. You may use a few outside sources, but the main interpretation should come from you and our class discussions.

I ask that you use MLA style documentation for all quotations. Additionally, essays and passage ID exams should demonstrate your ability to write college-level academic prose and should be free of major grammar, mechanical, or spelling errors. On occasion, student work fails due to poor grammar and mechanics.

**Students are expected to come to all classes on-time.** Missing class, leaving class early, OR arriving late means you will lose credit for the attendance/participation of the grade. It also will make it more difficult to do well on examinations. Please be aware that **excessive unexcused absences may result in failure of a student to pass the course**. Students who miss more than the equivalent of two weeks of class (six classes) should meet with me to discuss absences.

**All assignments must be turned in on time.** Students, however, are allowed to turn in ONE essay late (essay "late" = two days late) OR take ONE exam late (examination "late" = within five days) without penalty. If you miss your "late" deadline, then you will be penalized ONE letter grade for every day the paper is late. If any paper or test is not turned in within a week of the due date, the paper or exam will be given a 0. All work must be completed to pass the course.

**Please don't panic if you get writer's block or you are worried about the exams.** E-mail me or visit me during office hours. I have MANY years of practice dealing with students who are anxious or who have writer's block. There are ways to get through such unfortunate stints.

### **Plagiarism**

I am keenly aware of how easy and tempting it is for my busy students to plagiarize essays. Please don't be tempted! I have spent many uncomfortable moments with students who never thought I would catch them, and I am not apologetic AT ALL when it comes to failing plagiarized work. Instead of passing off another's work as your own or risking improper citation, e-mail me to discuss essay topics, show me an early draft, or tell me if you do not understand proper MLA citation methods for essays. You may also work with the tutors at the Writing Center, LA 334, phone # 280-7054. Give yourself plenty of time to think about topics, prepare for exams, draft essays, and write final drafts. \* (See UNO's plagiarism policy below.)

### **Additional Course Materials**

--Each student should have a handbook that covers basic grammar, mechanics, and style as well as MLA citation. No need to bring this to class.

- A good college dictionary. Bring this with you when you take examinations.
- Plenty of loose leaf paper in a binder for exams, which should be written in ink.

### **Grade Distribution:**

Reading assignments for this course will be assigned as two units. The grade percentages for assignments are as follows:

10%	Class attendance, participation
15%	Passage Identification Exam #1
20%	Essay #1
15%	Passage Identification Exam #2
20%	Essay #2
20%	Passage Identification Exam #3

### **Guidelines for Essays**

- Out-of-class essays must be TYPED
- In-class Passage ID examinations should be written in INK
- Use standard 8x10 paper
- Essays should be double-spaced
- All major assignments should have the following: name, course section, page numbers and date.

***Students should silence and put away all electronic devices during class. If you have a particular need that requires use of an electronic device, including a cell phone, tablet, or computer, you must approve this usage with me. Speak with me before class begins***

*\* Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at <http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu>.*

**If you have a disability, please know that I have worked successfully with many students like you! I work closely with Amy King to ensure students can do their best work. Let me know via e-mail, before or after class, or during office hours if you need accommodations. \*\***

*\*\* It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.*