

**AMERICAN STUDIES 3310F**  
**Advanced American Studies: Being American**

**Fall 2021-22**  
**Mondays 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**Location: TBA**  
**Course delivery: in-person**

**Instructor: Professor Aldona Sendzikas**

Office Hours: TBA  
 Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 1222  
 Email: [asendzi2@uwo.ca](mailto:asendzi2@uwo.ca)



Images courtesy of amplifier.org

**This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.**

**Course Description:**

What defines being “American”? How is the American identity constructed, and how and why is it frequently contested? This course employs an interdisciplinary approach to explore the meaning(s) and definition(s) of American identity from multiple viewpoints, and within the context of US history, politics, regions, values, and culture.

**Prerequisite(s):**

1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above or enrolment in an American Studies module.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Antirequisite(s):**

History 3310F/G.

**Course Syllabus:****Course Content and Objectives:**

In this course, we will engage in the “doing” of American Studies by bringing together sources from a variety of disciplines—including History, Literature, Political Science, Popular Culture, *etc.*—as well as current events, in order to explore and examine a variety of topics, in an attempt to answer the question: What defines being “American”? Who determines this definition? What unites Americans, and what divides them? How is the American identity constructed, how has it evolved, and how and why is it frequently contested? How and why has the definition of “being American” changed? Who has been excluded from “being American,” and why?

**Learning Outcomes:**

In this course, students will:

- Practice applying an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the United States.
- Use both primary and secondary sources, drawn from a range of disciplines, to interpret and analyze issues in American history and society.
- Learn to situate contemporary issues in the context of historical events, as well as in the broader context of American Studies.
- Develop a research question and answer it in a written assignment, integrating both primary and secondary sources, and employing an interdisciplinary approach, in formulating the argument.
- Develop improved essay writing and research skills.
- Develop improved presentation and communication skills through class discussion.

### Course Materials:

- *A New Literary History of America*, edited by Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors (Cambridge, MA and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012). **This book will be available for purchase through the Western Bookstore. Used copies may be available.**
- Additional weekly online readings, which will be posted on the OWL course website or will be otherwise accessible online.

### Methods of Evaluation:

#### Grading:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| • Class participation  | 20%           |
| • Two short written assignments* (3-5 pp. each)                  | 10% x 2 = 20% |
| • Leading class discussion on one of the readings                | 10%           |
| • Midterm exam (during class, October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2021)   | 20%           |
| • Essay proposal (due November 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021)           | 5%            |
| • Research essay (10-12 pages) (due Dec. 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2021) | 25%           |

\*The first short written assignment will be due on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The second short written assignment will be due on the date that you choose to lead a class discussion on an assigned reading from the textbook (or by 7 days from that date). This written assignment will be on the topic of that particular reading.

#### Written assignments

Written assignments must be submitted at the specified time on the due date, in hard copy as well as in electronic form via the submission link on the OWL course website. (By using the submission link on the course website, your paper will automatically be submitted to Turnitin.com.)

Further instructions regarding the above assignments will be provided in class.

Late assignments: A late penalty of 2% for each day (including Saturdays and Sundays) will be incurred for all written work submitted after the due date and time. (This penalty also applies to missed presentation dates, unless there is documented medical or other academic accommodation.) Papers submitted on the due date but after the due time will be considered late and will be penalized 2%. Keep a copy of each of your written assignments until you receive the grade for it.

Please note that AS3310F is an essay course. According to Western's Academic Handbook, an essay course "...must be so structured that the student is required to demonstrate competence in essay writing to pass the course." In this class, that means that all of the written assignments (including the midterm exam) must be completed and submitted in order for a student to pass the course.

***Expectations:***

- Weekly attendance. (Absences will affect your participation mark.)
- Completion of all assigned readings and active, informed participation in class discussion, based on those readings.
- Courtesy and respect towards other members of the class.
- Be present: avoid distractions during the seminar, and try to engage with the class!
- Follow U.S. news and current events throughout the term, as we will be discussing them in relation to our weekly topics and readings.

**Accommodation for missed midterms, including Self-Reported Absences (SRA):**

Students with an approved absence from an in-class midterm exam will be required to write a make-up exam.

Students should be aware that the make-up exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

The make-up exam will take place on **November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.**

No other make-up opportunities will be provided. Students who fail to write a make-up exam in the designated time slot will receive a grade of zero.

Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up slot.

Students should be aware that when they have submitted a SRA for one test or exam, they are not permitted to write a test/exam or complete an assignment for another course during the period covered by the SRA. Failure to observe this regulation will result in the cancellation of the SRA and the possible application of late penalties.

**Accommodation for missed assignment deadlines with a Self-Reported Absence (SRA):**

If a student reports a SRA for an assignment (*e.g.*, an essay) the new due date will be 48 hours after the SRA was submitted. For example, if you submit a SRA on March 19<sup>th</sup> at 3pm, your new due date will be March 21<sup>st</sup> at 3pm.

**Use of Electronic Devices:**

Students may use laptops during class to access course readings and to take notes, but not for any other purposes. The use of other electronic devices are not permitted during class. No electronic devices are permitted during the midterm exam.

## Additional Statements

### *Academic Offences:*

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, <https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Heidi Van Galen, Administrative Officer, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84963 or e-mail [vangalen@uwo.ca](mailto:vangalen@uwo.ca).