



Peru State College  
**ENG 336-49YAND NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE**  
Syllabus – Spring – 2012

**Instructor:** Dr. Tammy Trucks-Bordeaux  
**Office Hours:** Mondays: 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.  
Tuesdays and Wednesdays: 2:00 p.m-3:00 p.m.  
Thursdays: 9:30-11:00 a.m.

**Office Telephone:** 872-2238  
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**Course Meets:** Online March 12<sup>th</sup>-May 4th

**Required Textbook:**

Mihesuah, Devon A. *American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities*. Atlanta: Clarity, 1996.

Purdy, John L. and James Ruppert. *Nothing But the Truth: An Anthology of Native American Literature*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Momaday, N. Scott. *House Made of Dawn*.. New York: Harper Collins, 1999.

**Note:** You must have your books at the beginning of class. I will not let students make up work because they do not have their books. Also, you cannot pass this class without having the required books.

**Course Description & Objectives**

1. To introduce you to the discussion of American Indian literatures.
2. To gain an understanding and recognize the unique tribal background of each author or character and examine how this background relates to the literature.
3. To be able to gain an understanding of American Indian literature so that you

may write and discuss it critically.

4. To examine the literary form and content of American Indian literature.
5. To use MLA format effectively when writing at the college level.

**It is also designed to meet certain goals that make up the Mission & Goals Statements of Peru State College, which are found in the College's 2011-12 Catalog:**

“These goals of Peru State College are to instill in our students”:

- 1) "effective communication skills";
- 2) "computer and information literacy";
- 3) "independent critical thought and intellectual capacity for change";
- 4) "preparation to assume social and civic leadership roles";
- 5) "the ability to pursue intellectually, ethically, aesthetically, and physically rewarding lives" (7).

### **Assessment and Grading**

**Instruction Method/Mode of Delivery: Online delivery**

#### **Grading Policy:**

A	90-100
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D+	65-69
D	60-64
F	0-59

#### **Grade Breakdown:**

**Quizzes** = 150 points

**Discussion Boards** = 300 points

**Short Stories Essay Exam** = 100 points

**Final Exam** = 150 points

**700 points total**

## **Assessment Areas:**

Your performance and knowledge will be assessed across five main areas, each of which is explained further below: on-line participation, quizzes, reading responses, essay exams, and a final paper.

**Discussion Board Questions:** Each week you will respond to two discussion threads (questions) posted in the discussion board forum (except for Week #8 where you will have one question). You will be expected to write a minimum of 250 words for each discussion thread. Furthermore, you must also respond to two other students for each discussion thread in order to receive full credit. The responses to other students must be substantial meaning at least 50-100 words each. Initial discussion board posts will be due by 11:55 p.m. Thursday each week, and response/questions follow up posts will be due between Friday at 12:00 a.m. and 11:55 p.m. Sunday of each week. Therefore, if you respond to the discussion board question and to students all on one day, you will not receive full credit. This will allow everyone to post their initial discussion boards before students respond. You must use MLA format and properly document any information you use from the readings. A works cited page is not needed for the discussion questions since you will be using our texts. Note: this is a large portion of your grade!

### **Below is the discussion board schedule:**

By Thursday at 11:55 p.m.: submit your responses to the discussion threads (250 words each) 15 points possible for each response.

Between Friday at 12:00 a.m.-Sunday at 11: 55 p.m. respond to two students per discussion thread. (50-100 words each) 5 points for each response.

**Since we will have two discussion board questions each week (except for Week #8) you will be receive a total of 40 points for each week's discussion board. Week #8 you will have one discussion question, which will be due Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at noon.**

**Quizzes:** The online quizzes will consist of either multiple choice and true/false. Each quiz is timed, and you will not be allowed to use your book. Quizzes cannot be made up. If you have technical difficulties, you will have **two** opportunities to correct the situation. Email me as soon as possible. Also, contact tech support because after that, you will receive a zero for each missed quiz if you have technical difficulties. By the time we get to the poetry test, you should have any technical difficulties resolved.

**Discussion Questions:** Each week, unless otherwise specified, you will submit your answers to the posted questions. You must use MLA format and properly document any information you use from the readings. A works cited page is not needed for the discussion questions since you will be using our texts. Since there is no way to provide individual feedback for the discussion boards, I will put up a list of issues I find on the announcements page. Be sure to read those after grades are posted and review your work. If you have any questions for improving your discussion board posts, please email me as soon as possible. I will post the discussion board by Sunday evening before each week begins. **I will not accept discussion questions or anything assignments, except for the late Essay Exam #1, in my email box. Discussions are useless unless they can be shared with the rest of the class. Any submitted to me will receive a zero.**

**Essay Exam:** In an effort evaluate your understanding of the assigned literature and your ability to synthesize such information into a coherent body of knowledge about literature, you will write one essay exam. You will be given several questions and asked to choose one. You will **not** be allowed to use any outside sources. You will be expected to use MLA format and properly document any information you use from the readings. You will not need a works cited page. Exams should be about 1000-1500 words. You must also submit your work in the proper file (a word document or rich text format), titling your file with your last name and the name of the assignment (ex. SMITH: ESSAY #1 or SMITH: FINAL ESSAY. I cannot open docx. files. You must be aware of the due date for the essay exam. For the essay you may ask for an extension by emailing me. You will be given 48 hours after the original deadline to submit your work. However, you will lose one half grade for each 24 hour period. Submit your essay as an attachment to my oakmail account. Any exams received after the 48 hour period will receive a zero.

### **Grading Rubric for Essays:**

The following is my criteria for grading the quality of your writing on discussion board posts and essays.

**A/Excellent writing.** Exhibits strong ability to interpret/analyze literature and express that interpretation clearly. Ideas are well-developed, organized, and show a superior grasp of and ability to apply literary terms (tone, symbol, theme, etc.) effectively, as well as to use directly quoted evidence from the text to support your interpretation. Writing also displays excellent grammar skills, and is carefully proofread. Thesis is stated clearly and essay backs up thesis with depth and sophistication. Originality is usually what separates excellent from average or good writing.

**B/Good writing.** Ideas are well-developed, organized, and clearly stated, showing a strong grasp of and ability to apply literary terms effectively. Displays strong grammar skills, and is carefully proofread. Thesis is stated clearly and essay backs up thesis well.

**C/Average writing.** Ideas are stated well enough to be understood, but writing can be faulted for lack of organization, lack of development (depth of thought as expressed in writing), ineffective use of literary terms, lack of sufficient evidence from text to support your points, or faulty grammar and/or proofreading. Any one of these flaws, if serious enough, can result in a "C"; two of these flaws will guarantee it. However, a "C" does mean you are achieving, overall, a competent level of writing in the course.

**D/Below average writing.** Often means analysis and grammar skills are not adequate, resulting in writing that is not strong enough to be understood clearly. A "D" could also mean you have not read stories/poems/plays carefully enough, and/or haven't studied and learned literary terms well enough to use them effectively. A "D" is not a passing grade. If you get one on the first discussion board response or on the first essay, it's a signal that your writing and/or interpretive skills may not be high enough to pass an introductory literature course, and I will ask you to seek extra help.

**F/Fail.** As a grade on a discussion board response or essay, an "F" reflects a disregard for answering the questions that are asked, manifest incompetence in writing about literature, or severe grammar/proofreading problems that impede meaning. As a final grade, an "F" reflects disregard for completing assignments, repeated failure to write complete and well-prepared answers to discussion board questions, and/or a manifest incompetence to write clearly about literature--which may be the result of serious grammar problems.

### **Grading Rubric for Discussion Board posts:**

In addition to the above rubric, which I apply to all writing, following is guidelines that apply especially to your discussion board responses. Two initial discussion board responses (as well as two responses to students for each question) will be due each week, and they constitute a large part of your final grade.

Earn your points! I look to see that you do the following in your discussion board responses:

(These are not in order of importance, by the way--each item is as important as the rest):

- 1) Answer the question asked. Sounds remedial, but some students stray off focus.
- 2) Develop your response to the full word count. I will take off 1 point for each 25 words you're short of the 250 minimum for each initial response. Note that you can always write more than 250 words, and developing a response beyond expectations can help your discussion board grade.
- 3) Organize your response. Rambling or quickly dashed off paragraphs (or no paragraphing at all!) isn't what I want to see. Think carefully about the question, and plan your response so it sounds like a college student writing. Including a thesis

statement, or a one-sentence assertion that states your main idea, is encouraged. Then support that thesis in your response.

4) Show depth of thought in your response. Does this "rule" need explaining? Perhaps so. Depth of thought means you are able to, first, UNDERSTAND what you've read (look up any words you don't understand! Read the lecture notes! Ask me questions-- that's what I'm here for!), then THINK about and ASSIMILATE (make connections about) what you've read to create analysis, or a conveying of your interpretation to others for the purpose of making the story, poem, or play a more enriching reading experience, one that we can learn from to make our own lives better.

Therefore, quickly written, shallow responses like the following won't get you any points: "This was a really cool story that I'd never read before and I liked it when the main character gets tricked by the devil because it shows how life can really be crappy sometimes..." (Don't laugh; I've seen responses on this level). If I see this kind of writing in the first discussion I'll ask that you seek outside help and work harder.

5) Use appropriate evidence from the text, in direct quotes. **Include at least one or two direct quotes from the text you're discussing per response.** Responses that don't contain any directly quoted evidence will be docked points. You can include more than a couple of pieces of quoted evidence in any response if you wish, as long as you're not just stringing together several quotes without writing much from your own brain. The best use of evidence is to let it complement and help support the points you're making with your own ideas about the text. Read "Using MLA" in the "Course Documents" section for proper MLA citations. Ask me questions if you don't understand something in that section.

6) Grammar/proofreading. I like to see strongly constructed sentences and paragraphs. Avoid sentence fragments, run-ons, and comma splices--if you don't know what these are or need your memory refreshed, look them up in a grammar guide! I also like neat looking responses. Avoid such careless errors as lack of capitalization ("i thought this story lacked a good plot") or, just as bad, capitalizing words that shouldn't be capitalized ("I liked this Story because it showed me how to avoid mistakes in my own Life"), misplaced punctuation, etc. that display inattention to detail. Proofreading carefully shows me you care about the words you're putting out there for others to read.

7) As part of your discussion board grade, you'll also be required to respond to others. Specific guidelines can be found in the Week #1 assignment section.

## **Student Requirements:**

**Submitting Essays:** Peru State College offers online students a tutorial at the beginning of each online class. Therefore, I expect students to be able to successfully navigate the system. If you encounter any difficulties, it is your responsibility to contact computer services or me immediately. If I cannot open your assignment, I will give you one opportunity to correct this problem. I will email you, and expect that you resubmit your work to my email account within 48 hours. All students MUST use Microsoft Office products, i.e. Word, Excel, and Power Point. (Absolutely no other software is compatible). **IF YOU USE MS OFFICE 2007: YOU MUST SAVE YOUR DOCUMENTS AS A 97-2003 DOCUMENT BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR WORK IN BLACKBOARD.** After this, if I cannot open files, you will receive a zero grade. **Be sure to get this corrected before the Final Essay Exam. If I cannot open your Final Essay Exam, you will receive a zero.**

**Late Discussion Boards:** You will be allowed two 'freebie' discussion board assignments, except for Week #8. However, you must email me in writing prior to the deadline. You will be given a 24 hour extension to the deadline. If you fail to meet that deadline, you will receive a zero. The final essay exam and quizzes cannot be made up.

**Reading Course Materials:** Be sure to read all course materials and announcements. Also, I will post important information on the announcements concerning this course. Many students ask me questions about information they can easily find in the syllabus. If you ask me this type of question, I will refer you back to the syllabus.

**Peru email account:** **Be sure to check your Peru email account regularly. I will be sending all correspondence to your account. Many have missed important information by failing to check their account.**

**Many students have jeopardized their grades by not reading the required reading, not having the appropriate books, not watching deadlines, or failing to read the course information. Read through everything carefully before you begin, and email me if you have any questions.**

## **Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to be present in the online class on a regular basis and to complete all assigned work. I will not tolerate students who do not attend regularly and then submit a large portion of their work at one time or at the end of the semester. Attendance is a privilege and a responsibility represented by not only the student's investment, but also by a significant investment by the State of Nebraska.

## **College's Incomplete Coursework Policy**

To designate a student's work in a course as incomplete at the end of a term, the instructor records the incomplete grade (I). Students may receive this grade only when serious illness, hardship, death in the immediate family, or military service during the semester in which they are registered prevents them from completing course requirements. In addition, to receive an incomplete, a student must have completed substantially all of the course's major requirements.

Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, students must initiate requests for an incomplete by filling out an Incomplete Grade Completion Contract, which requires the signature of the student, instructor, and Dean. The Incomplete Grade Completion contract cites the reason(s) for the incomplete and details the specific obligations the student must meet to change the incomplete to a letter grade. The date by which the student agrees to complete required work must appear in the contract. The Dean, the instructor, and the student receive signed copies of the Incomplete Grade Completion Contract.

Even if the student does not attend Peru State College, all incomplete course work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester. Unless the appropriate Dean approves an extension and if the student does not fulfill contract obligations in the allotted time, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an F.

## **College's Academic Integrity Policy**

The College expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner that supports an honest assessment of student learning outcomes and the assignment of grades that appropriately reflect student performance. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand and comply with instructions regarding the completion of assignments, exams, and other academic activities. At a minimum, students should assume that at each assessment opportunity they are expected to do their own original academic work and/or clearly acknowledge in an appropriate fashion the intellectual work of others, when such contributions are allowed. Students helping others to circumvent honest assessments of learning outcomes, or who fail to report instances of academic dishonesty, are also subject to the sanctions defined in this policy.

Instances of academic dishonesty may be discovered in a variety of ways. Faculty members who assign written work ordinarily check citations for accuracy, run data base and online checks, and/or may simply recognize familiar passages that are not cited. They may observe students in the act of cheating or may become aware of instances of cheating from the statements of others. All persons who observe or otherwise know about instances of cheating are

expected to report such instances to the proper instructor or Dean.

In order to promote academic integrity, the College subscribes to an electronic service to review papers for the appropriate citations and originality. Key elements of submitted papers are stored electronically in a limited access database and thus become a permanent part of the material to which future submissions are compared. Submission of an application and continued enrollment signifies your permission for this use of your written work.

NSCS Board of Trustees Policy 4220 states that each College “. . . will establish a distance learning assessment policy that will include, at a minimum, a substantial culminating experience that is proctored.” Peru State College’s policy is that each course that is offered entirely online will feature a proctored final exam that substantially measures the extent the course’s stated learning objectives are achieved. Online course syllabi will clearly state that, regardless of grades earned previously, the proctored final exam must be passed in order to receive credit for the course. Courses which feature graded site-based activities (e.g., teaching demonstrations) and/or video-taped presentations that occur near the end of the term, and that are designed to substantially assess the achievement of learning objectives, can be considered in compliance with this policy. Project-based capstone and graduate courses utilizing real-time discussions held by web-cam, phone or in person with the faculty member as part of the assessment process can also be considered in compliance with this policy.

Should an occurrence of academic misconduct occur, the faculty member may assign a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade for the course. Each incident of academic misconduct should be reported to the Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA may suspend students for two semesters found to be responsible for multiple instances of academic dishonesty. The reason for the suspension will be noted on the student’s transcript.

A faculty member need present only basic evidence of academic dishonesty. There is no requirement for proof of intent. Students are responsible for understanding these tenets of academic honesty and integrity. Students may appeal penalties for academic dishonesty using the process established for grades appeals.

### **Title IX Compliance Notice**

Peru State College is an equal opportunity institution. PSC does not discriminate against any student, employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in employment and education opportunities,

including but not limited to admission decisions. The College has designated an individual to coordinate the College's nondiscrimination efforts to comply with regulations implementing Title VI, VII, IX, and Section 504. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and practices may be directed to Eulanda Cade, Director of Human Resources, Title VI, VII, IX Compliance Coordinator, Peru State College, PO Box 10, Peru, NE 68421-0010, (402) 872-2230.

Students requesting reasonable accommodation and tutoring services should contact the Center for Achievement and Transition Services (CATS).

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

*Note: I reserve the right to modify any aspect of the course syllabus and content.*

### **Critical Writings**

#### **Week 1**

Reading:

From *Nothing But the Truth*: Paula Gunn Allen, "The Sacred Hoop: A Contemporary Perspective"

**Gunn Allen Quiz**  
**Week #1 Discussion Board**

#### **Week 2**

Read all of Mihesuah, *American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities*

**Mihesuah Quiz**  
**Week #2 Discussion Board**

### **The Short Story**

#### **Week 3**

Reading:

From *Nothing But the Truth*:  
Alexie, "The Approximate Size of My Favorite Tumor"  
Cook-Lynn, "A Good Chance"

**Alexie and Cook-Lynn Quiz**  
**Week #3 Discussion Board**

## **Week 4**

Reading:

From *Nothing But the Truth*:

Louise Erdrich, "The Red Convertible"

Thomas King's, "Borders"

**Erdrich and King Quiz**

**Week #4 Discussion Board**

## **Poetry**

## **Week 5**

Reading:

From *Nothing But the Truth*:

Erdrich, "Indian Boarding School: The Runaways"

Harjo, "I Give You Back"

Linda Hogan, "The New Apartment, Minneapolis"

Kenny, "Wild Strawberry"

**Short Stories Essay Exam Due**  
**Week #5 Discussion Board Due**

## **Week 6**

Reading:

From *Nothing But the Truth*:

Simon Ortiz, "My Father's Song"

N. Scott Momaday, "December 29, 1890: Wounded Knee Creek"

Chrystos, "Today Was a Bad Day Like TB"

Alexie, "How to Write the Great American Indian Novel"

**Week #5 and #6 Poetry Quiz**

**Week #6 Discussion Board**

***The Novel***

**Week 7**

Reading: Read all of Momaday's, *House Made of Dawn*

**The Novel Quiz**

**Week #7 Discussion Board**

**Week 8**

**Final Essay Exam and Discussion Board Due**