Prof. Stephanie Tsank

Office: 456 EPB

Office hours: TTh 5:00-6:30 p.m.

stephanie-tsank@uiowa.edu

**“People on the Move”**

**Spring 2019 • TTH 3:30-4:45 • 209 EPB**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will read works that depict immigration, migration, and characters that willingly or unwillingly transverse borders, or are impacted by changes in borders, focusing on themes such as identity formation and cultural assimilation. We will use our course texts to discuss how characters from various ethnic backgrounds and nationalities seek to understand themselves and their contested place in the world. We will begin by examining the depiction of immigrants in American literature, and will later adopt a more global literary framework.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Willa Cather, *Song of the Lark* (Penguin Random House) $10.05  
ISBN: 9780375706455

Américo Paredes, *George Washington Gómez* (Arte Publico Press) $12.89   
ISBN: 9781558850125

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah* (Alfred Knopf) $16.00   
ISBN: 9780307455925

Lisa Ko, *The Leavers* (Workman Publishing Co.) $12.76   
ISBN: 9781616208042

**Note:** These texts are available at *Prairie Lights Bookstore*, and can also be ordered online or purchased second-hand. I strongly recommend you purchase these editions in hard copy, as it will allow you to readily follow along during the course. Please go by ISBN numbers.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

This course will require you to complete two writing assignments and one group presentation. You will also be graded via reading quizzes and participation, both of which will necessitate strong attendance.

**Literary Analysis 1 (20% of final grade):** 4-5 pp. literary analysis of a single course text of your choosing. This assignment will ask you to form a strong thesis statement and successfully defend your argument through close reading. The drafting portion of this assignment will require a thesis workshop and an in-class peer review session. If you do not submit a draft for this assignment, your final grade will receive a 1/3 grade deduction (from a B to a B-, A to an A-, etc.)

**Literary Analysis 2 (35% of final grade):** 6-7 pp. literary analysis of two course text(s) of your choosing. Like the first essay, this paper will require a strong thesis statement and the successful defense of your argument through close reading. The drafting portion of this assignment will require a thesis workshop and an in-class peer review session. If you do not submit a draft for this assignment, your final grade will receive a 1/3 grade deduction (from a B to a B-, A to an A-, etc.)

**Leading Discussion Assignment (20% of final grade):** You will collaborate with a small group to prepare a presentation and lead discussion on a particular class period of your choosing. Each group will either focus their presentation on historical or scholarly material. I will provide resources for both options (such as a bank of scholarly articles), although you will also be required to do your own research. You may also be assigned to present biographical information on the author and/or work you have chosen. Each group will also be tasked with posing discussion questions to the class, and delivering information in creative yet clear ways. This project will be graded as part-group, part-individual. The individual portion will require a 2-page essay on how your research has informed your understanding of the text.

**Reading Quizzes (10% of final grade):** Six impromptu quizzes will be administered throughout the semester. Makeups will not be allowed, due to the fact that I will drop your lowest quiz score at the end of the semester. Quizzes will always take place at the start of class, and if you are late, you will not be able to complete the quiz. These quizzes are not meant to trick you; if you did the reading, you should be able to score highly on each quiz.

**Participation (15% of final grade):** Your participation grade will be determined by a number of factors. Speaking up frequently during class discussion is an important component of your participation grade, but I realize this may be challenging for some of you. If this is the case, please see me so that we can discuss how you can best participate in other ways, or work on strategies to improve your vocal participation. With that said, participation is also calculated based on other factors, such as your respectful and collaborative performance in group work settings, peer reviews, minor writing assignments, and overall attentiveness and behavior in the classroom. If you would like an estimate of your participation grade at any time, please set up a meeting with me.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class meeting. If you must be absent, look for Canvas updates and check with a peer to find out what you missed. Please do not email me to ask “what you missed.” If possible, please let me know in advance and provide official documentation when you need to miss class due to illness, religious obligations, or university activities. You can find an “Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class” form on the Registrar’s website under “Forms for Students.”

**Accumulating more than 3 unexcused absences will result in your overall participation grade being lowered by a third** (in other words, after three absences a final participation grade of a B becomes a B-). If you miss fewer than three classes, no automatic penalty will be applied—but do keep in mind the importance of daily assignments and opportunities to participate; have your classmates fill you in about missed discussions and upcoming assignments. Please also keep in mind that I do not offer makeup quizzes, so if you are absent on the day of a quiz, you will not receive points for that quiz.

Although a limited number of excused absences will not impact your participation grade, unforeseen circumstances may arise that require students to be absent for long periods of time. If you must be absent for an extended period due to illness or other matters, the instructor reserves the right to ask that you withdraw from the course. It is understandable that life outside of the classroom will sometimes get in the way of school-related obligations, but if your ability to participate in the class is severely impacted, it may not make sense for you to continue in the course.

**GRADING CRITERIA**

You may access your grades on Canvas at any time during the semester, and are always welcome to meet with me to discuss what you are doing well, how you could improve, and what you can work on for future assignments. You will receive a detailed criteria sheet for each major project, explicitly outlining my expectations. I will be as clear as possible, but please ask for clarification if you need it. Doing an adequate job and fulfilling the assignment’s basic criteria is considered average (in other words, C-level) work—nothing is really wrong with it, yet nothing is exceptional. To produce B-level work, you must fulfill assignment requirements with a higher-than-average level of effort, competence, creativity, and enthusiasm. In order to receive an A, you must demonstrate exceptional skill, completing the assignment with sophistication, critical insight, creativity, and care. Please note that these grading criteria are department-wide.

***A grade of C*:** You can earn a C by attending class regularly and punctually, completing with competence all of the work assigned and participating regularly in class activities. This requires 1) adequately meeting all criteria for assignments, and 2) completing reading assignments on time and being prepared to share your opinions on the texts in class and during discussions.

***A grade of B****:* You can earn a B by fulfilling all of the C requirements while demonstrating a significantly higher level of effort and competence on all work assigned for the class. To earn a B you must show an interest in energetically, creatively, and critically engaging with the material and assignments. B work typically reflects independent thinking. The B student is self-reflexive and often asks questions such as “How can I make my work better? How can I revise this? How can I make my work unique and interesting? How can I help the class have productive and energetic discussions?”

***A grade of A*:** To receive an A in the course, you must surpass the requirements for B work as well as demonstrate high-level critical thinking and original analysis. A students interrogate all sides of issues enthusiastically in order to clarify their own opinions. A students don’t skip class, fail to honor deadlines for any reason, or show up unprepared to discuss the reading. A students will instead be willing to make intellectual discoveries and demonstrate an effort to inquire further into commonly understood issues.

***A grade of D*:** You can earn a D by not fulfilling your responsibilities outlined under “Grade of C” criteria, and/or failing to show respect for or interest in your fellow students’ presentations of ideas. A D student is a student who has many excuses but few completed assignments. For example, D students often fail to turn in reading responses and then claim later that they were ill or had a family emergency. D students are generally disinterested students who refuse to take an active role in making the class energetic and productive.  
  
I want to ensure that our conversations about graded assignments will be relevant and useful to you; to that end, I ask that you contact me **no sooner than 24 hours and no later than 7 days** after receiving a grade. Furthermore, conversations about grades must occur in person. I will not discuss grades over email.

**GENERAL POLICIES**   
  
**Classroom Expectations:** I expect students to cultivate a positive personal ethos for themselves as members of the class; this means thinking not only about the work being turned in but also about how one comports themselves in the space of the classroom. Make positive statements about yourself via the ways you collaborate with others, the ways you speak and listen, and even factors like a good attitude, promptness, and attentive body language. These are all also important components of active participation. In addition: **Always** **show respect and courtesy. Listen carefully when someone else is speaking. Manage your electronic device use in a respectful and considerate way**. And finally, **please respect our scheduled class time and refrain from packing up bags while class is still in session.**

**Contacting the Professor:** I welcome questions and comments from students about the course materials and assignments. However, please be sure to email me using your university email address, as this is university policy. Please also structure emails appropriately, beginning with a proper salutation, a body section in which you quickly and clearly outline your comments and questions, and a sign-off. I usually respond to email within 24-48 hours.

**Late or Missing Work:** You are responsible for submitting assignments on time and in the correct format. Missing class is not an excuse for failing to turn in work, and credit will be deducted for each day an assignment is late. If you experience a documented medical or family emergency that affects your work, please notify me as soon as possible so that I can help you keep up.When you submit assignments online, make sure you use a Word document, and that it uploads correctly. Do not upload PDFs. If you notice any issues with the process, please get in touch with me immediately.

**Administrative Home:** The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other policies. These policies vary by college (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>).

**Electronic Communication:** Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/professional-ethics-and-academic-responsibility#15.2)).

**Writing Center Resources:** If you are having difficulty with the writing in this course, I encourage you to visit the Writing Center in addition to visiting my office hours. The Writing Center is located in 110 EPB and offers semester-long enrollment tutoring, one-time appointments, and online tutoring for papers within a 48-hour time frame. Visit <http://www.uiowa.edu/~writingc/>for more information and to schedule appointments.

**Academic Integrity:** All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code). Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address.

**Accommodations for Disabilities:** UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student should then discuss accommodations with the course instructor (<https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>).

**Nondiscrimination in the Classroom:** UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, and religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity at [diversity@uiowa.edu](mailto:diversity@uiowa.edu) or [diversity.uiowa.edu](https://diversity.uiowa.edu/office/equal-opportunity-and-diversity).

**Understanding Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, definitions, and the full University policy, see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>.

**Making a Complaint:** Students with a complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in English ([Matthew-P-Brown@uiowa.edu](mailto:Matthew-P-Brown@uiowa.edu)) for majors courses, the Director of General Education Literature ([Blaine-Greteman@uiowa.edu](mailto:Blaine-Greteman@uiowa.edu)) for GEL courses, or the Director of Graduate Studies ([Kathy-Lavezzo@uiowa.edu](mailto:Kathy-Lavezzo@uiowa.edu) ) for graduate courses, before appealing, if need be, to the Chair of the English Department ([Claire-Fox@uiowa.edu](mailto:Claire-Fox@uiowa.edu)). Students may then bring the concern to CLAS (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>).

**CLAS Final Examination Policies:** The final exam schedule for each semester is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this final exam information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals. (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching-policies-resources-examination-policies>.)

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather:** In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the [Department of Public Safety website](https://police.uiowa.edu/emergency-communications).

**COURSE CALENDAR***\*this calendar is subject to alterations; changes will be posted to Canvas and/or announced in class. You are responsible for tracking course activities, due dates, readings and assignments as the semester progresses.* **Week 1:** T (Jan. 15): Syllabus Review & Introductions

Th (Jan 17): Excerpts from Takaki/Daniels (Canvas)

**Week 2:** T (Jan 22): Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (Canvas); presentation sign-up

Th (Jan 24): Abraham Cahan, selections (Canvas)

**Week 3:** T (Jan 29): Sui Sin Far, selections (Canvas)

Th (Jan 31): Willa Cather, *Song of the Lark*, pp. 1-145 (Part I) **Week 4:** T (Feb 5): Cather, *Song of the Lark*, pp. 149-227 (Part II); **Presentation #1 (Historical)**

Th (Feb 7):Cather, *Song of the Lark*, pp. 231-313 (Part III-IV)  
 **Week 5:** T (Feb 12): Cather, *Song of the Lark*, pp. 317-423 (Part V); **Presentation #2** **(Scholarly)**

Th (Feb 14): Américo Paredes*, George Washington Gómez*, pp. 1-63

**Week 6:** T (Feb 19): Paredes*, George Washington Gómez*, pp. 63-163; **Presentation #3 (Historical)**

Th (Feb 21): Essay 1 in-class peer workshop

**Week 7:** T (Feb 26): Paredes*, George Washington Gómez*, pp. 163-247

Th (Feb 28): Paredes*, George Washington Gómez*, pp. 247-302; **Presentation #4 (Scholarly)**

**Essay 1 due to Moodle by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 1st**

**Week 8:** T (Mar 5):Poetry TBA

Th (Mar 7): Poetry TBA

**Week 9:** T (Mar 12): Poetry TBA

Th (Mar 14): Reading TBA   
 **Week 10:** T (Mar 19): *Spring Break – no class*

Th (Mar 21): *Spring Break – no class*

**Week 11:** T (Mar 26): Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 1-10 (pp. 1-140)

Th (Mar 28): Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 11-16 (pp. 141-212); **Presentation #5** **(Historical)**

**Week 12:** T (April 2): Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 17-30 (pp. 213-351)

Th (April 4): Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 31-37 (pp. 351-419); **Presentation #6** **(Scholarly)**

**Week 13:** T (April 9): Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 38-49 (pp. 421-517)

Th (April 11): Adichie, *Americanah*, Ch. 50-55 (pp. 518-588)

**Week 14:** T (April 16): Lisa Ko, *The Leavers*, pp. 1-110

Th (April 18): Ko, *The Leavers*, pp. 113-161; **Presentation #7 (Historical)**

**Week 15:** T (April 23): Ko, *The Leavers*, pp. 161-241

Th (April 25): Essay 2 in-class peer workshop   
  
**Week 16:** T (April 30): Ko, *The Leavers*, pp. 241-335; **Presentation #8 (Scholarly)**

Th (May 2): Reading TBA   
**Finals Week:** (May 6-10): *NO FINAL EXAM*

**Essay 2 due to Canvas by 5 p.m. on Monday, May 6th**