

# Tohono O'odham Community College



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## Syllabus: *LIT 274, Native American Literature*

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### Course Information

Course Prefix/Number: LIT 274, Section 1

Semester: Spring 2017

Class Days/Times:

Tuesdays and Thursdays,

9:00-10:15 a.m.

Credit Hours: 3

Course Title: Native American Literature

Campus: Main

Building: Gewkdag Son Ki (GSK)

Room: GSK-4

### Instructor Information:

Name: Edison Cassadore, Ph.D.

Phone/Voice Mail: (520) 383-0103

E-mail: [ecassadore@tocc.edu](mailto:ecassadore@tocc.edu)

Office location: Ha-Mascamdah Ha-Ki building, Room 109

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:00 p.m.;

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.; and, by appointment.

### Course Description:

A survey of Native American oral stories, autobiographical writings, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. Includes historical and cultural contexts, major themes and issues in contemporary Native American literature, literary forms and techniques, and critical essays.

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) :

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. Describe historical and cultural contexts that shape Native American oral and written texts.
2. Describe major themes and issues in contemporary Native American writings.
3. Describe the literary forms and techniques used by Native American writers.
4. Communicate theories of Native American literature through critical essays.

# Tohono O'odham Community College

- **Additional Required Materials:** A memory stick (**to back up all written work**); a spiral-bound notebook (with *perforated edges* on the sheets of paper); a folder with metal prongs and inside pockets and sheet protectors (for one of the assignments); a vocabulary-builder text; a dictionary; and a thesaurus.

## Evaluation, Grading and Assignments:

The final grade for this course will be determined from your performance on many small tasks rather than on a few major projects such as a term paper, mid-term and final. This means that a poor performance on any one task will not hurt you greatly, and a very strong performance on any one task will not help your final grade very much.

Thus, to do well in this class, you should plan to attend and participate in class on a regular and consistent basis. Academic success means consistently working at your best possible level. *In addition, chronic lateness to class will also impinge on your participation since group cohesion will lose its effectiveness.*

Your final grade will be based on Individual Work. It will be calculated using a percentage scale (e.g., 90 to 100%=A, etc.) based on cumulative points earned throughout the semester.

### Key Performance Areas in Individual Work:

a. Short Papers.....	300 pts.
b. Midterm Examination.....	100 pts.
c. Personal Review Cover Memo/Portfolio.....	100 pts.
d. Oral Presentation.....	100 pts.
e. Journal.....	100 pts.
Total.....	700 pts.

### Explanations of Assignments and Grading in each Key Performance Area:

- **Short Papers, Format, and Grading:**

Three essays (*three to five full-page papers in length*) on assigned topics will be due at regular intervals during the semester to give you practice in developing and sustaining an argument or a line of thought in writing persuasive and interpretative essays on fictional and non-fictional Native American literature.

At least one of the papers should use both *primary* and *secondary sources* on a "Works Cited" page in the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. All papers, however, must follow the MLA style and formatting. Specific instructions will be given before the essay assignments are due.

**Note:** The essay(s), moreover, must be either *word-processed or typed in black ink, double spaced*, use *Times New Roman (10 or 12-size) font*, and have *one-inch margins* on all pages. The

## Tohono O'odham Community College

development as a writer and a person throughout the semester. Thus, students will analyze and evaluate their own voice and how it develops. Use quotations from your essay, the journal, and any other relevant sources that show changes or continuities in your writing style, voice, attitudes, beliefs, and subject matter. This cover memo will be submitted along with any rewritten essays and other items. This constitutes the **Portfolio** for the semester. Specific instructions will be distributed to students before the assignment is due. Finally, please maintain objectivity by fairly analyzing your experiences that influenced your writing voice and refrain from expressing overly personalized bias.

### **Mandatory Minimum Requirements:**

- I. A specific assignment sheet and/or checklist will be distributed for the Personal Review Cover Memo/Portfolio. The portfolio checklist must be included in the submission per the specific instructions for its placement. Writing Portfolios that do not include the checklist will not be accepted.
- II. The cover memo **must** be word processed. Cover memos handwritten in ink or pencil will not be accepted. In addition, **cover memos should be submitted electronically as well as placed within your Portfolio folder.**
- III. Each subheading (see below) must be answered with a minimum of three sentences.
- IV. As with all writing assignments (e.g., journal entries, essays), please **proofread** the Personal Review Cover Memo for grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors.
- V. In addition, you may be asked to rewrite and resubmit the cover memo if it does not address the six questions below.
- VI. A folder with metal prongs and inside pockets and sheet protectors are required materials for the Personal Review Cover Memo/Portfolio.

### **The following questions must be used as subheadings in writing this cover memo:**

1. What concerns (i.e., personal, social) did you contend with this semester?;
2. What skills (i.e., writing, social) did you build on?;
3. What struggles did you overcome?;
4. What efforts are still unresolved?;
5. What moral or academic or social issues remain highlighted for you?; and,
6. How far have you progressed as a student, a writer, and a person?

Please address and answer all of the above questions in your cover memo. Again, if the six questions are not addressed, it will need to be rewritten. If you have any further questions about this assignment, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

- **Oral Presentation**

The oral presentation is designed to see how successfully you've learned drawing a connection with the historic context of Native American peoples with the literature and to build critical



## Tohono O'odham Community College

property constitutes physical theft, taking credit for someone else's ideas constitutes intellectual theft" (*Your College Experience: Strategies for Success*, 162). As the Tohono O'odham Community College *Student Handbook*, Academic Year 2010-2012, states, "Students must do their own work and submit only their own work on examinations, reports, and projects, unless otherwise permitted by the instructor" (26).

**Any instance of plagiarism is unacceptable and is grounds for an automatic failing grade.** Indeed, "Submitting a paper you purchased from an Internet source or from an individual will cause you to miss out on the discovery and skill development that research assignments are meant to teach" (*Your College Experience: Strategies for Success*, 207). Search engines (and other computer software and Turnitin) can easily detect instances of plagiarism in submitted work, so please do not intentionally plagiarize.

- **Incompletes\***

**I**=In order to be considered for an Incomplete grade, you must successfully complete at least *sixty percent of the required course work*, and then submit a written request. The incomplete, however, is awarded at the sole discretion of the instructor, and each case is judged on individual merit and extenuating circumstance(s).

**\*Note: The instructor requires that a brief written and dated request be either submitted before or by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A request, however, for an incomplete to the above email address is also acceptable.** You must state the circumstances of your request and why you feel you qualify for an Incomplete. An "I" is not automatically awarded to students. Students, indeed, are responsible for requesting an incomplete grade in a timely manner.

If a student is awarded an "I," it is the student's primary responsibility to maintain communication with the course professor for any further requirements for completion of course work. For any awarded "I" grade, a "Learning Agreement" form will need to be completed which will stipulate specific time frames for when work will need to be submitted.

For further clarification of the "I" grade, please refer to the current Tohono O'odham Community College Catalog that is officially in use.

- **Withdrawals\***

**W**=If a student has not completed course work in a timely manner, the student may be withdrawn from the course at the discretion of the instructor.

**\*Note: If a student misses four class meetings without communicating to the instructor and without a valid excuse, the student will be withdrawn, and a "W" or "Y" will be recorded.**

- **Chronic Lateness**

*Persistent tardiness will not be tolerated since key information is usually given at the beginning of the class meeting.* It is unfair, disruptive, and inconvenient for the instructor and your colleagues to repeat statements made at the start of the class session. Please try to arrive on time

# Tohono O'odham Community College

used during the entire class meeting time. Please do not listen to music while class is in session. Again, all electronic devices are not permitted during the entire allotted class meeting time.

## General Course Outline:

- I. Historical and Cultural Contexts
  - A. Historical context
    - 1. Pre-Columbian
    - 2. Colonization
      - a. Removals and relocations
      - b. Boarding schools
      - c. Reservation and urban life
    - 3. Activism and agency
  - B. Traditional views of language and storytelling
  - C. Traditional views of land and the environment
  - D. Ceremony and ritual
- II. Major Themes and Issues in Contemporary Native American Literature
  - A. Identity (assimilation v. resistance, inclusive concept of self, bicultural identities, representation/stereotypes)
  - B. Cultural survival, continuity, and change
  - C. Social issues (such as oppression, racism, poverty, gender, sexuality)
  - D. Political issues (hegemony, domination, resistance, activism, agency, sovereignty)
  - E. Environmental issues
- III. Literary Forms and Techniques
  - A. Native American literary tradition
    - 1. Oral tradition (e.g. creation stories, trickster/transformer stories, hero/heroine stories, songs and chants)
    - 2. Autobiographical writings
      - a. Early collaborative "as-told-to" autobiographical writings
      - b. More recent autobiographical writings by Native Americans
    - 3. Contemporary Native American literature
      - a. Poetry
      - b. Fiction
        - 1. Short stories
        - 2. Novels
      - c. Nonfiction writings
    - 4. Literary techniques
    - 5. Influence of the oral tradition on writing style
    - 6. Innovations in form (for example, the mixing and merging of genres)
  - B. Literary criticism
- IV. Critical Essays
  - A. Using writing for critical analysis, including the collection, interpretation, and evaluation of primary and secondary sources

# Tohono O'odham Community College

Spring Semester

Tohono O'odham Community College

## Important Due/Test Dates:

February 9 <sup>th</sup> :	Short Paper #1
March 9 <sup>th</sup> :	Short Paper #2
March 9 <sup>th</sup> :	Midterm Examination
April 6 <sup>th</sup> :	Short Paper #3
May 4 <sup>th</sup> :	Personal Review Cover Memo/Portfolio
May 4 <sup>th</sup> :	Journal
May 9 <sup>th</sup> :	Oral Presentations
May 11 <sup>th</sup> :	Oral Presentations

Class Meeting Dates	Conceptual Discussion Topic/ Activity, Etc.	Assigned Readings/Homework/Essay, Etc., Due Dates
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## Tohono O'odham Community College

Week VIII: March 7 & 9	<b>Review Session</b> for Midterm Examination on 3/8  Midterm Examination on 3/10	<b>For Week VIII, read:</b> Begin reading from <i>The Glittering World: A Navajo Story</i> .  <b>Due:</b> Short Paper #2 (3/9).  Review Study Sheet Questions.
March 14 & 16	<b>Spring Break</b>  <b>No class meetings.</b>	<b>For Week IX, read:</b> Continue reading from <i>The Glittering World: A Navajo Story</i> .
Week IX: March 21 & 23	Literary Techniques & Criticism  Literary Forms & Techniques: Innovations in Form  Themes and Issues Addressed by Native American Authors:  Identity, Social Issues, and Political Issues	<b>For Week X, read:</b> Roppolo's "Towards a Tribal-Centered Reading of Native Literature: Using Indigenous Rhetoric(s) Instead of Literary Analysis," and <i>The Glittering World: A Navajo Story</i> .
Week X: March 28 & 30	Literary Forms & Techniques: Innovations in Form  Themes and Issues Addressed by Native American Authors:  Identity, Social Issues, and Political Issues	<b>For Week XI, read:</b> <i>The Glittering World: A Navajo Story</i> .
Week XI: April 4 & 6	Literary Forms & Techniques:  Autobiographical Writings	<b>For Week XII, read:</b> <i>Papago Woman</i> . (Possible additional reading: Bataille & Sands's "Maria Chona: An Independent Woman in Traditional Culture.")  <b>Due:</b> Short Paper #3 (4/6).

Class Meeting Dates	Conceptual Discussion Topic/ Activity, Etc.	Assigned Readings/Homework/Essay, Etc., Due Dates
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