

ENGLISH 326
LITERATURE, COMMUNITY, AND DIFFERENCE
SPRING 2020

Professor Marie Lo

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3pm, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the intersections of self, identity, and nation through the lens of literature by Native and U.S. writers of color. We take these terms, “literature,” “community” and “difference,” not as self-evident categories but as contested functions of cultural production. Through studying works by Native and U.S. writers of color, we examine the relationship between cultural production and the formation, practice, and representation of identities.

In the first half of the course, we examine the genre of autobiography to understand how literary form and conventions shape ideas of national identity, authorship, and difference. We then move onto considering the politics of representation and the relationship between literature, community and the self. We will contextualize our study of literature in relation to broader literary, philosophical, and political debates over the relationship between national identity and the colonizing structures that determine racial, class, gender, and sexual difference.

At the end of this course, students will be able to: Understand the relationship between cultural production and the formation, practice, and representation of social identities; connect theories of literature, community, and difference; and analyze literature in relation to understandings of identity and nation.

The instructor reserves the right to modify course content and/or substitute assignments and learning activities in response to institutional, weather, or class situations.

REQUIRED TEXTS

In addition to readings which will be available on D2L, the following texts are also required:

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*

- Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*
- Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*
- Helena Maria Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus*
- Tommy Orange, *There There*

ASSESSMENT

- Online Discussion – 50%
- Final paper (6-8 pages) – 50%

COURSE POLICIES

Format for written work – They must all be written and formatted according to MLA style, stapled, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and include a bibliography.

Online discussion rules – Respect and professionalism are paramount and define course etiquette. Respect for differences and opposing viewpoints is critical to creating a vibrant intellectual community. Kindly respect the other members of this class, regardless of their beliefs, linguistic difference, gender or sexual identity, race or ethnicity, or political views.

Contacting me – The best way to contact me to ask a question or set up an appointment is *via email*.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.

If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.

Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.

For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the [Fire and Life Safety webpage](https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety) (<https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety>) for information.

Academic Honesty – Students are expected to comply with the PSU Student Code of Conduct, which includes provisions for disciplinary action in cases of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or participation in such acts. This includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating, (b) fraud, (c) plagiarism, such as word for word copying, using borrowed words or phrases from original text into new patterns without attribution, or paraphrasing another writer's ideas; (d) The buying or selling of all or any portion of course assignments and research papers; (e) Performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons; (f) Unauthorized disclosure or receipt of academic information; (g) Falsification of research data; and (h) Unauthorized collaboration. (PSU Student Code of Conduct, 577-031-0136). You must do your own work. You must cite sources appropriately in all papers and presentations. You must acknowledge the contribution of other students to your work. Violation of integrity standards could have severe consequences for your academic future.

RESOURCES

Student Food Security - Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact Committee for Improving Student Food Security for support at foodhelp@pdx.edu. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

PSU Grading System

Undergraduate: <http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2018/Bulletin/Undergraduate-Studies/Grading-System-for-Undergraduates>

Graduate: <http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2018/Bulletin/Graduate-Studies/Enrollment/Graduate-grading-system>

Drop/Withdraw Deadline

<http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2018/Bulletin/Undergraduate-Studies/Grading-System-for-Undergraduates/Drops-and-withdrawals>

Writing Resources

Helpful and comprehensive **advice on writing English papers** from University of Toronto professors: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/~dwhite/papers.htm>

For details on **MLA style**, consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers and/or the Purdue University Online Writing Lab handout <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

Title IX Reporting Obligations:

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the [Office of Equity and Compliance](#) or the [Office of the Dean of Student Life](#).

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors **are required to report** information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor, the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module [Creating a Safe Campus](https://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/safe-campus-module) <https://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/safe-campus-module> in your D2L.

Grading Rubric:

<p>A</p>	<p>Your paper demonstrates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. An argument arrived at through interpretation and analysis of the text, supported with evidence from the text, the relevance of which to the overall argument is clearly explained in the analysis.b. Good prose style.c. Clear organization based on the development of a set of ideas, not necessarily on the sequence of the plot.d. Demonstration of good comprehension of the text.e. Clear description of the text's significance/implications and/or its subtler or deeper meanings/resonance.
<p>B</p>	<p>Your paper demonstrates a good comprehension of the text. Beyond this, it demonstrates some of the above qualities. In addition, it is a B paper because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. While it is a clear, well-structured and well-written argument, it is lacking in originality. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">b. While it puts forth a highly original argument or set of observations it nonetheless shows <u>some</u> writing or organizational problems or gaps in logic.
<p>C</p>	<p>Your paper unfortunately does not offer a clear analysis of the materials. Your paper is a C paper because it may contain some of the following problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Suggest some interesting ideas but does not follow through on those ideas or give sufficient evidence for them.b. May suggest some interesting ideas but because of poor organization or prose style does not make those ideas clear to the reader.c. Misinterprets aspects of the text.d. Does not present a clear argument.e. Resorts to summary of the text rather than analysis.f. Contains many grammatical and spelling errors.
<p>D</p>	<p>Your paper does not show a clear understanding of the materials and contains a large number of the problems discussed above or very serious forms of those problems and/or show a lack of sustained thought or effort.</p>
<p>F</p>	<p>Your paper shows no effort and/or understanding of the material and/or does not relate to the assignment.</p>

READING AND COURSE CALENDAR

The reading listed for each day must be completed for that day's class meeting. Readings denoted by • are found on D2L. Schedule is subject to change.

Week 1

Unit One	Introduction: Figuring things out
Unit Two	• Anderson, "Imagined Communities"

Week 2

Unit One	Morrison, <i>Playing in the Dark</i> (Chapter 1)
Unit Two	Morrison, <i>Playing in the Dark</i> (Chapters 2 & 3)

Week 3

Unit One	• Gates, "'Race,' Writing and Difference"
Unit Two	Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (Preface, Chapters 1-7)

Week 4

Unit One	Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (Chapters 8-11, Appendix)
Unit Two	Kingston, <i>The Woman Warrior</i> ("No Name Woman" & "White Tigers")

Week 5

Unit One	Kingston, <i>The Woman Warrior</i> ("Shaman")
Unit Two	Kingston, <i>The Woman Warrior</i> ("At the Western Palace")

Week 6

Unit One	Kingston, <i>The Woman Warrior</i> ("A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe")
Unit Two	• Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" & "Eye to Eye: Black Women, Hatred, and Anger" Lorde, <i>Zami</i> (Preface, Chapters 1-4)

Week 7

Unit One Lorde, *Zami* (Preface, Chapters 5-20)
Unit Two Lorde, *Zami* (Chapters 21-31, Epilogue)

Week 8

Unit One Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (Chapter 1-3)
Unit Three Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* (Chapters 4 & 5)

Week 9

Unit One Orange, *There There* (Prologue & Part I)
Unit Two Orange, *There There* (Part II)

Week 10

Unit One Orange, *There There* (Part III & V)
Unit Two **Final paper due**