Fall Semester 2014  
English 223 Section 1001  
Themes of Literature  
Literature and the Environment

Professor Susanne Bentley  
Office Hours: Monday: 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Tues: 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., Wed: Online, 1 - 3 p.m.  
Thurs: Online: 6 - 7 p.m. and by appointment.  
Office: Room: MH 126  
Phone: 775-753-2358  
E-mail: Use Web Campus e-mail for correspondence about this course.

Office e-mail: susanne.bentley@gbcnv.edu

Course Overview:  
“...[I]n Wildness is the preservation of the World.” This quote by Henry David Thoreau can provide a framework for our class--a reason for us to question and study. Through literature, we will gain a better understanding of the meanings of “wildness” in our pluralistic society; cultivate intellect, sensibility, and sensitivity to environmental issues; and examine diverse thinking as illustrated in the literature we will read.

This course will investigate and analyze humans’ relationship to nature through diverse works of fiction, poetry, essays, documentaries, and other media.

Course Objectives:  
1. To broaden and deepen students’ understanding and appreciation of literature, particularly literature written by authors whose work centers on the natural world  
2. To introduce the student to the various genres and styles of literature found within these works  
3. To foster an awareness of the complexity of the interrelationships of the cultural or societal issues discussed in the literature  
4. To build upon students’ critical thinking skills to as they form their own ideas about complex issues  
5. To build on the student’s skills in argument development and critical analysis  
6. To help students recognize form and pattern in literary works as a means of understanding their meanings
7. To advance reading and written communication skills

Required Texts:

3. Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, by Annie Dillard. ISBN: 9780061233326

You should also have access to, and use, a handbook for MLA documentation of sources. This is an excellent online source: Research and Documentation, 5th ed. Hackerhandbooks.com.

You will also need a Web Campus login and a portable storage device.

Prerequisite: ENG 102

Method of Instruction: This class will take place in a variety of ways including online lectures, discussions, instructor feedback, student question/answer, written responses to readings or multimedia presentations, and written literary analysis.

Course Policies and Expectations

Participation/Attendance: Although this course is delivered through Web Campus, you are expected to make the same commitment to participation as an on-campus course. You will log on to the site at least three times per week. Class discussion will take place through the Discussion Board on Web Campus; postings to this discussion board and responses to other students’ postings will be part of your grade. You may also be expected to respond to the drafts of your classmates.

English 223 is a discussion-based class. You must read all the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them when discussions are due. Your contribution to this class is crucial to your success. Much of our learning will happen through group discussions and your written responses to the reading. When you miss the discussion, you will not benefit or learn from this class; therefore, participation in weekly discussions of each literary piece is mandatory.

WebCampus: This is an entirely online course. You received a WebCampus username and password in the mail before class started; this will give you access to the course. When taking an online course, you have certain responsibilities. First, plan to check the course site at least three times per week. Check the course calendar and be sure to have readings and assignments completed by the due dates. And, most importantly, be proactive about asking questions by email. If you don’t ask, I will not know what you need. Use only the WebCampus
email for class correspondence. You should save all of your emails during the semester. Do not delete anything until the course is over.

Holidays: Usually, I will not be checking the website on holidays, so please plan accordingly.

How to Navigate the Course:

We will be using these tools:

- Discussion Board to post discussions
- Class e-mail
- Syllabus to keep current with assignments
- Assignments for information about assignments and Assignment Drop Box to send assignments to me
- Calendar

Learning Modules: The course is organized in weekly learning modules. Your assignments are outlined in detail on Web Campus. Go to the homepage and click on the appropriate learning module for each week’s assignments.

Calendar: Also refer to the “Calendar” tool in Web Campus to keep track of assignments each week.

To Check Your Grades and Read My Comments: Open the “Grades” link on the left of the homepage.

Reading My Comments on Your Papers: It is essential that you read all of the comments I make on your papers and learn from these. Do not repeat mistakes that you made on a previous paper. Open the assignment, go to Submission Details, and click on the preview icon to read my comments. This is explained in the link “How do I view instructor comments?”

Essays and major assignments also have a grading rubric, which you will be able to access through the graded assignments tab.

Due Dates: All assignments must be turned in to the Assignment Drop Box on WebCampus. Each assignment has a due date. If you experience an emergency and miss the due date, you may submit your assignment within 48 hours of the due date for a twenty percent reduction in credit. The assignment will be marked as “late.” No more than two late assignments will be accepted during the semester. After the 48-hour period, you cannot submit your assignment. Only assignments submitted through the correct assignment drop box will be accepted. No assignments will be accepted through e-mail.

Assignment Submission Guidelines: All work must be typed and be formatted according to 2009 MLA guidelines. Your work must be saved as a Microsoft Word document. This means the file extension will say either “.doc” or “.docx.” If you do not have Microsoft Word, you need to save your document as a Rich Text Format document (rtf) in order for me to read it. It is your responsibility to understand this process. Microsoft Works is not the same as Microsoft
**Word.** If I can’t open your document, you will not receive a grade for the assignment. Ask the Help Desk for assistance if you do not understand how to save your work in the correct format.

**Computer Problems:** Computers crash, flash drives get lost, students go out of town and do not have Internet access, dogs eat memory sticks, and your Internet service may not work. It is your responsibility as a college student to plan ahead to avoid these problems. Save your work to avoid losing it. Computer or Internet problems are not valid excuses for not submitting your assignments.

**Discussions:** The discussion format is an important component of an online literature class, so strive to create a discussion posting that offers your insight into the reading. You must post a discussion no later than 11:55 p.m. on Thursday. You must respond to two other students’ posting by 11:55 p.m. on Saturday.

**Format for Papers:** All essays must be submitted in proper 2009 MLA format. If you have not taken a college composition course in the past year, MLA style has made some changes. You need to use the current MLA format. Read the link on the homepage under “Lecture Notes” on “Format for English Papers” for more information.

It is expected that you have learned proper grammar, sentence structure, syntax, and punctuation in English 101 and 102. Use the Purdue OWL or a handbook to check these before you submit an assignment. Present work that is neat, carefully proofread, and correctly formatted. Practice proper paragraph structure - indentation, a topic sentence that presents the paragraph’s main idea, sentences in the paragraph body that develop the topic sentence with concrete details, data, facts, and examples, and a concluding sentence.

**Point of View:** In academic writing, use the third-person point of view (he, she, it, or they). If you are writing about a personal experience, it is permissible to use first-person point of view (I), but use this sparingly and only when it adds to your paper. **Do not use second-person point of view (you) in academic writing.** Also, avoid using contractions in academic papers.

**Professionalism in Writing:** This course is a professional setting, and every message you send in such a setting needs to be clear, concise, and checked for spelling and grammar. An infrequent mistake is understandable, but if your email messages and postings are continually difficult to read, this will affect your final grade. Your writing reflects the quality of your thinking. Every message you send has the potential to elicit a reaction from your reader. Give careful consideration to how you want your readers to perceive you. When readers in a professional setting see documents with improper syntax, poor grammar, and misspellings, this affects how seriously readers will take the writer.

Do not assume that because email and discussion postings can be written quickly that they can be sloppy. Use correct grammar, capitalization, and punctuation for all of your e-mail correspondence. Use the HTML editor on all of your email messages and check them for spelling using the “ABC” icon before you send your message.
NOTE: Failure to follow these format guidelines may result in your paper being returned without an evaluation.

Your Commitment: As a student in this class, you should be prepared to spend at least nine hours a week reading and preparing assignments. It is essential that you commit yourself to this degree of involvement to be successful in this course. The class transfers to major universities, such as the University of Nevada and University of California, so you should be prepared for a workload and a level of intellectual engagement comparable to these systems. The specific assignments and requirements for the class are explained in detail in the Assignment Drop box.

Writing projects: This class requires a big commitment from you. You must be prepared to read and write for at least nine hours per week. Expect to read each of the works more than once. There is no other way you can read critically and prepare quality work. You will write three essays that will help you understand your reading style and demonstrate your ability to express an interpretation of literary themes. Requirements for these papers will be discussed at length with each assignment.

Satisfactory Progress on Written Assignments:

In order to pass this class, students must receive a passing grade (60 percent or higher) on the following written assignments:

- Thought Papers One and Two
- Literary Analysis Paper
- Literature and Culture Paper
- Cumulative score of at least 60 percent on the discussions.

Within a week of receiving grades, a student who does not receive a passing grade on a paper, excluding the final research paper, will attend a mandatory conference to discuss his or her progress in this class. For students out of the Elko area, a telephone conference will be arranged. Any student who does not comply with this requirement within a week of receiving a failing grade will be dropped from the class.

Late assignments will not be accepted. There is a cut-off date for each assignment. Once this date is past, you cannot turn an assignment in to the Drop box.

Tutoring: I recommend that you visit the Academic Success Center and meet with a tutor to go over your essays before you submit them. In Elko, call 753-2149 to make an appointment. If you are at a branch campus, contact your local campus manager to find out about tutoring. GBC also has online tutoring, which you can access from the Academic Success Center Webpage.

Student Responsibility for Dropping Courses: If you are missing assignments, it is your responsibility to drop the course at the Admissions and Records Office. If you must withdraw from the course for any reason, it is your responsibility to do so before 60 percent of the class
is completed. Check the GBC calendar each semester to find the deadline for dropping a class. If you fail to withdraw, your instructor will issue an “F” as your final grade.

Students who have incomplete or late assignments who do not drop the course will receive a failing grade.

**Student Conduct Policy:** Students are expected to follow the Student Conduct Policy for students in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) outlined in the *Great Basin College Catalog*. Students will specifically be held accountable for behaving in a civil and respectful manner toward other students and the professor in their classroom and online communications such as e-mail messages, discussion postings, and written assignments.

The college catalog states, “Messages, attitudes, or any other form of communication deemed to be outside the bounds of common decency/civility as judged by common standards of classroom behavior (determined, as they would be in a regular classroom, by the instructor) will not be tolerated” (29).

**Pay particular attention to those last four words.** Any student who behaves rudely to another student or to me will be dropped immediately. During the first week of class, students will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read the Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Policy and understand that they will be dropped from the class for violating it.

**Confidentiality:** The English Department respects the policy that your grades are your and your instructor's business only. However, during the semester, student writing will be shared with peers and/or Writing Center tutors for revision purposes and may be publicly displayed. This is an integral part of the college writing program. If you have comments concerning this policy, please make them known to me during the first week of the course.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Academic dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a student claims credit for the work or effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work. Academic dishonesty is a violation of the GBC Student Code of Conduct and will not be tolerated in this class. Any evidence of academic dishonesty/plagiarism in this course will result in a failing grade on the assignment and/or a failing grade for the course. You should be aware that at other schools you will risk failing courses and potential suspension/expulsion for academic dishonesty, which is considered a very serious offense. If you are ever uncertain about your use of another person's work, ask a tutor or me for help.

Acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

CHEATING—unauthorized copying or collaborating on a test or assignment, or the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials;
TAMPERING--altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents;

FABRICATION--falsifying experimental data or results, inventing research or laboratory data or results for work not done, or falsely claiming sources not used;

PLAGIARISM--representing someone else's words, ideas, artistry, or data as one's own, including copying another person's work (including published and unpublished material, and material from the Internet) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project, then submitting it as one's own;

ASSISTING--assisting another student in an act of academic dishonesty, such as taking a test or doing an assignment for someone else, changing someone's grades or academic records, or inappropriately distributing exams to other students.

It may be tempting to use others' ideas and words from the vast resources on the available online. Do not give in to this temptation unless you are willing to cite your sources completely. Remember, if you found something on the Internet, chances are I can find it too.

**Safe Assign**: Your major assignments will be filtered through a plagiarism prevention Website called Safe Assign, or I may ask you to submit your paper to this Website. If any portion of a paper is found to be plagiarized, it will result in failure of the course.

**Grading Policy**: Your effort and the quality of work you turn will determine your grade. The final grade for the course is based on completion of all assignments. **If you do not complete all writing requirements, you will not pass the class! No exceptions. No late work will be accepted.**

Your final grade is based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Discussions</td>
<td>20 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper proposals (2)</td>
<td>15 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Analysis Paper</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature and Culture Paper</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought Papers</td>
<td>60 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Bibliography</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15 – 20 points each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pluses and minuses may be figured into the final grade.

In order to receive full credit, an assignment must:
1. be turned in on time and follow proper 2009 MLA format
2. be complete and well thought out
3. reflect academic, college-level work/writing
4. incorporate critical thinking
This class meets General Education requirements for a humanities class, and emphasizes the following GBC General Education Outcomes:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner Outcome</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>Formally essays and thought papers evaluated by rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of communication with instructor and other students in discussions and e-mail messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An oral communication component <em>may</em> be evaluated through a presentation of the final project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing information</td>
<td>Evaluation of the depth and breadth of outside research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of essay assignments, thought papers, and responses to texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will use a variety of techniques for literary analysis.</td>
<td>Evaluated through essays, thought papers, discussion postings, and weekly assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal and cultural awareness</strong></td>
<td>Evaluated through thought papers, essay assignments, and participation in class discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technological Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Students will use Web Campus and conduct Internet research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**See the online syllabus in Web Campus for a complete list of assignments.**