ENGL 1301W Fall 2026
The Margins Are the Center: US Literature and Social Justice
Mondays/Wednesdays, 1:25-3:20 216 Pillsbury Room 335
Office: Pillsbury Hall, Suite 210
Instructor: Isabel Bethke
Office Hours: Mondays/Wednesdays, By Appointment
4 credits - Writing Intensive
Zoom Link for Virtual Meetings/Office Hours: https://umn.zoom.us/j/97662215372

Course Description:

What is the relationship between narrative and institutions of power? How do social forces shape cultural production—and vice versa? This course emphasizes how social contexts such as systemic oppression, war, dispossession, and political movements emerge in and through American literature. We will focus on selected works by U.S. minoritarian writers and artists to explore how literature is constructed and consumed (and by whom?), paying close attention to both form and content as we engage with shifting concepts of nation, representation, empire, and categories of difference (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, ability). Through class lectures, discussion, and papers, you will develop textual analysis, writing, and communication skills in our examination of the ways authors and texts respond to the dominant systems they and their reader operate within.

We will specifically focus on immigration in the United States, tracking its legal history alongside the literary tradition that enforced or rejected stereotypes about certain groups. This is not a comprehensive law and literature course. Instead, we focus on primary texts, and a variety of legal and non-legal primary and secondary course materials to engage with the history of immigration in modern American society.

Most course texts are available on Canvas as PDFs or through the UMN library for free. There is one required text, which you may purchase from the bookstore, or from any reseller/secondhand bookstore. This text has one available version on the UMN library website, and is also available at the St. Paul and Minneapolis public libraries:

Required Purchase/Acquisition: All texts will be available on Canvas.

This syllabus is copyright of the instructor and is for educational purposes only. Access is for students enrolled in this course only. Sharing or distributing this syllabus and course materials without consent from the instructor and UMN is prohibited. This includes submission of this syllabus to AI models/forums.

Course Schedule and Readings

All readings are linked on the Canvas site. They are available both in "files" and on the week module BEFORE its due date. For example, if a reading is going to be discussed in Week 4, the link to the readings are on Week 3s module.

Week 1: Introduction	**Labor Day**	**Wednesday, September 9**
	Read for 9/9: Nothing! See you in class. Sign up for presentation date	In Class: Syllabus overview Read for 9/14: *The Jungle*, Chapters 1-7 (full text available on Canvas)
Week 2: *The Jungle* and its Impact on the United States	**Monday, September 14**	**Wednesday, September 16**
	In Class: Discussion/Lecture Read for 9/16: 1. Pearce, "A Brave New Jungle: Factory Farming and Advocacy in the Twenty-First Century" 2. Banerjee, "Hygiene, Whiteness, and Immigration:	In Class: Discussion/Lecture Read for 9/21: *The Jungle*, Chapters 8-12
Week 3:	**Monday, September 21**	**Wednesday, September 23**
	In Class: Discussion, Chapters 8-12 Nina Simone: Four Women Discussion (Outside Speaker) Read for 9/23: *The Jungle*, Chapters 9-17	In Class: Student-led lecture. Lecture Introduce Final Read for 9/28: *The Jungle*, Chapters 18-27

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Week 4: Immigration History in a Nutshell	**Monday, September 28**	**Wednesday, September 30**
	In Class: Student Led Discussion, Lecture Prepare Conference Theme Read for 9/30: The Killing Floor Is a Crucial Work of Art About American Labor **Watch:** *The Killing Floor*, CONTENT WARNING: Violence, language, and racism. If you are unable to watch the film, please read this full website: https://www.the-killing-floor.com/	In Class: Student-Led Discussion, Lecture; comparison between film and novel Read for 10/5: *The Jungle*, Chapter 28-31
Week 5:	**Monday, October 5**	**Wednesday, October 7**
	In Class: Discussion, Lecture: *Final thoughts on The Jungle* Read for 10/7: Migration in *The Jungle* Conference Proposal Notes - Proposal is due in two weeks	In Class: Conference Proposal Prep - 15 minutes at the beginning of class. Bring three quotes that exemplify migration in *The Jungle*. Provide page number from your text, and a chapter number. Read for 10/12: Mae Ngai’s “Immigration and Ethnic History”

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		Chinese Exclusion Act
Week 6:	**Monday, October 12**	**Wednesday, October 14**
	Student-led discussion on Ngai Immigration Act of 1882 How the origins of America’s immigrants have changed since 1850 Conference Proposal Due in Two Weeks 10/26	In Class: Class discussion, Read for 10/19: Luibhéid, *Queer Migrations* Conference Proposal Due 10/26
Week 7:	**Monday, October 19**	**Wednesday, October 21**
	In Class: Research Discussion with Malaika Grant, Subject Librarian Begin setting final research groups. Read for 10/21: Mirzoeff, The Right to Look https://www.vera.org/news/10-stories-from-immigrants-seeking-safety-in-the-united-states	In class: Student presentations, Reading for 10/26: None. No class 10/26
Week 8:	**Monday, October 26**	**Wednesday, October 28**
	No class 10/26 Read for 10/28: Critical Archival Studies Articles	In class: Critical archival studies discussion, Finalize Research Groups

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	10/26: Conference Proposal Due	Break into research groups Read for 11/2: UN Declaration of Human Rights; Korematsu
Week 9:	**Monday, November 2**	**Wednesday, November 4**
	Read for 11/4: UN Refugee Convention and Protocol	Read for 11/9: "How to Tell a True War Story" + "Good Form" Tim O'Brien
Week 10:	**Monday, November 9**	**Wednesday, November 11**
	Watch for 11/11 FIRST: Why Cybraceros Second: https://amhistory.si.edu/docs/Womens_History_Bracero_Archive.pdf (watch FIVE - be sure to mark which ones you view) https://guides.loc.gov/latinx-civil-rights/bracero-program Guest speaker: Kerstin Tuttle	In Class: Bracero Program Overview Read for 11/16: *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, Introduction, Parts 1-3
Week 11:	**Monday, November 16**	**Wednesday, November 18**
	Read for 11/18: *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on*	DUE: Annotated

Course Schedule and Readings

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	Refugee Lives, Parts 4-8	Bibliography Due by 1:00 PM
Week 12:	**Monday, November 23**	**Wednesday, November 25**
	No Class: Open Office Hours for Annotated Bibliography Read for 11/30: Peggy Levitt, "The Role of Museums in a Time of Migration and Societal Change" ANNOTATED BIB DUE WEDNESDAY	No Class ANNOTATED BIB DUE TODAY
Week 13: Thanksgiving	**Monday, November 30**	**Wednesday, December 2**
	In Class: Presentations on Read for 11/30: Peggy Levitt, "The Role of Museums in a Time of Migration and Societal Change" Work day for final For Wednesday, December 2 Listen to "Radiolab Presents: Border Trilogy"	Class Pitch Day 1
Week 14:	**Monday, December 7**	**Wednesday, December 9**
	Final Presentation Option 1	Final Presentation Option 3
	Tuesday, December 8	**Thursday, December 10**
	Final Presentation Option 2	Final Presentation Option 4

Assignments:

In-Class Discussion/Participation: All class dates

I ask that you participate meaningfully when we meet. This can be accomplished in many ways including participating in class discussions, active listening, and attending office hours. Students who are unable to engage in class are expected to communicate with me to create an alternative plan for engagement.

Group Discussion Leader: Dates will vary by student

In week 1, students will sign up to be the discussion leader for a particular text, or section of text. The discussion leader is asked to prepare a 7-10 minute presentation on their chosen text, followed by five discussion questions to engage with the class. The discussion questions must be submitted the night before class by 11:59 PM to the corresponding Canvas Discussion Page. The Discussion leader is responsible for leading discussion on their chosen topic, and may pair with other students if desired.

Conference Proposal Submission: Due Oct 26, 2026 1:25 PM

Each student will submit a conference proposal. Conference proposals should be 500 words in length, proposing your final topic for the conference paper and presentation outlined below.

Annotated Bibliography: Due Nov 16, 2026

You will spend time in and outside of class creating an annotated bibliography to prepare for your final paper and presentation. We will discuss details in class, but please read this article carefully. Your annotated bibliography should have at minimum TEN peer-reviewed sources.

Final Paper/Conference Presentation: **Paper Draft Due December 7, 2026**
presentation due dates will vary by student, Final Draft Due December 16

Your final project will take the form of a conference paper and brief presentation. For humanities conferences like Modern Language Association Conference, Law and Society, etc… an individual can submit a proposal to be on a particular pre-formed panel. Our class conference will be based on Pew Research Center's "Voting Issues" from the 2024 presidential election. You will draft a 7-10 page research paper based on one of these social issues. In your paper, you will choose ONE fictional text (can be a book, movie, tv show, poem, short story, essay, etc…) that focuses on your chosen issue. You will perform a close reading of your chosen text, and then put the chosen text in the larger conversation about the social issue of your choice. This will require you to do scholarly research into your chosen topic. You will want to provide data about your chosen issue, perhaps including court cases, public discussions or debates, popular articles, as well as peer-reviewed articles which explain your social issue or your chosen text. We will work on this paper both in and outside of class. The final draft of this paper is due December 7.

In the final weeks of the course, we will have conference panels where you will read an abbreviated version of your paper aloud, and answer questions. Presentations should be 5 minutes in length, with ten minutes for questions.

Choose a text that focuses on a social issue of your choice from those below:
Economy
Healthcare
Foreign Policy
Violent Crime
Immigration
Gun Policy
Climate Change
Abortion
Per https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/09/09/issues-and-the-2024-election/

Course Objectives:

1) **To probe, complicate, and broaden our understanding of what US Literature and Social Injustice *means*, and what is both included and excluded. We will primarily focus on the migrant experience.**
2) **To develop intensive reading skills and individual analysis, focusing on close reading.**
3) **To engage and intensify critical writing skills, and learn how to apply those skills both in and outside the classroom.**
4) **To broaden individual and group horizons.**
5) **To build a respectful cohort of students and instructors.**

Attendance:

Students are permitted to miss two classes without grade penalty. I ask that you email me if you are unable to attend class, even if you have not missed any classes before. This class meets almost entirely in person.

Proof of Work:

This class specifically prohibits the use of AI entirely. This includes Google Gemini. Students are required to "show their work" on a Google Doc, which the Instructor will share with students the second week of class. All notes, drafting, and any other work for the class should occur on that document. This will factor into your final grade.

Grade Breakdown:

The instructor reserves the right to change the grading structure to meet course learning objectives.

Class Participation (15%)
Group Discussion Leader (25%)
Conference Proposal: (10%)
Annotated Bibliography: (10%)
Conference Paper and Presentation (40%)

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Minnesota was founded on land violently stolen from the Dakota people, for which they have never been paid or compensated. Whether we are physically on campus or elsewhere this semester, please remember that, as students of the University, we are guests on this land and that our institutional educations are a result of a broader colonialist context. We are obligated to actively reflect on our positionality in this community and respect the Dakota people who live in it. If you would like to learn more about indigenous communities around the world, I have found this resource to be a good starting place.I would also like to recognize that land acknowledgments themselves are imperfect and not supported by all Dakota people and encourage conversation and research surrounding land appropriation. More information on University of Minnesota's land acknowledgment pledge can be found here and here.

As an instructor, I know that words are not enough, and aim to bring to action support, resources, and programs that increase access to all aspects of higher education for our American Indian students, staff, faculty, and community members.

Instructor Policies

You are welcome to call me Isabel, or Instructor Bethke if that is more comfortable for you. You can email me at ijbethke@umn.edu from your UMN email. Here and here are links to some general guidelines of formatting emails to an instructor - I am not too particular about formalities, but I do value my name spelled correctly and quick proofreading concerning times / dates and clarity of your communication. I will typically respond to emails within 24 hours on

weekdays and 48 hours on weekends; though I check my inbox throughout the day, I do not usually respond after 6 pm. I am not always immediately available (nor do I expect you to be!), but I will get back to you.

I am happy to answer questions via email as I understand that sometimes you might miss something on the Canvas site or I might have been unclear in my explanations / instructions. However, to be considerate of my time as well, I would appreciate it if you checked the syllabus and Canvas modules to see if they answer your question about the course before emailing me. Any course updates or announcements will come through our Canvas page. Please be sure to access the course page and check your email regularly.

Student Safety

All individuals in the United States, regardless of immigration status, have rights. I am an UndocuAlly, and an immigration policy researcher and advocate. While I cannot give you direct legal advice, I can help you to know your rights:

Know Your Rights with ICE

Know Your Rights PowerPoint with Linked Resources

If you are undocumented, you do not need to disclose this status with me or any member of our class. If you do choose to disclose this information, it will remain private between us. You also have the right to remain silent and do not have to discuss your immigration or citizenship status with police, immigration agents, or other officials[1].

If you need additional support, please set up a meeting with me. I will do everything I can to help you stay safe.

Mutual Respect

I want to acknowledge that we all exist beyond the structure of this class - that there are many aspects to our lives beyond who we are as students or our role in the university. I want you to know that I will, to the best of my ability, act with compassion, kindness, and respect with regard to the expectations outlined in this syllabus and in all course interactions. In turn, I ask that you do the same for myself and your fellow classmates. I will not tolerate disrespect, including but not limited to racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia: if such conduct occurs in an assignment you submit to me, it will be marked incomplete / be reflected in the assigned letter grade and I will ask you to resubmit. Please let me know if something said or done throughout this course, by either myself or other students, is troubling or causes discomfort or offense. If this occurs and you do not feel comfortable addressing that concern with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address it, such as the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative

[1] https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights

Action office, your academic advisor, or English Department Director of Undergraduate Studies Siobhan Craig.

Engagement:

It is important to remember that because this is a community-based and process-driven course, if you fall behind by multiple weeks without communicating with me, it will not be possible to catch up and I will recommend that you withdraw from the course if that is still an option for you. You will not be able to pass the course if you are missing any of the three final product submissions.

You will submit all work through Canvas - please do not email me your assignments. If you are having technology issues, I encourage you to reach out to the IT help desk: they offer services both in-person in Coffman and virtually as screen-share walk-throughs.

CLA and English Departmental Policies

CLA Classroom Policies
The following policies apply to all undergraduate students enrolled in courses taught in the English Department. Instructors may develop additional policies specific to their classes (such as policies on attendance and participation, late submission of work, and grading procedures and standards), but these may not override University, college, and department policies. This is not an exhaustive list but a compilation of the most frequently requested classroom policies.

The University requires that course syllabi include copies of, references to, or statements about those policies marked with an asterisk (*) after the title. For more information, see the policy on Syllabus Requirements.

Attendance (Department Policy)
Students are responsible for all information disseminated in class and all course requirements, including deadlines and examinations. The instructor will specify whether class attendance is required or counted in the grade for a class. In the absence of a course-specific attendance policy, the following department policy is in effect. Students should attend every class meeting, on time and prepared, and should remain in class for the duration of the class period. If a student misses the equivalent of one week of class with unexcused absences, his or her grade may be lowered. Once a student misses the equivalent of three weeks with unexcused absences, he or she may fail

the course. Students are responsible for all material and assignments missed because of absence or lateness.

Mandatory Attendance at First Class Session and Consequences for Absence
Students must attend the first class meeting of every course in which they are registered unless (1) they obtain approval from the instructor before the first meeting or (2) they provide notice to the instructor they must miss class because of a recognized religious holiday. Otherwise, they may lose their places in class to other students. For more information, see the policy on Mandatory Attendance at First Class Session and Consequences for Absence.

Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences*
University policy recognizes that there are a variety of legitimate circumstances in which students will miss coursework, and that accommodations for makeup work will be made. Such circumstances include illness, physical or mental, of you or your dependent; medical conditions related to pregnancy; participation in intercollegiate athletic events; subpoenas; jury duty; military service; bereavement, including travel related to bereavement; religious observances; participation in formal University system governance, including the University Senate, Student Senate, and Board of Regents meetings, by students selected as representatives to those bodies; and activities sponsored by the University if identified by the senior academic officer for the campus or the officer's designee as the basis for excused absences. Such circumstances do not include voting in regional, state, or national elections. For more information, please see the University policy on make-up work.

Grading and Workload Expectations
Grade Definitions*
The University uses plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

A (4.000) - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
A- (3.667)
B+ (3.333)
B (3.000) - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
B- (2.667)
C+ (2.333)
C (2.000) - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
C- (1.667)
D+ (1.333)

D (1.000) - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
S - Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better
For additional information, please refer to the University policy on Grading and Transcripts.

Grading Systems
The two major grading systems used are the A-F and S-N. Departmental majors must take major courses on the A-F system; non-majors may use either system. The instructor will specify criteria and achievement levels required for each grade. All students, regardless of the system used, will be expected to do all work assigned in the course, or its equivalent as determined by the instructor. Any changes you wish to make in the grading base must be done in the first two weeks of the semester.

Expected Student Academic Work per Credit
The University prescribes the quantity of work needed to earn a credit as three hours per credit per week or 42-45 hours per semester. A student should therefore expect to spend about nine hours per week, including class time, on a 3-credit course. Workload expectations are an estimate of the amount of work needed for an average student to earn an average grade. Course grades are based on the quality of the work submitted, not on hours of effort. For more information, see the policy on Expected Student Academic Work per Credit.

Student Conduct
Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty*
Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as: plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask. Review the University's Student Conduct Code.

Student Conduct Code*

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community. As a student at the University you are expected to adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities." Review the University's Student Conduct Code.

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials
Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see the policy on Student Responsibilities.

Equitable Access
Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action*
The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy.

Sexual Harassment*
"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature under either of the following conditions: (a) when it is stated or implied that an individual needs to submit to, or participate in, conduct of a sexual nature in order to maintain their employment or educational standing or advance in their employment or education (quid pro quo sexual harassment); (b) when the conduct: (1) is severe, persistent or pervasive; and (2) unreasonably interferes with an individual's employment or educational performance or creates a work or educational environment that the individual finds, and a reasonable person would find, to be intimidating, hostile or offensive (hostile environment sexual harassment). Sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, relationship violence and related retaliation are all prohibited conduct at the University of Minnesota. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy.

In my role as a University employee, I am required to share information that I learn about possible sexual misconduct with the campus Title IX office that addresses these concerns. This allows a Title IX staff member to reach out to those who have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about the personal support resources and options for investigation that they can choose to access. You are welcome to talk with me about concerns related to sexual misconduct. Within the requirements of my job, I will be as responsive to your requests for confidentiality and support as possible. You can also or alternately choose to talk with a confidential resource that will not share information that they learn about sexual misconduct. Confidential resources include The Aurora Center, Boynton Mental Health and Student Counseling Services.

Disability Accommodations*

The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or you think you have, a disability in any area such as mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC office on your campus (612-626-1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.

If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations please contact your access consultant/disability specialist.

Additional information is available on the DRC website or e-mail drc@umn.edu with questions.

Names and Pronouns

University members and units are expected to use the names, gender identities, and pronouns specified to them by other University members, except as legally required. University members and units are also expected to use other gendered personal references, if any, that are consistent with the gender identities and pronouns specified by University members. The full policy about names and pronouns.

Academic Services

Mental Health and Stress Management*

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating, and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website.

Academic Learning Support Services

The University provides a wide range of resources to support your learning. These include:

SMART Learning Commons

An all-in-one undergraduate academic support center located in the three main libraries—Wilson, Walter, and Magrath. The SMART Learning Commons offers support through peer tutoring (tutoring for over 200 undergraduate courses), peer-assisted learning groups (weekly facilitated study sessions connected to specific courses), peer research consultants (one-on-one assistance in conducting research), and media consultants (individual help with media projects).

Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence

Group and individual tutoring and skill-building workshops where students can take their time to learn, study together, develop support groups, and build lasting friendships.

Student Academic Success Services

One-on-one academic counseling and online self-help materials focusing on academic skills.

Student Writing Support

Student Writing Support (SWS) offers free writing instruction for all University of Minnesota students—graduate and undergraduate—at all stages of the writing process. In face-to-face and online collaborative consultations, SWS consultants from across the disciplines help students develop productive writing habits and revision strategies. Consulting is available by appointment online and in Nicholson Hall, and on a walk-in basis in Appleby Hall. For more information, call 612-625-1893 or go to the SWS site. In addition, SWS offers a number of web-based resources on topics such as avoiding plagiarism, documenting sources, and planning and completing a writing project.

Students for Whom English is a Second Language (Department Policy)

University policy requires that undergraduate students in the same class be held to the same standards of academic performance and accomplishment. Students for whom English is a second language, however, may have difficulty with the readings, lectures, discussions, and writing assignments in a course. The University offers many resources to assist non-native speakers of English, including courses and consultations through the Minnesota English Language Program, the Center for Writing, the Department of Writing Studies, and International Student and Scholar

Services. Please speak with your instructor if you would like to learn more about these opportunities.

Academic Freedom

Academic Freedom and Responsibility*

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

Offensive Material (Department Policy)

In any course, students may be required to read words or view images that they may consider offensive. The ideas expressed in any given text do not necessarily reflect the views of the instructor, the Department of English, or the University of Minnesota. Course materials have been selected for their literary, cultural, and/or historical value, in order to achieve specific learning objectives and course goals. These materials are meant to be examined in the context of intellectual inquiry and critical analysis, as appropriate for a university-level course. If you are easily shocked and/or offended, please contact your instructor to discuss whether a course is suitable for you.

College of Liberal Arts Grading Policies

The following grading policies apply to courses offered in the College of Liberal Arts. Instructors need not include statements about these policies on course syllabi, but students should familiarize themselves with these policies as applicable.

Satisfactory

Standards for the S grade ("satisfactory" work) may vary from one course to another. The instructor may also set different tasks or establish different criteria for S-N and A-F registrants. However, the work required for an S may not be less than that required for a C- (1.67 grade points). The S is not figured into the grade point average.

Maximum Limits for S-N Grades

In order to complete a degree at the University, a student must take a minimum of 30 semester credits offered through the University. This includes 24 credits taken after admission for students

in the College of Liberal Arts. Seventy-five percent, or at least 22 credits of the 30 credit minimum, must be taken on the A-F grade basis (with grades of D or higher). No courses taken for major or minor credit may be taken on the S-N grade basis unless the courses are designated "S-N only" and approved by the major department.

Withdrawals

If a student officially withdraws from a course during the first two weeks of classes, no record of that course registration will remain on the student's transcript. If a student officially withdraws from a course during the third through tenth week of class, or during the second or third weeks of summer sessions, a W (withdrawal) will be entered on the transcript. Withdrawal after the deadlines (with the exception of the one-time late withdrawal, noted below) will require approval of the College of Liberal Arts and may not be granted solely because a student is failing the course; there must be extenuating non-academic circumstances justifying late withdrawal.

One-time Late Withdrawal

Each student may, once during his or her undergraduate enrollment, withdraw from a course without college approval, and receive the transcript symbol W, after the deadline for withdrawal and at any time up to and including the last day of instruction for that course. A student may not withdraw after completing the final examination or equivalent for a course.

Withdrawals and Misconduct

Students cannot evade (intentionally or unintentionally) a grade sanction by withdrawing from a course before or after a misconduct charge is reported. This also applies to late withdrawals, including the one-time late withdrawal.

Incompletes

The instructor will specify the conditions, if any, under which an "Incomplete" will be assigned instead of a grade. The instructor may set dates and conditions for makeup work, if it is to be allowed. The student and instructor must fill out an Agreement for the Completion of Incomplete Work stating the terms for completion whenever an incomplete is requested and approved. Undergraduates must submit work to make up an Incomplete within one year of the last final examination of the term in which the I was granted. (Students called to active military duty have up to one calendar year following their discharge from active duty to complete their incompletes). If the work is not submitted by that time, the I will automatically change to an F (A-F grade base) or an N (S-N grade base).