

ENGLISH 209Q:
BLUE RIDGE TO BLUE SEA: CULTURES OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH
COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2013
Classtime: TR 12:15-1:30 p.m.
Room: EHFA 252

Professor: Dr. Daniel Cross Turner
Office: EHFA 222
Office Hours: TR 11:10 a.m.-12:10 p.m.; T 1:40-2:40 p.m.; R 1:40-4:20 p.m.; *and by appointment*
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

ENGL 209 Blue Ridge to Blue Sea: Cultures of the American South (3) (Prereq: ENGL 101). This course will immerse students in diverse perspectives on the American South by investigating the ways in which the multifaceted cultural spaces and histories from “Blue Ridge” to “Blue Sea” are reflected in literature and other media.

COURSE INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- For students to gain an overall understanding of various literary and historical subcultures of the American South from the antebellum period to the present
- For students to explore the relation between historical pressures and aesthetic forms, including contested issues such as the definition of regional identity and its relation to ideas of nationhood, economics, class, ethnicity, and gender
- For students to expand their knowledge of literature in its broader contexts by analyzing works in connection with theoretical arguments as well as with other cultural forms and artifacts, such as painting, photography, architecture, popular music, and cinema, that focus on the American South
- For students to develop critical thinking and writing skills in a collaborative intellectual environment
- For students to utilize the travel component of the course to gain firsthand, experiential knowledge of southern cultures

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who successfully complete ENGL 209 will meet the following SLOs as described by the Quality Enhancement Program, **Experienced@Coastal**:

Goal 1. Students participate in experiential learning activities that complement and build on the knowledge and skills relevant to their academic program and/or career goals.

SLO 1.1. Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills obtained through participation in experiential learning activities that are relevant/pertinent to their academic programs and/or career goals.

*To address SLO 1.1 students will write a short paper the first week of the semester identifying which of the planned travel immersion activities they will participate in and explaining what they expect to gain from each experiential learning (EL) activity.

Goal 2. Students critically reflect on the relationship between and among experiential learning, their academic experience and the world in which they live.

SLO 2.1. Students will demonstrate a high level of comprehension and skill in connecting theory with practice which is correlated to their level of participation in Experiential Learning activities.

*To address SLO 2.1 each student will be required to write a formal research essay (7-8 pages) that integrates research and responses garnered from their EL activities in connection with formal analysis of a particular text/texts drawn from our course syllabus. A major component of the research essay will be to explain how their on-site learning and research affected or enhanced their understanding of our readings and in-class discussions. They will present a version of their essay in a multi-day in-class conference at the end of the semester.

SLO 2.2. Students will compare and contrast their expected learning to their actual learning derived from Experiential Learning activities.

* To address SLO 2.2 students will return to their initial short writing assignment in SLO 1.1 and write a supplementary paper describing and assessing their expected learning vis-à-vis their actual learning from their EL activities.

SLO 2.3. Students will reflect on the impact that Experiential Learning activities have had on their relationship to the world in which they live.

*To address SLO 2.3 students will conduct and present original research in class based on one of the travel immersion sites for the course that will strengthen research as well as oral communication skills and describe how the EL activities have changed or deepened their view of southern culture.

In addition, students who successfully complete ENGL 209 will meet the following SLOs specific to this course:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the form and content of the primary text(s) at the center of the course, as well as a knowledge of those texts' place within their historical and cultural specificity
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate critical and theoretical scholarship relevant to the course topic
- Illustrate the communication skills (written and oral) necessary to the sharing of their research with critical audiences, both peer and faculty

CLASS ATTENDANCE (*adapted from the University Catalog*):

Stated simply, you are obligated to attend each class session. On-time attendance is required at all class meetings unless you have obtained permission in advance. Students with more than three unexcused absences will be penalized by having their semester grade lowered by half a letter grade for each additional absence (e.g., an A will be lowered to a B+; a B+ will be lowered to a B; a B will be lowered to a C+; a C+ will be lowered to a C; and so on). In addition, this instructor will impose a penalty, including assigning the grade of F, for **unexcused absences in excess of 30%** of the regularly scheduled class meetings. Absences and tardiness do not in any way absolve a student from the responsibility of completing all assigned work promptly. Excuses like work, family, and scheduled doctor's appointments will be declined. The only acceptable "excused absences" are noted in the CCU Catalog. These include documented cases of:

- incapacitating illness
- official representation of the University (excuses for official representation of the University must be obtained from the official supervising the activity)
- death of a close relative
- religious holidays

Students who miss course work obligations due to excused absences only may be allowed to make up the work at the discretion of the instructor. *However*, the instructor will not allow a student to make up work missed due to an unexcused absence. Students should keep a record of their absences and should not expect to be reminded by the instructor that they have missed an excessive number of classes. If you must be absent from class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and fulfilling any assignments due. Find a reliable classmate and ask to borrow his or her notes for the missed day.

CLASS ETIQUETTE:

As an active and engaged participant in ENGL 209, you are required to turn off and put away all electronic devices during class time (cell phones, iPods, laptops, iPads, etc.). Any student observed in violation of this policy will receive an "unexcused" absence for that class period.

GRADING SYSTEM (*as outlined in the University Catalog*):

Enrollment in a course obligates the student not only for prompt completion of all work assigned but also for punctual and regular attendance and for participation in whatever class discussion may occur. It is the student's responsibility to stay informed concerning all assignments made. Absences, whether excused or unexcused, do not absolve the student from this responsibility.

A (100-90), B+ (89-87) and B (86-80), C+ (79-77) and C (76-70), D+ (69-67) and D (66-60), and F (59-0) carry the traditional academic connotations of excellent, good, average, poor, and failing performance, respectively.

LATE WORK:

Unexcused late work will be penalized **one letter grade per day** including weekends and breaks. Extensions for assignments are rarely given. Only in extreme cases (serious illness, death in the immediate family) will you be permitted to turn in a late assignment without penalty. Be sure to notify us in advance if you feel you have a legitimate reason for missing a due date.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I enforce a zero tolerance policy with respect to plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism cases may result in an “F” for the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the University. Always acknowledge the source for any idea that is not your own, including of course any online sources. The number of students failing courses owing to internet plagiarism has been rising. Cheating is the quickest and easiest way to fail this course. An essential part of a liberal arts curriculum is learning to interpret the world in your own terms; plagiarizing violates this deep responsibility to express your own ideas in your own language.

GRADES:

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

- **Initial Essay on Immersion Activities Choice/Rationale (10%) and Reflection Essay on Expectations and Results (10%):** Students will not only fill out the QEP Questionnaire concerning experiential learning dimension of the course, but will also write an initial essay describing their choice of immersion activities and rationale for the particular experiential learning activities they will participate in over the course of the semester (2 pages). They will write a supplementary essay evaluating their expectations of the experiential learning aspects *vis-à-vis* their perceived results of this aspect of the course (3 pages).
- **Individual Research Presentation (20%):** Each student will sign up to do an individual presentation (10 minutes) based on a particular text we are reading. Your presentation should briefly give relevant historical background on the text under study. More significantly, your presentation should help establish and expand the parameters of our discussion by elucidating critical perspectives on your chosen text as well as providing trenchant interpretations of particular passages.
- **Class Participation/Quizzes/Journals (15%):** Vigorous and fruitful contribution to in-class discussion is not only requested, it is required...and graded. I expect you to participate actively and productively in class discussions. You should use this course to develop your oral communication skills in addition to your writing skills. Reading quizzes may be given at any time to gauge your level of preparation and your comprehension of the assigned texts. You will also do “in-the-field” journaling during some of our experiential learning activities to record your immediate impressions and responses.
- **Formal Research Essay (30%):** You will write one formal research essay (7-8 pages) for this course. For this paper, you should provide a clear and coherent analysis of one or more of the assigned texts on our syllabus. Again, your analysis should be cogently argued, mechanically proficient, and amply supported with detailed close readings that set forth your interpretation of evidence from the text, but it should also make use of outside research. This project will take shape over the course of the semester and will require outside of class research, analysis, and writing. Your final essay should contain a minimum of three legitimate scholarly sources (e.g., scholarly articles, book chapter, books) that you incorporate into your own argument about the work under study. You do not necessarily have to agree with your secondary sources; instead, you can critique their arguments in order to lend your interpretation more validity. To make sure you are headed in a productive direction before the paper is due, I will ask that you turn in a one-page prospectus outlining your intended topic for your research essay.
- **Final Exam (15%):** During the scheduled final examination period, you will have an exam to assess your understanding of the key texts and concepts of our course.

FINAL DISCLAIMER:

The professor claims the right to make slight adjustments to this syllabus when necessary. Listed above are the general terms of our contract for this semester. Exceptions to the rules of the course are rarely given, so see me in advance if you feel you have legitimate extenuating circumstances. If you ever have any questions or concerns about the course or these policies during the semester, please feel free to get in touch with me in person, by phone, or by email. *If you are not available to meet during my office hours, we'll find a mutually agreeable meeting time.*

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Josephine Humphreys, *Nowhere Else on Earth* (Penguin)
- Ron Rash, *Serena* (Ecco)
- Casey Clabough, *Confederado: A Novel of the Americas* (Ingalls)
- John Lane, *My Paddle to the Sea: Eleven Days on the River of the Carolinas* (U of Georgia P)

SPECIFIC COURSE TOPIC:

ENGL 209: Blue Ridge to Blue Sea: Cultures of the American South will immerse students in diverse perspectives—esthetic, ecological, socio-historical—on the American South. Following historian

Charles Joyner's famous advice for scholars to ask big questions in small places, the course will employ the South Carolina coastal area to upcountry South Carolina and the western North Carolina mountains as a cross-section of various southern subcultures. To what extent does "a sense of place" shape literature, language, customs, and identity? Through a spectrum of literary works, films, and other cultural media produced in and/or about these subregions, students will be able to engage with distinctly plural *senses* of place: *geographic and ecological* (e.g., mountains, flatlands, marshlands, coastlines, as well as signs of human participation in these landscapes), *social and economic* (e.g., upcountry yeoman farms, lowcountry rice and indigo plantations based on chattel slavery, textile mills, entrepreneurship, military bases, universities), as well as *ethnic* (e.g., Native American, Gullah, Appalachian). Do these diverse texts and geographic spaces cohere into a vision of southern culture "writ large"? Per traditional southern studies, "writ large" has typically meant the American South as a place of intact separation, a world apart from the rest of the U.S. and other regions. Yet, can we expand the meaning of "writ large" to view the South, not in isolation, but in connection with other cultures and places—southern culture "writ larger"? How might national and global cultures be expressed locally in and across the South? The course will investigate the ways in which the multifaceted cultural spaces and histories from "Blue Ridge" to "Blue Sea" are reflected—or, as likely, reinvented—in literary and other media concerning these areas.

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

ENGLISH 209Q: BLUE RIDGE TO BLUE SEA: CULTURES OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY / SPRING 2013

REVISED ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:

R 1/17: Revisiting "The South"

- Daniel Cross Turner, "From Blue Ridge to Blue Sea" *SSSL Newsletter* (Spring 2011)
- Nicole King, "Traveling to the Newer South of the Border" *South Writ Large* (Summer 2012)
- Lynne Freely, "On Going to the Plantation Forever" *Avidly* (Fall 2012)
- Jim Rutenberg, "Dueling Visions of the Old South" *New York Times* (2009)
- George Packer, "The Political Isolation of the American South" *The New Yorker* (2013)

T 1/22: Before "The War"

- William Gilmore Simms, "Grayling; or 'Murder Will Out'" (1845)
- *QEP: Experienced@Coastal Pre-Activity Questionnaire**

R 1/24: The Cult of the Lost Cause

- Henry Timrod, "At Magnolia Cemetery" (1867)
- Sidney Lanier, "The Dying Words of Stonewall Jackson" (1865)
- Andrew Hudgins, selected poems from *After the Lost War* (1988): "After the Wilderness"; "Burial Detail"; "Around the Campfire"

T 1/29: A Woman's View of The War

- Mary Boykin Chesnut, selected entries from *A Diary from Dixie* (1860s)

R 1/31: *Redirect for EL

T 2/5: Fables of the Reconstruction/Reconstruction of the Fables

- Charles W. Chesnutt, "The Goophered Grapevine" (1887)

R 2/7: Chesnutt

T 2/12: North versus South

- F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Ice Palace" (1920)

R 2/14: *Redirect for EL

***QEP: Initial Essay: Choice of Immersion Activities/Rationale (1-2 pages; 10%)**

T 2/19: Changing Landscapes of the Eco-South

- John Lane, *My Paddle to the Sea* (2011)

R 2/21: *Redirect for EL

T 2/26: Lane

R 2/28: Contemporary Appalachian Poets:

- Charles Wright, selected poems
- Betty Adcock, selected poems
- Robert Morgan, selected poems

- Fred Chappell, selected poems
- Ron Rash, selected poems
- Allison Hedge Coke, selected poems

T 3/5: **The Scots-Irish Tragedy: All Unquiet on the Western NC Front**

- Ron Rash, *Serena* (2008)

R 3/7: Rash

T 3/12-R 3/14: **SPRING BREAK**

***QEP: Western NC/Upcountry SC [F 3/8 – Su 3/11]**

+Resident Experts: Ron Rash, John Lane, and Erica Abrams Locklear

M 3/18: ***QEP: On Campus**

+Resident Expert: SC State Senator and 2010 Democratic Nominee for Governor Vincent Sheheen

T 3/19: **Southern Dialect(ics)**

- Edgar Allan Poe, “The Gold-Bug” (1843)
- John Bennett, from *Doctor to the Dead: Grotesque Legends and Folk Tales of Old Charleston* (1946)
- Genevieve Wilcox Chandler (collector), from *Coming Through: Voices of a South Carolina Gullah Community from WPA Oral Histories* (2008)
- Charles Joyner, from *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (1984)

R 3/21: Poe, Bennett, Chandler

T 3/26: **Mixed Memories: Remembering the Native South**

- Josephine Humphreys, *Nowhere Else on Earth* (2000)

R 3/28: ***QEP: On Campus**

+Resident Expert: Nicole King

T 4/2: Humphreys

R 4/4: **South of South: GloSo Confederado**

- Casey Clabough, *Confederado: A Novel of the Americas* (2012)

T 4/9: ***QEP: On Campus**

+Resident Expert: Casey Clabough

R 4/11: **The Hardboiled South**

Mickey Spillane, selected creative nonfiction
James Dickey, selected poems

T 4/16: Spillane and Dickey

R 4/18: ***QEP: Lowcountry SC: [F 4/19 – Su 4/21]**

+Resident Expert: Josephine Humphreys (Sullivan’s Island, SC)

T 4/23: **Student Presentations Forum I**

***QEP: Reflection on Experiential Learning: Expectations and Results (2-3 pages; 10%)**

R 4/25: **Student Presentations Forum II**

T 4/30: **Student Presentations Forum III**

***QEP: Formal Research Essay (7-8 pages; 30%)**

Official Exam Period: **Final Exam (15%)**

QEP ACTIVITIES:

Potential Resident Experts and Activities:

In addition to current faculty members at Coastal Carolina University from a range of disciplines (e.g., creative writers Dan Albergotti and Jason Ockert; linguists Becky Childs and Daniel Hasty; Gullah specialist Veronica Gerald; historians Maggi Morehouse and Eldred “Wink” Prince; archeologists Cheryl Ward, Sharon Moses, and Carolyn Dillian; religious studies expert Preston McKeever-Floyd; musical experts David Bankston and Matthew White), we may call on the following external writers and scholars as “resident experts”:

- +**Casey Clabough:** creative writer and literary scholar to talk with students about his experiences hiking along The Warrior’s Path in the Great Smoky mountains as well as his new novel *Confederado* (Conway, SC)
- +**Ron Rash:** creative writer to talk with students and answer questions about his fiction and poetry set in western NC and upcountry SC, including the novel *Serena* (Cullowhee, NC).
- +**Erica Abrams Locklear:** scholar of Appalachian literature and culture at the University of North Carolina at Asheville (Asheville, NC)
- +**John Lane:** creative writer/environmental author to meet with students and talk about connections between the ecological history and the writing of the region, drawing from his books of narrative nonfiction, *Circling Home* and *My Paddle to the Sea* (Glendale Shoals Environmental Studies Center, Glendale, SC).
- +**Charles Joyner:** CCU Distinguished Professor Emeritus and internationally recognized historian and expert on lowcountry and Gullah cultures (Conway, SC)
- +**Josephine Humphreys:** nationally prominent creative writer from Charleston, SC, who will talk with students about her work based in these microregions, including *Rich in Love* in Charleston and *Nowhere Else on Earth* in Robeson County, NC (Sullivan’s Island, SC).
- +**Bruce Eelman:** historian and author of *Entrepreneurs in the Southern Upcountry: Commercial Culture in Spartanburg, South Carolina, 1845-1880*, the most comprehensive account of the diverse economic history of the western North Carolina/piedmont South Carolina subregions. Eelman argues that these areas offer compelling examples of commercial entrepreneurship in contrast to traditional understandings of the region as predominantly agrarian.

These are some potential onsite, experiential learning activities for the course, though specific activities and sites will vary by semester.

- +Hiking in the Blue Ridge mountains (Pisgah National Forest, NC)
- +Touring Thomas Wolfe’s home (Asheville, NC)
- +Visiting Carl Sandburg’s farm (Flat Rock, NC)
- +Visiting old mills and mill towns (Glendale, SC)
- +Visiting plantation houses and grounds, such as Brookgreen Garden (Georgetown County, SC) and Drayton Hall (Charleston, SC)
- +Exploring local ecology (Waties Island, SC), marshlands (Huntington State Park, SC), and waterways (Waccamaw River)
- +Engaging with Gullah culture (Sandy Island, SC)
- +Touring downtown Charleston, including the Market and the Battery
- +Visiting Ft. Moultrie (Sullivan’s Island)