College of Arts & Letters
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

IAH 207: Lit, Cultures, Identities

Redefining Renaissance: From the Early Modern through the COVID-19 Era
Summer 2022 Syllabus

Instructor

Professor
Katherine Knowles

Contact Information

- Office Hours: by appointment via my Calendly page - a Zoom link will be generated when you schedule a meeting
- Email: knowle50@msu.edu

Course Description

In this class, we will explore the meaning of the term renaissance and examine how the idea of renaissance has shaped literary history. We will begin in "the Renaissance," then analyze renaissance periods in Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQ+ literature to examine both the importance and limitations of thinking about these artistic outputs through this lens. We will read works by authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Gloria Anzaldúa, Tony Kushner, and William Shakespeare. We will also question the expectation that the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to another renaissance period similar to the plague years in early modern Europe. Throughout the semester, you will work to create a digital project in the form of a podcast, multimedia poster, or website around the theme of renaissance.

Course Goals and Outcomes

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Identify traits of renaissance periods in a variety of different historical and artistic contexts
- Develop close reading and critical analysis skills to help them understand literature from a variety of historical periods and cultures
- Engage with selected critical scholarship to hone abilities to participate in scholarly discussions around both literary and critical writings
- Draw connections between course texts and articulate their thoughts via a digital scholarly project that has a clear thesis and well developed argument

- Thoughtfully engage with a variety of digital projects and tools as both producers and consumers

Mission and Goals of IAH

The mission of IAH is to empower students to more deeply reflect on, understand, inquire about, and transform the world around them, and to invite all students into lifelong engagement with the arts and humanities. More specifically, IAH enhances students' capabilities to:

- Reflect with intellectual curiosity on their own lives, knowledge, values, needs and desires, experiences, and/or professional or other communities
- Understand and engage with diverse cultures, communities, identities, experiences, and histories
- Explore challenging questions about culture, artistic expression, systems of power, the nature of information and knowledge, or other topics that are essential to understanding what it means to be a human being and a global citizen in the 21st century
- Interact with the wider world in creative, critical, and socially responsible ways

The goals of IAH courses are to assist students to
- Cultivate habits of inquiry and develop investigative strategies from arts and humanities perspectives;
- Explore social, cultural, and artistic expressions and contexts;
- Act as culturally aware and ethically responsible citizens in local and global communities;
- Critically assess, produce, and communicate knowledge in a variety of media for a range of audiences; and
- Recognize and understand the value of diversity and the significance of interconnectedness in the classroom and beyond.

MSU's Diversity Requirement

Students must include at least one "N" course and one "I" course in their program. A "D" course may meet either an "N" or an "I" requirement, but not both. This requirement is intended to increase cultural understanding in ways that empower students to act as engaged, well-informed citizens as they meet the challenges and opportunities of a complex, interconnected world in the 21st century. In addition to the academic benefits of diverse perspectives, employers increasingly seek out college graduates who are skilled in communicating to varied audiences and making decisions that reflect broad historical, social, and cultural knowledge. Overall, fulfilling the IDN designations prepare students to respond constructively to opportunities connected with our pluralistic society and global community.

This course is designated as International (I) and has been approved as fulfilling one course toward the University Diversity Requirement. Courses designated as International (I) emphasize international or global issues, ideas, and perspectives. The "I" designates a focus on one or more non-U.S. contexts and diversity topics as

they unfold in these contexts. Non-U.S. examples and readings play a dominant role in shaping the lens through which diversity is addressed. The learning objectives and outcomes of the course will emphasize this designation and provide a guide for how this course furthers understanding of diversity at MSU and beyond.

Course Materials
You are only required to purchase a single novel for this course. All other materials will be posted to our class's D2L page.

Required to Purchase
- *House Made of Dawn*
  - o Author(s): N. Scott Momaday
  - o Edition: 50th Anniversary
  - o ISBN: 978-0062909954
  - o Purchase: Available at University Book Store or online at https://www.amazon.com/dp/0062909959?psc=1&ref=ppx_yo2_dt_b_product_details

Other Materials (Provided on D2L)
- Benjamin Ostermeier, "Creating a Podcast with Soundtrap"
- Soundtrap, "Storytellers"
- Create., "Interactive Posters"
- Julie Logan, "Digital Poster"
- Coates Library, "Creating Websites: Learn to Create Websites Using Google Sites and WordPress"
- John Donne, "Death, Be Not Proud"
- Edmund Spenser, "Amoretti XXX: My Love is like to ice, and I to fire"
- Sir Philip Sidney, "Astrophil and Stella 39: Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace"
- William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 116: Let me not to the marriage of true minds"
- dir. Liv Thomsen, *The Renaissance: When the World was Reborn*
- Selected poems by Claude McKay:
  - o "If We Must Die"
  - o "The Lynching"
  - o "America"
- Selected short stories by Zora Neale Hurston:
  - o "Mother Catherine"
  - o "John Redding Goes to Sea"
- Leslie Marmon Silko, "The Man to Send Rainclouds"
- Tony Kushner, *Angels in America - Part 1: Millennium Approaches*
- Selected essays by Gloria Anzaldúa from *This Bridge Called My Back*:
  - o "Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to Third World Women Writers"
  - o "La Prieta"
- Andrew Dickson, "Shakespeare in lockdown: did he write King Lear in plague quarantine?"

- Peter Marks, "Shakespeare wrote 'King Lear' during a plague. What great work will emerge from this pandemic?"
- Emilie Lorditch, "Redefining art, finding a voice during COVID-19"
- Ada Palmer, "Black Death, COVID, and Why We Keep Telling the Myth of a Renaissance Golden Age and Bad Middle Ages"
- Noel King and Allison Aubrey, "Success Of COVID-19 Vaccines Ushers In Renaissance In Vaccine Technology"

Course Technologies

This asynchronous course will operate on two platforms:
- D2L, which is where you will find course materials including the syllabus, course policies, writing resources, readings, lectures, weekly activities, and assignments.
- Zoom, which is where all office hours and individually scheduled meetings will be held.

Please note that if you have any issues with D2L, contact MSU IT Service Desk directly. They will notify me if a technical issue has occurred that prevents you from submitting an assignment or completing an activity and provide the time stamp for the problem. Do not wait until the last minute--failed internet connection is not a valid reason for late work.

Turnitin OriginalityCheck in D2L

Consistent with MSU's efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool in D2L called Turnitin OriginalityCheck to compare a student's work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student's work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a "similarity score." The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool. Students should submit assignments to be screened by OriginalityCheck without identifying information included in the assignment (e.g., the student's name, PID, or NetID); the system will automatically show identifying information to the course faculty when viewing the submissions, but this information will not be retained by Turnitin.

Classroom Civility Statement

Adapted from Koritha Mitchell, Ohio State University: This class will be free of hate speech regarding sexual orientation, gender expression, race, religion, and socio-economic status or background. Inflammatory remarks will not go unchecked and will not be tolerated. Each member of this class is responsible for fostering an environment in which people and their ideas are respected. For the same reasons, students will strive to make remarks that are informed by our material and the history that surrounds it. The professor is accountable for their statements; students must be, too.

Descriptions of Major Assignments

Weekly Activities (30%)
due Sundays at 11:59 PM
Each week, you will be asked to engage with the readings through a short activity asking you to think critically about the topics we are covering in class. Examples of activities include analyzing a digital project, finding scholarly resources, or evaluating an argument.

Project Proposal (20%)
due May 29th, 2022 at 11:59 PM
In the project proposal, you will identify the topic of your final project and propose a tentative thesis and research question. Your proposal should include a two page description of your topic, a one page rationale for your selected medium, a short annotated bibliography, and a project timeline.

Project Draft & Peer Evaluation (20%)
draft due June 12, 2022 at 11:59 PM; evaluation due June 19, 2022 at 11:59 PM
The purpose of the project draft is to help keep you on track and have the opportunity to receive feedback before the final version is due. Drafts are not expected to be perfect and should prioritize content over aesthetics. Following the submission of the drafts, you will be assigned two of your peers' projects to review and provide constructive feedback.

Final Project & Reflection (30%)
due June 30, 2022 at 11:59 PM
For your final project, I am asking you to develop a website, multimedia poster presentation, or podcast around the theme of renaissance. You can focus on a specific period of renaissance that we've discussed in class or research a new one. The main goal is to demonstrate you understand the concept and convince your audience why renaissance periods are important in a variety of communities and contexts. In addition to your digital project, you will also be asked to submit a three page reflection paper based on your experiences working on the project.

Course Grading
The table below describes the graded course activities including points and activity description. The first column includes the points possible, and the second column includes a description for each activity.

Percentages	Description
30%	Weekly Activities
20%	Project Proposal
20%	Project Draft (10%) & Peer Evaluation (10%)
30%	Final Project (20%) & Reflection (10%)
100%	**Total Percentage**

Grade Assignment (Grading Scale):

The table below describes the relationships between letter grades, percent, and performance. The first column describes the grade. The second column describes the percentage range associated with that letter grade. The third column describes the performance represented by that letter grade and percentage.

Grade	Percentage	Performance
4.0	90 to 100%	Excellent Work
3.5	85 to 89%	Nearly Excellent Work
3.0	80 to 84%	Very Good Work
2.5	75 to 79%	Good work
2.0	70 to 74%	Somewhat good work
1.5	65 to 69%	Poor Work
1.0	60 to 64%	Barely adequate work
0.0	0 to 59%	Failing work

Scoring:

For more information on what you will be scored on for each Assignment, please view the "Assignments" document included in the course introduction. This assignment sheet provides detailed instructions and expectations. If you have any questions about assessment, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Attendance, Participation, and Late Work

Attendance & Participation

As this course is asynchronous, there is no recorded attendance. However, you will be expected to actively participate on D2L and complete all readings, weekly activities, and assignments.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. If you fear that you will be unable to complete an assignment on time, you must coordinate with the instructor in advance of the deadline for an extension. It is at the instructor's discretion as to whether or not to provide the extension based on the reason for the request. As the final project is due on the last day of class, it will not be accepted late under any circumstances.

Ethics and Academic Integrity

In accordance with MSU's policies on "Protection of Scholarship and Grades" and "Integrity of Scholarship and Grades," students are expected to honor principles of truth and honesty in their academic work. Academic honesty entails, among other things, that students will not plagiarize. This means (1) students will not submit someone else's

work as their own, nor will they hand in a paper copied from the web or another published source. Academic honesty also means students (2) will not knowingly permit another student to copy and submit their work as that student's own and (3) will not use unacknowledged quotations or paraphrases as part of their work. As provided by university policy, such academic dishonesty or plagiarism may be penalized by a failing grade on the assignment OR for the course. Failure in a course as a result of academic dishonesty will also result in written notification to the student's academic dean of the circumstances. Additional discussion of academic integrity is available on the Ombudsman's webpage.

Resources:

- [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#) (all-university policy)
- [MSU Ombudsperson Academic Integrity](#)
- Spartan Code of Honor
    - On March 22, 2016, The Associated Students of Michigan State University (ASMSU) adopted the following Spartan Code of Honor:

        "As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do."

Accommodations

MSU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Please let me know how I can help you succeed in this course. Below are additional resources for students needing various accommodations:

Resources:
- [Disability Access](#)
- [Grief Absences](#)
- [Religious Observances](#)

Safe Learning Environment
- [Mandatory Reporting Information](#)
- [How to Make a Report](#)
- [Title IX-related resources](#)
- [Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
- [MSU's Sexual Assault Program](#)

- [How to get involved with the TItle IX program](#)

Limits to Confidentiality

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the [MSU Police Department](#)) if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the [MSU Counseling Center](#).

SIRS Online Evaluation Policy

Michigan State University takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction and has implemented the Student Instructional Rating System (SIRS) to gather student feedback (https://sirsonline.msu.edu). This course utilizes the online SIRS system, and you will receive an e-mail during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out the SIRS web form at your convenience. In addition, participation in the online SIRS system involves grade sequestration, which means that the final grade for this course will not be accessible on STUINFO during the week following the submission of grades for this course unless the SIRS online form has been completed. Alternatively, you have the option on the SIRS website to decline to participate in the evaluation of the course. We hope, however, that you will be willing to give us your frank and constructive feedback so that we may instruct students even better in the future. If you access the online SIRS website and complete the online SIRS form or decline to participate, you will receive the final grade in this course as usual once final grades are submitted.

Course Schedule

The table below describes the weekly activities including week, topic, readings, activities, and due date. The first column describes the week. The second column describes the topic. The third column describes the readings. The fourth column describes the activities. The fifth column describes the due date. For further information regarding readings and activities/assignments, please refer to the corresponding sections earlier in this syllabus. This information is also available on the course D2L site.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Activities & Assignments	Due Date
Week 1	May 16 - 22, 2022	Introduction & Course Policies	Syllabus, Digital Tools Tutorials & Documentation	Activities: introductions discussion board, survey, using library resources,	May 22, 2022
Week 2	May 23 - 29, 2022	"The" Renaissance	Documentary, dir. Liv Thomsen; sonnets by Donne, Spenser, Sidney, and Shakespeare	Activities: guided notes, **Project Proposal**	May 29, 2022
Week 3	May 30 - June 5, 2022	Black Renaissance	McKay sonnets; Hurston short stories	Activity: analyzing a digital project; understanding copyright & licenses	June 5, 2022
Week 4	June 6 - 12, 2022	Indigenous Renaissance	Momaday novel; Silko short story	Activities: narrative mapping, **Project Draft**	June 12, 2022
Week 5	June 13 - 19, 2022	Queer Renaissance	Kushner play; Anzaldúa essays	Activity: evaluating an argument; **Peer Evaluation**	June 19, 2022
Week 6	June 20 - 26, 2022	Pandemic & Renaissance	Dickson, Marks, and Lorditch articles; Palmer essay; King and Aubrey podcast	Activity: Analyzing a digital project; end of course survey	June 26, 2022
Week 7	June 27 - 30, 2022	Reflect & Wrap-up	None	Activity: **Final Project & Reflection Paper**	June 30, 2022