# **ENG 224-1: Writing the American Dream**



**Spring 2023 Semester**

**Syllabus and Course Calendar**

**Course Number/Section/Title: ENG 224-1 : Writing the American Dream**

**Class Time: Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:00AM-12:15PM**

**Class Location: Library Learning Commons 330**

**Finals Week Date/Time: Tuesday, May 2, 10:30AM-12:30PM**

**Instructor:** Dr. Liz W Faber (they/them)

**Phone:** Call or chat on MS Teams

**Office:** Library Learning Commons 303

**Office Hours:**

* Drop-in Hours (no appointment needed):
  + Mondays: 11AM-12PM
  + Thursdays: 3:30PM-5:30PM
  + Fridays: 11AM-12PM
* Appointments: [CLICK HERE](https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/ProfFaber@dean.edu/bookings/) to make an appointment for any available time Monday-Friday 10AM-5PM

**E-mail address:**  efaber@dean.edu

**Textbooks and Materials**:

**Required textbooks**:

1. *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue (must purchase)
2. *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair (available free online: https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/140)
3. *Stone Butch Blues* by Leslie Feinberg (available free online: <https://lesliefeinberg.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Stone-Butch-Blues-by-Leslie-Feinberg.pdf>)

**Required materials**: laptop/tablet and charger, Office 365 (free from Office.com with your Dean email and password), consistent internet access

***PLEASE NOTE:*** The sources with complete information about a course and its assignments are the course syllabus and the Canvas classroom site. Please consult course materials daily.

**Course Catalog Description:**

Is the American Dream still alive and well? What does this concept reveal about our past, present, and future? This course examines and explores how writers have perceived the American Dream and the US American people’s aspiration to its promise. Representative writings from the nation’s conception, through the struggles and triumphs of the republic, to contemporary questions about who the people of the United States of America are, will be read, discussed, and analyzed to get a firmer understanding of the US American character and experience. Prerequisite: ENG 111 or permission of the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This course fulfills the Core Distribution Humanities requirement. Offered on an as-needed basis.

**How This Course Fits Into your Dean Degree program/major:**

Core Distribution Humanities courses are core requirements for students in all majors. Students must complete ENG 111 or be admitted as an Honors students in order to enroll in any Core Distribution course. Therefore, students generally complete these courses in semesters 2, 3, and 4. In addition, this course may be used to fulfill the major requirement of AA-ENG and BA-ENG majors. This course may also be used to fulfill a lower division liberal arts elective.

**Course Learning Goals:** By completing this course, students you be provided an opportunity to learn how to:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dean College Student Learning Goals** | | **Aligned Program Learning Goals – Associate Degree** | **Aligned Program Learning Goals – Bachelor’s Degree** | **Aligned Course Learning Goals** |
|  | **Critical Thinking**  **And Creative Problem Solving**  *Research and connect information from multiple, credible, valid sources and perspectives to critically evaluate and creatively solve problems or advance innovations* | Demonstrate research skills ethically, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis to create reliable, authoritative, and/or scholarly texts. | *Integrate research ethically, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis to create reliable, authoritative, and/or scholarly texts.* | Research germinal texts and figures that have shaped and/or challenged the concept of an American Dream, using both primary and secondary sources. |
| Logo  Description automatically generated | **Global and Intercultural Fluency**  *Demonstrate awareness and respect for commonalities across and differences between identities, cultures, experiences, and/or global origins.* | Analyze literature with nuance, demonstrating sensitivity to the diverse historical, cultural, and social conditions from which the work emerges. | *Interpret literature with nuance, demonstrating sensitivity to the diverse historical, cultural, and social conditions from which the work emerges.* | Analyze and interpret a broad range of US American writing in order to understand the diverse, intersectional, and often contradictory cultures of the US. |
| Logo  Description automatically generated | **Effective Communication**  *Exchange thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written, oral, and visual forms while demonstrating audience awareness.* | * Write with an engaging and distinctive style, using clear organization and structure, while shaping grammar and mechanics for various audiences and genres.   *Demonstrate polished literary academic, creative, and professional writing, understanding multimodal versus traditional formats.* | * *Write with an engaging and distinctive style, using clear organization and structure, while shaping grammar and mechanics for various audiences and genres.*   *Compose a rich variety of texts, including creative pieces, polished literary academic writing, and professional documents, applying digital publishing skills and traditional formats.* | * Develop college-level writing skills by demonstrating coherent, clean, and focused writing in formats appropriate to the discipline * Develop college-level oral communication skills through a clear and coherent presentation on a topic related to the course subject |
| **Additional Course Learning Goals:** | | | | Develop college-level reading skills by reading closely, paraphrasing text, and interpreting meaning of primary sources in context |

**Course Grading**:

*Reading Responses (40%)*

*Midterm Project (25%)*

*Final Project (35%)*

**Course Assessments and Assignments**

**Reading Responses**

For each reading assigned in this course, you will write at least 300-500 words in response to a given prompt. (Prompts are listed in the schedule below and with each assignment on Canvas.) Responses are informal, but you are nevertheless expected to adhere to academic standards of grammar and punctuation as well as citation. Please cite all sources, including course texts, in MLA format.

The goals of the reading responses are to demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings and help you prepare for in-class discussion. Each entry will be graded holistically using a rubric.

**Midterm Project: A Conversation with James Truslow Adams**

Beginning with James Truslow Adams’s definition of the American Dream, you will draw on the course readings, listenings, screenings, lectures, and your own personal experiences to critique and/or support Adams’s definition. The essay should be a 4-6 page formal, well-reasoned, persuasive response to Adams’s book chapter.

The goals of this project are to practice working with primary and secondary sources, demonstrate proficiency in written communication, and engage critically with the concepts covered thus far in class. The Midterm Project will be graded holistically based on the clarity and thoroughness of both your own argument and the connections you draw between Adams’s work and the other course materials. Please see Canvas for further details.

**Final Project: American Dream Analysis**

For your final project, you will select a fictional example of the American Dream we have not discussed in class and analyze it through an 8-10 minute in-class presentation.

The goals of this project are to practice working with primary and secondary sources, demonstrate proficiency in oral communication, and apply the concepts covered in class. The project will be graded holistically using a rubric. Please see Canvas for additional information.

**Late Work Policy:**

Every assignment in this course builds on every previous assignment, so it is vital that you submit all work on time. However, sometimes life happens, so all deadlines are flexible **only** if you communicate with your instructor prior to the deadline using the following email template. You do not need to offer an excuse, but you do need to provide a reasonable estimate (within a week) of when you are able to complete the assignment. If you do not communicate in writing ahead of the deadline, you will earn no credit for the assignment. (Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis for extreme emergencies that prevent you from communicating, such as power outages or incapacitating illness.)

*Please note that perfectionism is not a valid excuse for late work! Turning in something is infinitely better than turning in nothing!*

Email template to request an extension:

Dear Dr. Faber,

I would like to request an extension in ENG 355 for [name of assignment]. The original due date is [date/time], and I can complete it by [date/time].

Thank you,

[your name]

Attendance and Participation

1. **Attendance**: You are expected to arrive on time and prepared for each and every class session, unless you are sick or have some other engagement that you cannot miss.

***Do not come to class if you are sick, physically or mentally. Take care of your body and mind by resting when you need it!***

Missing class for any reason will count as an absence. You may take up to 4 absences throughout the semester. Arriving to class late without notifying your instructor ahead of time will count as ½ an absence. For each absence after the 4th, you will lose 5% of your final grade.

If you cannot come to class or you know you will be arriving late, please notify the instructor by e-mail or Teams message. Communication is key here—you do not ever have to explain why you’re missing class, but your instructor wants to make sure that you are safe and receiving the care you need, so please be in touch.

If you do need to miss class, it is your responsibility to notify your instructor, download any missed assignments from Canvas, and get lecture/discussion notes from a classmate. Missing class does not excuse you from submitting the assigned homework in a timely fashion.

Email template to notify your instructor of an absence:

Dear Dr. Faber,

I am unable to come to class today, [date]. [Insert reasoning only if you feel comfortable sharing.] I will check the syllabus/Canvas for any missed notes and assignments as well as check in with a classmate for notes.

I have already submitted my homework due today *OR* I will submit the homework due today by [date/time].

Thank you,

[your name]

1. **Participation:** Participation includes the completion of all assigned readings/screenings/listenings, any in-class and online discussion, in-class writing, activities, or quizzes, peer review assignments, and attendance in individual and/or group conferences with your instructor. All assigned readings should be completed before coming to class so that you can participate fully in class discussions. You are, of course, not required to like everything you read, but you should be able to respond to and discuss it in a clear, critical fashion.

Your participation will not be graded so you have the space to be as active or inactive as you need in the classroom. However, please keep in mind that learning is an active process, and the benefit of being in a small class at a small college is that you have the ability to ask questions, engage in hands-on activities, and explore important ideas. Take advantage of the opportunity!

Other Important Information

1. **Academic Honesty**: All Dean College students are expected to understand the meaning of academic honesty, and to behave in accordance with the College’s policies on academic honesty as published in the online student code of conduct.
2. **Accessibility and Accommodations:**Dean College is committed to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment. If you are experiencing difficulties accessing course work which interrupts your learning experience, Accessibility Services can provide resources and/or reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities, as granted in the ADA. Early planning is essential, so please feel free to make any matters known as soon as possible. Contact the Accessibility Services Office at 508-541-1942 or [accessibility@dean.edu](mailto:accessibility@dean.edu). See your professor if you need assistance contacting the Accessibility Services Office.
3. **Credit Hour:** Dean College complies fully with the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) definition of a credit hour: a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates not less than:  (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one-quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
4. **Recording Policy:**
   1. Dean College strictly prohibits students from any photographing, videotaping or other recording of all or any portion of any class without the express permission, in advance, from the presiding faculty member. This means that students may not take pictures, record video images or make any audio recording of any portion of a class, lecture, lab, seminar or other academic exercise without the express permission, in advance, of the professor. This also means that students may not upload or distribute any such picture, video image or audio recording of a class session without the express permission, in advance, of the professor. Any permission to make or use any such recording shall be strictly limited to the specific purpose for which that permission is granted. Any request for permission to make recordings as a disability accommodation must be presented, in advance, to the Accessibility Services Office. Students who violate this policy or who aid or encourage another person in violating this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. For the full policy, please see the current Dean College Academic Catalog.
   2. In recognition of possible technical interruptions online, synchronous class sessions will be recorded and will be posted to Canvas, and only be available for students enrolled in that class. All recordings will be deleted at the end of the term. Students are permitted to view these recordings for educational purposes only, as related solely to this class. Students are expressly prohibited from posting, publishing, quoting from or forwarding, in whole or in part, these recordings.
5. **Changes:** Please note that this syllabus is subject to change.

**Course Outline** (subject to change):

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Complete Prior to Class** |
| **Week 1** | | |
| R 1/19 | **Intro to the American Dream** | None! 😊 |
| **Week 2** | | |
| T 1/23 | **Intro to the American Dream** | * Reading Response 1: Read excerpt from *The Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams. In your own words, explain Truslow Adams’s definition of the American Dream. According to him, what are the roles of business, education, and cultural values in achieving the American Dream? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 1/26 | **Westward Expansion** | * Reading Response 2: Read the 7 documents posted on [The Manifest Destiny Reader](https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/) website. In your own words, briefly summarize each of the 7 documents. What are the different arguments for and against westward expansion that you discovered through these different documents? Was there anything particularly surprising in the different voices and writings? Why or why not? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 3** | | |
| T 1/31 | **Streets Paved with Gold** | * Reading Response 3: Read *The Jungle* chapters 1-7. Why do Jurgis and his family members immigrate to America? What are their expectations and dreams about life in America? Thus far, in what ways are they achieving their dreams? Just based on these first few chapters, do you think Jurgis and his family are representative of the American Dream, as we’ve defined it in class? Why or why not? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 2/2 | **Streets Paved with Gold** | * Reading Response 4: Read *The Jungle* chapters 8-16. Prove to me you read the chapters in any way you like, as long as it can be uploaded to Canvas. Be creative. |
| **Week 4** | | |
| T 2/7 | **Streets Paved with Gold** | * Reading Response 5: Read *The Jungle* chapters 17-25. Why does Jurgis go back to the city? Do you think he made the right choice? Why or why not? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 2/9 | **Streets Paved with Gold** | * Reading Response 6: Read *The Jungle* chapters 26-end. What is Upton Sinclair telling us readers about the American Dream through his novel *The Jungle*? Provide 3 specific examples to support your points. In what ways do you think the American Dream of immigrating to America has changed since the early 20th century when this book was written? Do you think it’s easier or harder for an American immigrant to achieve the American Dream today? Why? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 5** | | |
| T 2/14 | **Streets Paved with Cheese** | * Attend the in-class screening of *An American Tail*   *OR*   * Watch online + submit proof of viewership for attendance credit |
| R 2/16 | **Streets Paved with Cheese** | * Attend the in-class screening of *An American Tail*   *OR*   * Watch online + submit proof of viewership for attendance credit |
| **Week 6** | | |
| T 2/21 | **Apple Pie & White Picket Fences** | * Reading Response 7: Compare how *An American Tail* and *The Jungle* represent the American Dream. Provide at least 2 specific examples from each text to support your ideas. Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 2/23 | **Apple Pie & White Picket Fences** | * Reading Response 8 (EXTRA CREDIT): Read “O Youth and Beauty” by John Cheever. Compare Cash Bentley in Cheever’s story to Jim Anderson in the episode of *Father Knows Best* we watched in class on Tuesday. What do their insecurities tell us about white men in suburban America? How do their stories differ, and what do those differences tell us about TV portrayals of the American Dream vs. written portrayals? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. * Midterm Project |
| **Week 7** | | |
| T 2/28 | **Apple Pie & White Picket Fences** | * Reading Response 9: Read excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. In your own words, explain what the feminine mystique is. What are some of the examples Friedan provides to demonstrate that the mystique is real? Do you think the feminine mystique still exists today? Why or why not? Give at least one recent example to support your point. Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 3/2 | **Apple Pie & White Picket Fences** | * Reading Response 10: Read “Doing the Dirty Work” by Mignon Duffy. This is a dense article, so do your best to read it and write at least 3 sentences explaining Duffy’s main arguments in your own words. Your reading response should be typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Spring Break** | | |
| T 3/7 | **Spring Break!** | * Rest! |
| R 3/9 | **Spring Break!** | * Relax! |
| **Week 8** | | |
| T 3/14 | **Whose Dream?** | * Reading Response 11: Read “Howl” by Allen Ginsberg. Take the day off from writing. Go outside and sit under a tree instead. Or if it’s too cold, just sit and meditate for a few minutes. |
| R 3/16 | **Whose Dream?** | * Reading Response 12: Read “Sonny’s Blues” by James Baldwin. What aspects of the American Dream are Alan Ginsberg and James Baldwin struggling against in their respective writings? How does each author describe that struggle against the Dream? Why does this struggle exist? How does each author resolve and/or refuse to resolve the struggle? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 9** | | |
| T 3/21 | **Whose Dream?** | * Reading Response 13: Read “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” by Audre Lorde and “Coming Apart” by Alice Walker. In your own words, explain what Lorde means when she writes that the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. How do we see that idea in action in Alice Walker’s story? Do you think we can dismantle the master’s house and also achieve the American Dream? Why or why not? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 3/23 | **Challenging the American Dream** | * Reading Response 14: Read *Stone Butch Blues* chapters 1-9. So far in *Stone Butch Blues*, what is Jess’s American Dream? What are some of the challenges she faces in achieving that Dream? In what ways do community and identity provide both a roadblock and a pathway to the Dream? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 10** | | |
| T 3/28 | **Challenging the American Dream** | * Reading Response 15: Read *Stone Butch Blues* chapters 10-16. Prove to me you read the chapters in any way you like, as long as it can be uploaded to Canvas. Be creative. |
| R 3/30 | **Challenging the American Dream** | * Reading Response 16: Read *Stone Butch Blues* chapters 17-end. This book was first published in 1993. Do you think it’s still relevant now in 2023? Why or why not? Describe the end of the novel; if it were published today, how might the ending be similar or different? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 11** | | |
| T 4/4 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 17: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 1-9. Are Jende and Neni Jonga on the path to achieving the American Dream? Why or why not? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 4/6 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 18: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 10-18. Prove to me you read the chapters in any way you like, as long as it can be uploaded to Canvas. Be creative. |
| **Week 12** | | |
| T 4/11 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 19: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 19-26. Are Clark and Cindy Edwards good people? Why or why not? Have they achieved the American Dream? Why or why not? Is there a relationship between the American Dream and the relative goodness or badness of a person? Provide at least one example to support your point. Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 4/13 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 20: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 27-36. Prove to me you read the chapters in any way you like, as long as it can be uploaded to Canvas. Be creative. |
| **Week 13** | | |
| T 4/18 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 21: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 37-49. What do you think is going to happen at the end of the novel? Why? Be sure to consider what’s already happened in the novel, what we know of the characters, and what has happened in the other stories we’ve read this semester. Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 4/20 | **The American Dream Today** | * Reading Response 22: Read *Behold the Dreamers* chapters 50-end. Create a chart comparing and contrasting the three novels we’ve read so far this semester. Be sure to consider main characters, themes, ending, and stance on whether the American Dream is achievable. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| **Week 14** | | |
| T 4/25 | **Final Presentations** | * Reading Response 23: Read “Bad Dream” by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio. In your own words, summarize the author’s essay. How does Cornejo Villavicencio’s story compare to the Jongas’ in *Behold the Dreamers*? What do these two texts tell us about the American Dream today? Your reading response should be a minimum of 300 words, typed, double-spaced, in MLA format. Please be sure to provide specific examples from the reading(s) to support your ideas and cite using MLA style. Please upload your assignment to Canvas in .docx format prior to class time. |
| R 4/27 | **In Class Work Day** | * None! |
| **Week 15** | | |
| T 5/2 10:30AM-12:30PM | **Final “Exam” (in-class reflection)** | * Final Narrated PowerPoint * Extra Credit: Create & present a creative project inspired by one of our readings this semester. Worth up to 5 points toward Reading Response grade. |