

**English 102**  
**College Reading and Composition II**  
**Los Angeles Mission College**  
(Section: 6502, Mondays 3:20-6:40)

***Instructor: Amanda Bloom Email: Bloomac@lamission.edu Office: Learning Resource Center, Rm. 219 Office hours: Mondays 2:45-3:15 (And by appt.)***

**Course Objectives**

Thematically, this course revolves around the concepts of catastrophe (personal, social, environmental) and responsibility. In generating ideas that build on such themes, our goal is to produce literary criticism that will add to the critical discourse surrounding modern and contemporary American literature and culture. Our emphasis on *discourse* necessitates that each student enter "the conversation" revolving around the various issues/conflicts facing the literary characters in our texts - poverty, dissipation, environmental disaster, gender conflict, runaway consumerism, etc. Throughout the course I will continue to encourage you see the parallels between your world and the ones inhabited by the characters or "voices" we will meet. Your ultimate goal is to produce a 6-7 page MLA-style research paper that combines close analysis of some aspect of a literary text (symbol, allusions, setting, set descriptions, etc.) and the use outside sources. Regarding the research paper, students will be encouraged to follow the conventions of a particular mode of literary discourse or "discourse community" - feminism, new historicism, psychoanalysis, queer theory, new character studies, etc.

**Required Materials** (Available at Eagles Landing Bookstore or Online)

- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *Curse of the Starving Class* by Sam Shepard
- *The Age of Miracles* by Karen Thompson Walker
- Envelope or box large enough to store all hand-outs, drafts, essays, inventions, etc. until the end of the semester

\*All other course materials will be provided via email or handout. Please make sure the email address in your student records is current! If it isn't, you will not receive important alerts, updates, and emails containing links to online readings

**Course Requirements**

You are responsible for completing 3 thesis-driven essays and 5 short-answer assignments that are to be written in response to assigned readings. You must sit for a midterm and a final exam, as well. Of course, English 102 functions as a workshop; therefore class participation is

absolutely necessary. Poor attendance and lack of participation may result in a steep grade penalty.

## **Grading**

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- **Essays 1-3 40%** (Essay #1: 10% Essay #2: 10% Final Research Essay: 20%)
- **Final Exam 20%**
- **Midterm 20%**
- **Short-Answer Assignments 10%**
- **Attendance & Participation 10%**

\* Essays that initially receive below a "C" may be re-written within a week for a grade no higher than a "C."

## **Late Policy**

Late assignments will be accepted, but do be aware that two late assignments in a row may result in a grade penalty on the second late assignment.

## **Extra Credit Option**

There are two ways to earn a 5% grade bump. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND COMPLETING ONE OF THESE ASSIGNMENTS. This 5% can make up for poor performance on your first essay, a late assignment, an absence, etc. Consider assignments like these insurance policies - always keep yourself (and your grade) covered.

Option A: Write a 1,000-word creative writing piece: a short story, series of poems, a one-act play, an imaginative diary entry, an alternate ending to one of the assigned literary texts, etc. Please attach to the creative piece a short explanation for why you found that text inspiring (Ex: "I chose to write an alternate ending to 'Curse of the Starving Class' because Emma's relationship with Ella reminds me of my relationship with my mother, and I feel they deserved a less explosive fate.") This must be submitted by our last class.

Option B: Go see a play! There are many inexpensive productions and you don't need to go downtown to find them! Several theater companies in the North Hollywood Arts District sell tickets for as cheaply as \$7. Even local schools like Valley College and CSUN stage quality productions of plays new and old. After seeing the play, please turn in a 1,000-word performance review (examples can be found online) and proof of ticket purchase. A few recommended web sites: Goldstar.com & Plays411.com. This information must be submitted by the final day of class.

## **Attendance Policy**

Since this class will be conducted as a workshop, regular attendance is extremely important. The standard guidelines for attendance are as follows:

- You are allowed to miss 2 classes without effect to your final grade. Additional absences will result in a 5% grade penalty.
- Tardiness of more than 30 minutes may be counted as an absence.
- If you miss more 3 classes I will strongly suggest that you withdraw from the course. There will not be enough time to make up for unfinished work.
- An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of every class session. If you arrive late, be sure to sign in.
- If you need to leave early, please inform me at the beginning of class.

## **The Learning Resource Center – Writing Lab**

I strongly encourage you to visit the LAMC Writing Lab, located on the bottom floor of the library (rm. 219 – make a right as you walk in the door). The Writing Lab, open from 8 am to 8 pm, is an excellent resource for additional help with grammar, sentence structure, and other aspects of the writing process. For appointments, call (818) 364-7754.

## **Students With Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability should contact DSPS (Disabled Students Program & Services). A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSPS. For more information about who qualifies for these services, visit <http://www.lamission.edu/dsps/>.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another writer's words or ideas without proper acknowledgement. At Los Angeles Mission College we take plagiarism very seriously. If you are having real difficulty finishing a paper (or properly managing source material), please let me know. Always remember that it is much better to receive a low grade than to plagiarize (a plagiarized paper will receive an automatic "F"). Being open and honest about your inability to complete an assignment is much preferable to committing an act of intellectual dishonesty. If you are caught plagiarizing in this class—and it is easier to catch than you may realize—you will be reported for disciplinary action.

## **Technology in the Classroom**

The use of laptop computers and cell phones is absolutely prohibited in this class! You are required to keep these items in your backpack at all times. I should not be able to see them in your hand, lap, pocket, etc. If I do, you will receive one warning. If I see it again, I reserve the right to confiscate your device until the end of the class period. However, if you do have a pressing need for the use of a certain kind of technology, please speak to me after of class, and we can work it out.

## Tentative Course Outline

Monday, August 26th	Syllabus/Housekeeping In-class Diagnostic
Monday, Sept. 2nd	Labor Day - No Class!
Monday, Sept. 9th	Introduction to literary analysis.  Read: "Allegory of the Cave" (Online)  <b>Journal #1 Due</b>
Monday, Sept. 16th	The Novel: Theme, Setting, Symbol Read: <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Ch. 1-3 "What Isn't For Sale?" Michael J. Sandel (Theatlantic.com) "The Powerful Theory of Conspicuous Consumption" (Handout)
Monday, Sept. 23rd	The Novel: Reading for Character Read: <i>Gatsby</i> Ch. 4-6 <b>Journal #2 Due</b>
Monday, Sept. 30th	The Novel: The Social "Catastrophe" Read: <i>Gatsby</i> Ch. 7-9 "The Great Gatsby and the American Dream" Sarah Churchwell (Theguardian.com)
Monday, Oct. 7th	The Short Story Read: "A Late Encounter with the Enemy" Flannery O'Connor "The Veldt" Ray Bradbury (HANDOUT) <b>Essay #1 Due</b>
Monday, Oct. 14th	Poetry: Literary Analysis Catastrophe in "Miniature"  Read: "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop; "Storm Warnings" by Adrienne Rich; "Elm", "The Night Dances", "Daddy" by Sylvia Plath (HANDOUT) <b>Journal #3 Due</b>
Monday, Oct. 21st	Poetry, cont. Midterm (in-class)
Monday, Oct. 28th	Drama - Personal/ Cultural "Catastrophe" Read: <i>Curse of the Starving Class</i> Act 1 <b>Journal #4 Due</b>

Monday, Nov. 4th	Drama, cont. Read <i>Curse of the Starving Class</i> Acts 2 & 3
Monday, Nov. 11th	No Class <b>Essay #2 Due</b> (Via email, by midnight)
Monday, Nov. 18th	Drama, cont. The Contemporary Novel: Environmental "Catastrophe" Read: "Homebody/Kabul" Act One Monologue (Handout) The Age of Miracles Ch. 1-11
Monday, Nov. 25th	Read: <i>The Age of Miracles</i> Ch. 12-24 Group Presentations on Literary Modes of Discourse
Monday, Dec. 2nd	<i>Miracles</i> Ch. 25-34; Presentations, cont. <b>Journal #5 Due</b>
Monday, Dec. 9th	Final Exam (in-class)
Friday, Dec. 15th	<b>Final Essay Due</b> (via email, by midnight)