

Special Topics in Literature: The Immigrant Experience Syllabus

ENGL 330 Special Topics in Literature Spring 2025

Instructor	Kaia L. Simon, Ph.D.	Phone	[Type your phone number here]
Office Location	Visiting Faculty Office	Email	Ks734@evansville.edu
Course Meeting Days and Time	9:30-10:45 pm, Tuesday and Thursday	Student Drop-In Office Hours	By appointment
Course Mode	In Person		

Course Information

Catalog Description:

Students will read and analyze a variety of literary texts that reflect the immigrant experience from various aspects of immigration: refugees, economic migrants, education-related migration, and highly-skilled migrants.

Credit Hour Policy Statement:

Standard lecture: "This class meets the federal credit hour policy of 1 hour of class with an expected 2 hours of additional student work outside of class each week for approximately 15 weeks for each hour of credit, or a total of 45-75 total hours for each credit." (Def 1)

General Education Requirements:

This course meets the General Education requirements for Outcome 2 Overlay E Writing.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will develop nuanced understanding of the global phenomenon of international migration through literary texts from multiple genres.

Students will develop literary analysis skills in writing and orally.

Students will experience multiple perspectives on global migration through diverse voices.

Students will plan, propose, and complete an independent project that engages with their own interests in English studies and in the course theme.

Required Materials:

To purchase: (paperback, Kindle, or e-book versions of these are all fine)

Brooklyn by Colm Tóibín (ISBN 978-1439148952)

The Late Homecomer by Kao Kalia Yang (ISBN 978-1566894786)

American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang (ISBN 978-1250811899)

Additional readings will be supplied by PDF.

Methods of Instructions:

This course will be largely discussion-based. You can expect to read texts in advance of each class and arrive well-prepared to lead yourselves in student-centered discussions about the assigned reading(s). You will be actively involved in class sessions. Some independent initiative will be expected as you will develop and complete a final project that relates to your interests in the theme or in English studies more broadly.

Withdrawal and Attendance policies:**Important Dates.**

Friday 17 January is the last day for drop/add changes

Friday 11 April is the last day to Withdraw from a Spring class

Harlaxton College expects regular class attendance by all students. Students are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular and punctual attendance, to accept this personal responsibility and to accept the consequences of failure to attend. When absences occur due to emergency or medical reasons, students are expected to notify their instructors of the absence prior to class or to seek the assistance of the College nurse or a member of the Student Experience Team for help in notifying instructors.

Instructors have the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons upon review of appropriate documentation and professional recommendation supporting such a request. In the event of long-term illness, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow a student to complete a course. In these cases, the Dean will need to approve the long term nature of the accommodation.

The Dean of Harlaxton College has the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons.

Each instructor is expected to maintain an attendance policy in keeping with the nature of the Harlaxton program and may consider it in evaluating performance in their courses.

Policy Governing Unexcused Absences:

Harlaxton College operates an attendance policy that is binding on all faculty and students. The number of unexcused absences that are allowed before incurring a penalty is related to

the number of times a class meets each week. For courses which meet three times a week, students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences during the semester without attracting penalty points. For courses meeting twice a week two such absences are permitted, and for courses meeting once a week a single absence is allowed. Additional unexcused absences will attract a grade penalty.

This class meets twice a week. Students are allowed two unexcused absences without incurring a penalty. For the third and each subsequent absence, there will be a third-letter grade deduction applied to the final grade at the end of the semester. In other words, five total unexcused absences will result in a deduction of one full letter grade.

Policy Governing Excused Absences.

- Excused absences are not given to facilitate student travel independent of College-sponsored travel.
- Students may be permitted to miss class because of participation in academic field trips.
- Instructors must co-ordinate and confirm academic fieldtrips with the Dean, prior to the commencement of the Semester to ensure their inclusion in the Semester timetable.
- Where authorization for an academic fieldtrip is requested after the commencement of the semester, the request must be submitted to the Dean.

The following information is required:

- Purpose and brief description of the official Harlaxton event or academic fieldtrip.
- Dates, location, and times (as applicable).
- Alphabetical list of students involved [Last Name/First Name] along with their student identification number.

If approval is granted:

- Instructors affected will be notified at least one week prior to the class period during which absence is anticipated, or as soon as possible.
- Missed class time due to student participation is to be considered an excused absence.
- The grade of a student may not be lowered in any class due to excused absences.
- It is the student's responsibility - to take the initiative by consulting with their instructors before the absence occurs, and - to do what is required by the instructor to make up all missed assignments and/or examinations.
- Instructors are required to assist students in these occasional situations of excused absences.

Grading Criteria:

I will use these percentages to calculate final grades. I round up to the nearest whole number (i.e., 92.5 rounds up to 93% and 92.2 remains 92%).

B+ = 86-89% C+ = 76-79% D+ = 66-69%

A = 93% or higher B = 83-85% C = 73-75% D = 63-65% F= 59% or below

A- = 90-92% B- = 80-82% C- = 70-72% D- = 60-62%

Types of Assignments

Preparation (15% of course grade) will be assigned for each reading assignment. You will write a brief summary of the reading and prepare two ideas, topics, questions, or other prompt to inspire discussion. These will be graded as complete/incomplete and they cannot be submitted or graded on days you have an unexcused absence.

Discussion Presence and Participation (15% of course grade) will be expected for each discussion you attend. Participation will be noted as speaking, listening, asking questions, or otherwise contributing to the conversation. It should go without saying that scrolling (online or on your phone), working on other homework, sleeping, or other obvious evidence of distraction will result in a deduction of this grade, especially if it becomes habitual and regular. You cannot make up points in this category on days you have an unexcused absence.

Unit Essays (three total for 50% of course grade) will ask you to draw connections across multiple texts and make a claim that relates to the focus on migration for the unit. We will dedicate class time to idea generation and peer review of these essays. They will use evidence from multiple texts to support the claim, and be written with attention to good style and editing. Essays will earn a letter grade based on evaluation criteria distributed with each prompt.

Final Project (20% of course grade) will allow you to take initiative in developing a project related to our course theme that meets your interests. You might choose to read additional texts and explain how they relate to the theme and why they should be assigned in future iterations of the course; you might choose to write a creative response to any of the texts assigned; you might investigate how one or more text from this class has been adapted into different media and describe how the affordances of the different media affect representations of immigration...or you will come up with a completely original idea based on something you're interested in thinking about more. You will submit a Final Project Proposal and Plan during week Thirteen for approval. You will present your final projects to each other on the last day of class.

Honor Code:

All students at the University of Evansville agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*

Unauthorized aid, in this class, includes copying work from already-existing writing online; AI-generated text; having another human write your work for you.

The use of assistive technologies, like audio books, voice-to-text programs, or screen readers, is perfectly acceptable.

Course AI Policy:

This course is designed for you to develop your knowledge and skills with regard to reading, analyzing, thinking about, and discussing literature. Using generative AI (like Chat GPT or Google Gemini) or writing assistants (like Grammarly) means that you are not participating in the learning goals for this class.

If AI is permitted in specific circumstances:

In this course, submission of any work that is not entirely your own is considered academic dishonesty unless otherwise specified. This means that the use of generative AI tools is prohibited, except for certain assignments for which you are given specific guidelines and examples of appropriate AI use. When permitted, you must clearly identify and cite the AI tools used. Submitting AI-generated work as your own constitutes a violation of academic integrity as an example of unauthorized aid.

Course Schedule:

A detailed calendar with specific reading assignments, other homework, and writing exercises will be distributed during the first week of class in January 2025. Reading assignments will be organized according to the perspectives on migration as organized below. Preparation and Discussion assignments will be due regularly throughout the semester.

Week One: Global Migration History and Context: *Oxford UP Very Short Introduction to International Migration*

Weeks Two-Four: Aspirational economic and educational push-pull factors in migration: *Brooklyn*; short stories; poetry; Unit Essay due on 6 February

Weeks Five-Seven: Refugee experiences: *The Late Homecomer*; short stories; poetry; Unit Essay due on 27 February

Weeks Nine-Twelve: Second generation migrant perspectives: *American Born Chinese*; “With Great Power Comes Great Pronounceability” podcast; Unit Essay due on 3 April

Weeks Thirteen-Fourteen: Project planning, proposal, draft

Week Fifteen: Final project due 21 April; Project presentations 23 April.

Disability Policy:

The University of Evansville is committed to providing an accessible and supportive environment for students with disabilities. It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Students should contact Disability Services at 812-488-2663 to seek services or accommodations for disabilities. Written notification to faculty from Disability Services is required for academic accommodations.

Institutional Equity and Title IX

UE is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and creating an inclusive campus for all members of the University community regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, ability, or veteran status. All Faculty members are considered Responsible Employees and required to report instances of discrimination, harassment, or sexual violence to the Office of Institutional Equity

You may also choose to speak to a Confidential Resource about your experience. Confidential Resources at the University include:

Counseling Services: 812-488-2663, counselingservices@evansville.edu

Crayton E. and Ellen Mann Health Center: 812-488-2033, healthcenter@evansville.edu

Spiritual Formation Coordinator: 812- 488-5265, spiritualformation@evansville.edu

If you or someone you know has been harassed, assaulted, or discriminated against you can find the appropriate resources by contacting the Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator: email titleix@evansville.edu ; phone (812) 488-5261. For more information visit <https://www.evansville.edu/offices/titleix/policy.cfm> .

Non-discrimination Statement

The University of Evansville expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and civility. Harassing behaviors directed towards any member of our community will not be tolerated. As part of its commitment to non-discrimination, the University specifically prohibits harassment based on any other characteristics set forth in its nondiscrimination statement as follows: including race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, creed or religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status and all federally protected groups/classes. Any form of harassment undermines the mission of the University and negatively impacts the University community as a whole. For more information contact the [Center for Inclusive Excellence](#).

Campus Safety

All members of the UE community are automatically enrolled in the Ace Alerts Emergency Alert System. When the system is activated, emergency notification information is sent in the following manner: calls to campus IP phones, text messages, emails, campus housing speaker system, active threat sirens (non-weather related), digital signage, and AlertUS desktop on campus-owned computers.

To contact the Office of Public Safety:

Emergencies: 812-488-6911

Non-emergencies: 812-488-2051

Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals

The University of Evansville seeks to resolve all student concerns in a timely and effective manner through policies and processes documented in the University [Course Catalog](#) and [Student Handbook](#).