UWS 41b: HUDDLED MASSES: IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICA

Mondays/Wednesdays/Thursdays 12-12:50p, Brown 218
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In 1883, Emma Lazarus’ poem “The New Colossus” was inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty, declaring, through the voice of the statue: *Give me your tired, your poor,/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,/The wretched refuse of your teeming shore./Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,/I lift my lamp beside the golden door!*” In this course — through various writing and reading skills, practices, and assignments — we will interrogate the poem’s suggestions about a welcoming America while also analyzing how the popular conception of the United States as a haven for immigrants came to be.

As this is first and foremost a writing course, we will grapple with questions of immigration presented by history, our current moment, and the literary works through our writing. In the first paper, students will learn the skills of close reading through an intensive examination of a literary work, namely, Karolina Waclawiak’s *How to Get into the Twin Palms*. Then, students will put their own writing into dialogue with Gayatri Spivak’s theory on the Other and the graphic text *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang. Finally, students will develop an individualized research project that locates and examines representations of immigrants and issues related to immigration in a self-chosen text. These literary materials combined with information on transnational historical, social, economic, and political conditions related to immigration throughout the twentieth century will allow us to discuss relevant issues such as – but not limited to – race, gender, class, and nationality.

Throughout the course, we will consider the following questions: Does the U.S. in fact open its arms as widely to immigrants as Lazarus’ poem suggests? How has the conversation around immigration changed over time, considering legislation, various crises, and war? What techniques do authors use to portray the struggles and triumphs of their immigrant characters? How do various immigrant stories differ when it comes to ethnic difference, country of origin, and other identity markers? Is there a standard immigrant story, or are they all deviations? Through independent and collaborative work, this course will help students explore questions such as these through writing while also demystifying college writing and preparing students with the composition skills necessary for a successful career at Brandeis and beyond.
REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS (available in the bookstore)
How to Get into the Twin Palms by Karolina Waclawiak (ISBN: 978-0983247180)
Other readings and videos will be available on LATTE

GRADE BREAKDOWN
Close Reading Unit: 20%
Lens Unit: 25%
Research Unit: 30%
Final Presentation: 5%
Participation: 10%
Portfolio: 10%

WORKLOAD
UWS is a reading and writing-heavy course. Success in this 4-credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class, in addition to regular scheduled class time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
The Close Reading Essay (5-6 pages): In this assignment, you will formulate an argument, through close textual analysis, about how and why Karolina Waclawiak depicts immigrant characters with various intersecting identities in our contemporary moment in her first novel, How to Get into the Twin Palms.


The Research Essay (10-12 pages): For this assignment, you will select a work from an archive of literature, TV, film, and art that in some way depicts a representation of immigrants. In this research project, you will test out and apply the ideas we’ve spent the entire semester exploring. By engaging with a new primary source, you will have the opportunity to create a fresh and unique interpretation that enables you to arrive at informed conclusions about how and why your source depicts, celebrates, and/or satirizes, (etc.) immigrants and ethnic-American cultures.

Final Presentation (5 minutes): The last two weeks of the semester are devoted to final presentations. Students will prepare engaging presentations about their final research to the class. You decide on the format—you may choose to prepare a traditional presentation using PowerPoint or Prezi. Or you may deliver some sort of creative reading and/or performance. Or you may opt for some other intriguing option! The only requirements are that the presentation be 5 minutes in length, involve some sort of visual aid, and thoughtfully convey your final research to the class.

Portfolio: At the end of the semester you will assemble all your work (including Pre-Draft assignments, rough drafts, and final drafts) in an electronic file, together with a letter describing
how your understanding of yourself as a writer has changed over the course of the semester. **This means that you need to keep all your writing from the semester.**

*Participation:* Includes class attendance, conferences, in-class and digital workshops, and LATTE posts. It is expected that you come to each class prepared, you attend all conferences, you actively participate in peer review workshops, and thoughtfully submit LATTE posts.

Here are my specific expectations for LATTE posts: You will be writing a total of ten LATTE posts over the course of the semester. They will vary in topics and expectations, but will generally require you to write between 250-500 words. However, I don’t want you to spend too much time on them. LATTE posts are low stakes writing (i.e., graded on a credit/no credit basis). While you should always try to use good grammar, beautiful sentence structure, and exciting word choice, *don’t worry too much* about style. LATTE posts are for experimentation. Test out ideas, ask questions, offer provocative suggestions. Often, the work you do in this space turn into future essays ideas! Everyone can skip one LATTE post over the course of the semester with no penalty.

**DRAFTING**

Four steps lead up to the final draft of each essay:

- **Pre-Draft Assignments:** Each essay will be preceded by two or three Pre-Draft Assignments, which are short pieces of writing designed to help you develop ideas. These assignments are graded individually based on credit/no credit but will count as part of your overall grade for that sequence.
- **First Drafts:** You are required to turn in a first draft of each paper, as well as an accompanying cover letter. These drafts and cover letters are important because they are opportunities for you to receive vital feedback from your peers and your instructor. These drafts needn’t be polished, but they should be complete.
- **Peer Review:** After the first draft of each paper is due, you will workshop your papers in a peer review group. You will give your partners feedback in the form of peer review letters, which count as part of your final grade. These activities increase your sense of audience awareness and give you an opportunity to reflect on the concepts discussed in class. You will engage in peer review through shared documents – with your group and with me.
- **Conferences:** Each student will have three twenty-minute conferences with me over the course of the semester. Attendance is required; missing a conference is the equivalent of missing a class. Sign-up sheets will be distributed electronically.

**UWS OUTCOMES**

*Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing*

- Use writing and discussion to work through and interpret complex ideas from readings and other texts (e.g., visual, musical, verbal)
- Critically analyze your own and others’ choices regarding language and form (e.g., in student texts or formally published texts)
- Engage in multiple modes of inquiry (e.g., field research, library-based, web-based)
- Incorporate significant research (as above) into writing that engages a question and/or topic and uses it as a central theme for a substantive, research-based essay
• Use writing to support interpretations of text and understand that there are multiple interpretations of text
• Consider and express the relationship of your own ideas to the ideas of others

Process
• Use written, visual, and/or experience-based texts as tools to develop ideas for writing
• Understand that writing requires recurring processes of invention, revision, and editing
• Develop successful, flexible strategies through the processes of invention, revision, and editing
• Experience and understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
• Learn to critique your own and others’ work
• Be reflective about your writing processes

Knowledge of Conventions
• Understand the conventions of various particular genres of writing
• Use conventions associated with a range of dialects, particularly standardized written English (but not necessarily limited to it)
• Recognize and address patterns in your writing that unintentionally diverge from patterns expected by their audience(s)
• Practice using academic citation systems (MLA) for documenting work

THE UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
The Writing Center, located on Goldfarb 232 on the Goldfarb mezzanine of the library, provides free one-on-one help with your essays. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this service. Writing Center tutors are well trained graduate students and will work with you in 45-minute sessions that you can schedule online. Students who attend a Writing Center appointment (and receive a form from their tutor) may have a 24-hour extension on the final draft of their essay. Only one extension is allowed per essay.

FORMATTING
All essays and Pre-Draft assignments will be submitted electronically via LATTE. You must submit a rough and revised draft for all three essays in order to pass the class. To reiterate, unless otherwise noted, everything will be submitted online through LATTE.

Essays must be double-spaced, use 1-inch margins, and 12 point Times New Roman font and be submitted in Microsoft Word. Essays must have original, thoughtful titles.

GRADING SCALE
A+ = 98-100  A = 94-97  A- = 90-93  B+ = 88-89  B = 84-87  B- = 80-83
C+ = 78-79  C = 74-77  C- = 70-73  D+ = 68-69  D = 64-67  D- = 60-63
F = 59 and below
LATE WORK, EXTENSIONS, AND MINIMUM PAGE REQUIREMENTS
I am willing to offer extensions if you contact me at least 24 hours before the due date. Otherwise, late work, including first drafts, will be penalized by a third of a grade per day (B+ → B → B- etc.) on the final paper. If a paper is due electronically at midnight and you submit it at 12:01 AM, it is late. In addition, final papers that do not meet minimum page requirements will be penalized by a third of a grade for each page that the paper falls short.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE
This class relies heavily upon class discussion. You cannot contribute to the conversation if you are not present. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. You are, however, allowed to miss three days of class, no questions asked. For each additional absence, your final grade will be penalized by a third of a grade. Seven or more absences will result in a failing grade. Please contact me in the event of an emergency. Also, arriving late to class is rude and disruptive. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be counted as absent.

Class Participation includes:
- Your prompt, prepared, alert, consistent attendance
- The completion of reading assignments by the dates listed in the syllabus
- Your thoughtful contributions to class discussions

Also, it is to your benefit to use my office hours. Students who come to office hours often perform well because they become more familiar with the material and because they work on assignments earlier and discover potential obstacles and confusion early in the process. And if my regular office hours are not convenient for you, please talk with me about making an appointment for a different time.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE AND THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY
- My classroom is a safe space for exploration and expression. Because of the nature of this class, sensitive questions and ideas will be discussed and interrogated. Disrespectful dialogue of any kind will not be tolerated, so be sure to have an open-mind when coming to each class.
- Electronic devices of all types should not be used in class unless otherwise specified.
- It is the student’s responsibility to be available for e-mail communication via your brandeis.edu address. Check LATTE and check your email account regularly.
  - Regarding email: Please use proper greetings and salutations in all email correspondence for this course.

ACCOMMODATIONS
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in class, please see me right away.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
You are expected to be honest in all your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually in section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about these expectations, please ask.
TENTATIVE NATURE OF THE SYLLABUS
If necessary, this syllabus and its contents are subject to revision; students are responsible for any changes or modifications distributed in class, posted on LATTE, and/or communicated via the student’s Brandeis email.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

The Close Reading Unit

Week 1
Wed. Aug 29  In-Class: Introductions, syllabus, LATTE

Week 2
Mon. Sept 3  No Class – Labor Day

Wed. Sept 5  Read: Definitions of various migrant categories (LATTE)
Write: LATTE post 1 and Student Questionnaire (due Tuesday 9/4 by 11:59p)
In-Class: immigration and importance to the US, close reading, unit assignment sequence

Thurs. Sept 6  Brandeis Monday
Read: How to Get into the Twin Palms p. 1-71
In-Class: Twin Palms, close reading practice, literary devices

Week 3
Mon. Sept 10  No Class – Rosh Hashanah

Wed. Sept 12  Read: How to Get into the Twin Palms p. 72-107
Write: LATTE post 2 (due Tuesday 9/11 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Twin Palms, thesis statements

Week 4
Mon. Sept 17  Read: How to Get into the Twin Palms p. 108-148
Write: Pre-Draft 1.1 (Mini-close reading) due after class on LATTE by 11:59p
In-Class: Twin Palms, close reading, introductions

Wed. Sept 19  No Class – Yom Kippur

Week 5
Mon. Sept 24  No Class – Sukkot

Tues. Sept 25  Brandeis Monday
Finish: How to Get into the Twin Palms p. 148-191
Write: LATTE post 3 (due Monday 9/24 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Finish discussion of Twin Palms, workshop Intros and Theses

Wed. Sept 26  Read: “Shitty First Drafts” (LATTE)
Write: Pre-Draft 1.2 (Intro and Thesis Statement) due on LATTE Tuesday 9/25 by 11:59p and bring to class
In-Class: Workshop Intros and Theses; discuss first drafts
Week 6 CONFERENCES THIS WEEK (Wednesday and Thursday 10/3 and 10/4)
Mon. Oct 1  No Class – Shmini Atzeret
Draft of Close Reading Essay and Cover Letter due by 11:59p via LATTE

Wed. Oct 3  Read: Close Reading examples from Write Now! (LATTE) and Your peers’ essays
Write: Post Peer Review Comments/Letters by 11:59p on 10/2 via LATTE
In class: Workshop examples from Write Now!, Peer Review

The Lens Unit
Week 7
Mon. Oct 8  Read: Gayatri Spivak’s *Can the Subaltern Speak* (LATTE)
Write: LATTE post 4 (due Sunday 10/7 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Lens Sequence, Discuss Strangers and lens

Write: After class, by 11:59p, using this week’s discussions of the lens text, write a detailed LATTE post demonstrating your understanding of the lens text. You can use whatever format makes sense to you, but it has to be in depth
In-Class: Spivak with Yang, how to write with a lens

Thursday October 11: Close Reading Essay Final Draft and Cover Letter due by 11:59p on LATTE

Week 8
Write: LATTE post 5 due by 11:59p on Sun., 10/14
In-Class: *American Born Chinese*, Spivak, and lens

Wed. Oct 17 Write Now! Examples of Lens Essays (LATTE)
Write: LATTE post 6 due by 11:59 pm on Tues., 10/16
In-Class: Lens practice, Structure

Week 9
Mon. Oct 22 Read: essay excerpts about *American Born Chinese*
Write: Pre-Draft 2.1 (Mini Lens Analysis) due Sunday 10/21 by 11:59p
In-Class: more lens

Wed. Oct 24 Read: TBD
Write: TBD
In-Class: Lens

Week 10 CONFERENCES THIS WEEK (Monday and Wednesday, 10/29 and 10/31)
Mon. Oct 29 Read: Research sequence
Write: Draft of Lens Essay and Cover Letter due Sunday 10/28 by 5:00p to me and your peers via LATTE
In-Class: Peer Review Activity, Research Sequence
Wed. Oct 31  
Read: ---
Write: Complete Library Modules on LATTE
In-Class: In-Class: Library field trip! Meet at Circulation Desk by 11:55a.

Sun. Nov 4  
Lens Essay Final Draft and Cover Letter (due by 11:59p on LATTE)

The Research Unit

Week 11
Mon. Nov 5  
Read: “Scholarly Sources,” Peruse Possible Primary Texts for Research Paper
Write: ---
In class: Issues with Lens, Developing research question(s); plagiarism

Wed. Nov 7  
Read: Junot Diaz, “Fiesta 1989” (LATTE)
Write: LATTE post 7 (due Tuesday 11/6 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Discuss story, citation, popular v scholarly sources

Sunday Nov 11: Last day to declare primary source and angle for Research Project

Week 12
Mon. Nov 12  
Read: ---
Write: LATTE Post 8 (due Sunday 11/11 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Research

Wed. Nov 14  
Read and bring in a Secondary Source (LATTE)
Write LATTE post 9 (due Tuesday 11/13 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Source functions across the disciplines/genres, presentation handout

Thurs. Nov 15  
Read: Find 2 books on Brandeis oneSearch and bring in the call numbers
Write: Work on Research
In-Class: Library field trip! Meet at Circulation Desk by 11:55a.

Week 13
Mon. Nov 19  
Read: your sources
Write: LATTE Post 10 (due Sunday 11/18 by 11:59p)
In-Class: Workshop/conferences

Wed. Nov 21  
Happy Thanksgiving! No class
Write: Pre-Draft 3.1 (Annotated Bibliography) due Friday 11/23 by 11:59p on LATTE

Fri. Nov 23  
Pre-Draft 3.1 (Annotated Bibliography) due by 11:59p on LATTE

Week 14
Mon. Nov 26  
Read: Portfolio Instructions
Write: Work on Research Essay First Draft (5 pages) due by Friday 11/30 at 11:59p via LATTE
In class: Presentations
Wed. Nov 28  Read: ---
Write: Work on Papers
In-Class: Final Presentations

Fri., Nov 30  Research Essay First Draft (5 pages) due by Friday 11/30 at 11:59p via LATTE

Week 15  CONFERENCES THIS WEEK
Mon. Dec 3  Read: ---
Write: Work on Research Paper
In-Class: Final Presentations, Portfolio questions

Wed. Dec 5  Read: ---
Write: Work on Papers; Draft of Research Essay and Cover Letter (due by Friday 12/7 at 11:59p)
In-Class: Final Presentations

Thurs., Dec 6  Extra Class for conferences/workshopping/presentations if needed

Friday, Dec 7 Draft of Research Essay and Cover Letter (due by 11:59p via LATTE)

Week 16
Mon. Dec 10  Last Day of Classes
Read: Peers’ Papers
Write: Peer Review Comments via LATTE by Sunday 12/9 at 11:59p
In-Class: Peer Review, Final Presentations

Post Term
Sun. Dec 16  Portfolios due electronically by 11:59 PM (must be in one document),
including: portfolio cover letter, final research cover letter and final research essay. See portfolio handout for order of assignments.