

ENGL 2618 - American Literature and Diversity

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 02, CRN 41575,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Gina Villamizar Vasquez

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Associate Professor of Spanish

Instructor Professional Qualifications: Ph.D. in Hispanic Languages and Literatures. University of Pittsburgh, 2013.

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Course Description

2618. American Literature and Diversity. Writers and works in relation to the diversity of American culture, politics, lifestyles, and social movements. 3 s.h.

This section of American Literature and Diversity explores Hispanic voices within American literature, with particular attention to writers and characters whose experiences are shaped by both Hispanic and U.S. cultural traditions. Through short fiction, essays, and poetry, students will examine how writers represent questions of identity, belonging, language, family, cultural inheritance, memory, and home within the United States. The course approaches these experiences from a variety of cultural and generational perspectives. Emphasis will be placed on close reading, discussion, and comparison, with attention to the different and sometimes competing ways writers portray what it means to belong to more than one cultural tradition.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Eleven	Sandra Cisneros	
Required	My Name	Sandra Cisneros	
Required	American History	Judith Ortiz Cofer	
Required	Love in L.A.	Dagoberto Gilb	
Required	The Jacket	Gary Soto	
Required	Tortillas	José Antonio Burciaga	
Required	Names/Nombres	Julia Alvarez	
Required	Fiesta, 1980	Junot Díaz	
Required	How to Tame a Wild Tongue	Gloria Anzaldúa	
Required	The Moths	Helena María Viramontes	
Required	The Witch's Husband	Judith Ortiz Cofer	
Required	My Father in English	Richard Blanco	
Required	n Cuba I Was a German Shepherd	Ana Menéndez	
Required	Woman Hollering Creek	Sandra Cisneros	
Required	The Circuit	Francisco Jiménez	
Required	Dreaming of the USA	Lilliam Arrieta Carsana	
Required	Who Is Hispanic?	Pew Research Center	

No textbook is required. Assigned readings will be provided by the instructor and/or made available through Blackboard.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.



Class Calendar

Day	Date	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
Tue	8/25	None	Course Introduction: Course overview and expectations; What Is American Literature?	None
Thu	8/27	Pew Research Center, "Who Is Hispanic?"	Hispanic Voices in American Literature: Hispanic, Latino, Chicano, Mexican American: terms, histories, and perspectives	Complete assigned reading.
Tue	9/1	Sandra Cisneros, "Eleven" and "My Name"	Unit I: Who Is American? Belonging, identity, and growing up	Complete assigned readings
Thu	9/3	Judith Ortiz Cofer, "American History"	Unit I: Who Is American?	Complete assigned reading
Tue	9/8	Dagoberto Gilb, "Love in L.A."	Unit I: Who Is American?	Complete assigned reading; Student-Led Discussion 1
Thu	9/10	Gary Soto, "The Jacket"	Unit I: Who Is American?	Complete assigned reading
Tue	9/15	José Antonio Burciaga, "Tortillas"	Unit I: Who Is American?	Complete assigned reading; Student-Led Discussion 2
Thu	9/17	Julia Alvarez, "Names/Nombres"	Unit I: Who Is American?	Complete assigned reading; Student-Led Discussion 3
Tue	9/22		UNIT I Debate: Who is American?	Small-group preparation and whole-class debate
Thu	9/24		In-Class Written Reflection 1 Unit I synthesis and comparison	Complete assigned readings. Prepare for Written Reflection
Tue	9/29		EXAM 1	
Thu	10/1	Junot Díaz, "Fiesta, 1980"	Unit II: English, Spanish, and everything between: Language, family, and cultural inheritance	Complete assigned reading Student-Led Discussion 4
Tue	10/6	Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"	Unit II: English, Spanish, and Everything Between	Complete assigned reading
Thu	10/8	Helena María Viramontes, "The Moths"	Unit II: English, Spanish, and Everything Between	Student-Led Discussion 5 Complete assigned reading
Tue	10/13	Judith Ortiz Cofer, "The Witch's Husband"	Unit II: English, Spanish, and Everything Between	Complete assigned reading Student-Led Discussion 6
Thu	10/15	Richard Blanco, "My Father in English"	Unit II: English, Spanish, and Everything Between	Complete assigned readings
Tue	10/20		UNIT II Debate: English, Spanish, and everything between	Small-group preparation and whole-class debate
Thu	10/22		Unit II synthesis and comparison In-Class Written Reflection 2	Prepare for Written Reflection Complete assigned readings
Tue	10/27		Exam 2	
Thu	10/29	Ana Menéndez, "In Cuba I Was a German Shepherd"	Unit III: Where is home? Family, memory, place, and changing identities	
Tue	11/3	Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek"	Unit III: Where Is Home?	Student-Led Discussion 7 Complete assigned reading
Thu	11/5		Final Collaborative Creative Project Workshop	Groups, text selection, brainstorming, and initial project plan
Tue	11/10	Francisco Jiménez, "The Circuit"	Unit III: Where Is Home?	Complete assigned reading
Thu	11/12	Lilliam Arrieta Carsana, "Dreaming of the USA"	Unit III: Where Is Home?	Complete assigned reading Student-Led Discussion 8
Tue	11/17		UNIT III Debate: Where is home?	Small-group preparation and whole-class debate
Thu	11/19		Unit III synthesis and course-wide comparison In-class Written Reflection 3	Complete assigned Readings Prepare for Written Reflection

Tue	11/24	Exam 3
Thu	11/26	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
Tue	12/1	Final Collaborative Creative Project Presentations
Thu	12/3	Final Collaborative Creative Project Presentations; Course conclusion
Tue	12/8	FINALS WEEK
Thu	12/10	FINALS WEEK

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.