

## Multicultural Literature → 2021-2022

Instructors: Joanna Sorensen (she/her/hers) // Room: 506

Email: [jsorensen@greeleyschools.org](mailto:jsorensen@greeleyschools.org) // Phone (call and text): 970-325-3881

**Course Description:** This course is designed to satisfy a junior level ELA elective credit. This course will be conducted as a junior level survey course utilizing book studies, discussions, investigation, and various world themes. This class, in a nutshell, is a survey of multicultural literature through the study of the various authors and their points of view. This class will allow us to look at authors and voices that you may not have been able to look at before; this includes but isn't limited to POC creators, LGBTQ+ creators, and creators in industries like music, theater, and art. Each unit will contain a mix of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, grammar, and writing, speaking and listening.

**Course Motto:** We will be kind people despite living in an often mean world.

**Computers:** Much of the work we do will be through Schoology. Make sure you bring your ChromeBook with you EVERY DAY. It needs to be charged, please.

### **Mature Content Matter:**

Some of the content we cover in class will be more mature, and will involve mature topics that students may find difficult. This mature content ranges from world issues like xenophobia and racism to differences in sexual orientation and abuse. I hope to give students the opportunity to reflect through questions, writing prompts, and group discussion. If you have concerns or questions, or would like more information on the literature selection for the course, please don't hesitate to contact me.

**New Grading System:** This year, I am redesigning my grading system. All assignments you turn in for points will be graded out of 4. The weights may be different (see below), but everything will be graded out of 4. The lowest you can earn on an assignment is a 1 (meaning the assignment has not been completed). This helps eliminate the idea of "negative failing", which seems much more fair.

**Projects:** Once a week, you will turn in an assignment that is used to assess what you have learned thus far. Additional homework, exercises, etc. will be used for low-stakes practice and for the opportunity to earn Mastery Badges and Honor Badges (see below).

**In-Class Work and Participation:** Additionally, you need to listen, speak when it is your turn, take notes, and stay on task while in class as a way to get points. You need at least 5 participation points per week, and these can only be earned while in class

### **Category Breakdown:**

Projects: 40%

In-Class Work and Participation: 50%

Final (Virtual Writing Portfolio): 10%

### **Grading scale:**

A= 90%-100%

B= 80%-89%

C= 70%-79%  
D= 60%-69%

Anything lower than a 60% is failing, so you need a 60% or higher to pass.

### **Mastery Badges and Honor Badges:**

Throughout the school year, you will have the ability to earn **Mastery Badges**. Mastery Badges may be earned for completion of in-class work, engagement in class material, excellence in discussions and socratic seminars, etc. Students will also be able to earn **Honor Badges**. These are badges that students nominate other students for, and can be earned when a fellow student submit a recommendation based on their peers' behavior, kindness, perseverance, etc. outside of class. You will have the chance to exchange these badges for extra credit, entries into drawings for gift cards, etc. occasionally throughout the year.

### **Materials:**

Each day, please come prepared to class with your:

- ChromeBook
- Charger
- Notebook
- Writing Utensils

### **Cell phones:**

Please silence your phone so it's not going off in class. Use your phone for the benefits it can provide you, but please understand that we're going to be moving through information fast and we all need to engage with each other, not with our phones. If cell phone usage becomes a habit, I will ask that you leave your phone in a secured drawer in my desk and get it at the end of class, but I will not involve administration. If I am continually asking you to leave your phone at my desk, administration will come take your phone for the rest of the day. Basically, I won't get admin involved unless the issue gets pushed that far.

### **Expectations:**

**Of me:** You have the right to learn in an environment where everyone is respected and given the ability to exit the class a more educated person at the end of the year. I am currently in school for my Masters degree, and there are some aspects of "student treatment" that I've identified as important to me, like...

- An understanding that, if something doesn't get turned in right on time, I probably had something important come up and will get it turned in as soon as I can
- A trust that some days, I just have bad days. I don't hate my professor, I don't hate the class, but sometimes, days are just hard and I need a fresh start the next day.
- A commitment to giving me feedback on my work (please don't give me comments like "good work," "good job," "you got a D on that assignment").
- A system where, if I turn something in late but the professor hasn't graded those yet, it won't be counted as late. Essentially, a system where assignments are "on-time until graded".

I commit to treating you, as students and humans, like I would like to be treated, as students and humans.

**Of you:** This class offers a chance for everyone to improve their language and literature skills. Respect everyone's right to enjoy that opportunity. Listen when others speak. Attempt to understand where they come from. We will deal with topics in this class that will reveal controversies, and as we approach these topics, we expect you to approach them openly and politely. Additionally, please treat me and others as you would like to be treated.

**Classroom Policies:**

**Late Work:** Late work will be accepted for one week after it is due for full credit. Late work will be accepted through the end of the current unit for 80% of its full credit after the first week.

**Bathroom Passes:** You will often be asked to show work before you can go to the restroom.

**Packing Before the Bell:** Packing before the bell while a discussion is happening towards the end of class creates a lot of noise that makes it harder for everyone to listen (again with the limited time issue). Please hold off on packing until the bell rings.

**Drinks:** It's going to be in your best interest if you bring a full water bottle with you at the start of every class since drinking fountains will be shut off. As long as you have a bottle with a screw top, you're good to go in class.