

# Course Syllabus

## Course Instructor & Contact Information

- Neal Gilbert Redman (he/his), you may call me “Neal” or “Mr. Gilbert Redman” in writing and when we speak in person
- Office number: 525K, East Grand Forks Campus
- Email address: [neal.gilbertredman@northlandcollege.edu](mailto:neal.gilbertredman@northlandcollege.edu) (the best way to contact me outside of class is through email or Zoom)

## Student (Zoom Office) Hours

Tuesday/Wednesday 1-2 PM, Thursdays 11 AM-12 PM, or by appointment (email me to set up a time we can meet on Zoom, Monday-Friday, 10 AM-4:30 PM)

## Course Objectives

ENGL 2248 fulfills MNTC Areas 6 and 7A and is designed to build on your past experience with literature and expand your understanding and appreciation of it even further through a focus on the enormous cultural diversity found in American literature and the United States. As we study, we will develop skills and techniques to help you think and talk about what we are reading and then apply those skills in a variety of discussions and writing assignments (some minor, with others being more major essays). In doing so, you will strengthen your ability to read and analyze information, as well as to communicate and write effectively.

## Prerequisites

ENGL0095 Reading & Writing III or a sufficient Accuplacer Reading Placement score to be exempted from developmental coursework in reading and writing.

## Required Course Materials

The following books are *required* for this course. We will be using them extensively in class, so pick them up immediately (if you haven't already). You can order them through the Northland bookstore (be sure you look up the correct section) or another store.

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. (either a physical copy or ebook is fine)  
Orange, Tommy. *There There*. (either a physical copy or ebook is fine)

## Other Course Requirements & Expectations

### Technology and Communication

As this is a literature course carried out primarily through Brightspace and email, regular and easy access to the internet and a word-processing program is needed (Northland students receive Microsoft Office 365 for free with enrollment). You must also be willing to interact regularly via Northland's email and the course management program Brightspace (our online course management system), which is accessible through the Northland homepage.

### A Strong, Independent Working/Learning Ethic

This is an online class, and as such, it requires you to do much of the work on your own. Procrastination and waiting until the last minute are not good approaches for your learning in this class or your grade. Also, the more work you put into your reading, discussing, and writing this semester, the more you will learn and develop your capabilities as a reader and a writer.

This course is worth 3 credits, which means you may be asked to complete up to 3-6 hours of work per week, including class time. Realize the time required may fluctuate depending on the type of work for the week and your needs. The class schedule in the last section of the syllabus notes the process for assignments and due dates so that you can plan your work for the semester accordingly.

### What you can expect from me

Both in person and online, I am here to help you out and help you improve and increase your learning! Here is how I will work and communicate with you to help reach those goals.

#### Course work:

- Each week, there will be a variety of work and materials that you can find on Brightspace
- This work may involve pre-recorded lectures or other video materials, class or group discussions, as well as other readings or assignments

#### Communication:

- I will respond to emails within about 24 hours, M-F, and within 48 hours on the weekend. If I am behind on responding to emails, I will message your class to let you know.
  - We can also meet during my Zoom Office hours noted at the beginning of the syllabus to cover any questions or concerns you may have.
- There will be at least one weekly announcement on Brightspace, covering what our class will be doing for the week
- As needed, I will also email your class 1-2 times a week answering common questions, noting adjustments needed to our weekly work, etc. Check your Northland email regularly!

#### Feedback:

- I may use email to provide your class with overall feedback for recent discussions or assignments

- You will also receive feedback from me through rubrics on our assignments and some discussion forums, along with written feedback on major assignments and select smaller assignments
- You may always ask questions about that feedback and ask for help on how to improve

## Course Policies

Because your success in this course relies heavily on writing and the discussion of readings, writing samples, etc., your participation, focus, and promptness are essential. The following policies and resources will help our class run as smoothly as possible.

### Student Handbook

The handbook contains the policies and procedures that relate to many aspects of your life as a student at Northland. Whether you study on campus or online, membership in the Northland community brings the responsibility of becoming familiar with these policies.

<https://www.northlandcollege.edu/students/student-handbook/>

### Northland Support Services

If you have a disability, either permanent or temporary, which might affect your performance in this class, please inform me at the start of the semester. You must also contact Accessibility Services in the Academic Success Center to arrange accommodations.

**Counseling Resources:** Northland has a Dean of Students and counselor that are here to assist you with any potential challenges you face beyond your studies, including with housing, mental and physical well-being, food insecurity, safety, and financial issues. Don't hesitate to reach out for extra support if you need it! You can find Northland's counseling services here: <https://www.northlandcollege.edu/about/offices/counseling-services/>

### Changes to the Syllabus

Events during the semester may necessitate some changes to the syllabus (e.g., adding a reading, revising an assignment, etc.). This hopefully will not happen, but if it does, I will notify you in class and/or via e-mail, and it is then your responsibility to know and follow the changes.

### Questions and Self-Motivation

As your teacher, I am always open to your questions, no matter what they are about: something just discussed, an upcoming assignment, your grade, etc. **I cannot help you if you do not ask any questions** you may have about class, a concept, an assignment, etc., so please, don't hesitate to get in touch with me so I can help.

You can do this via email or Zoom. I will have regular online/Zoom office hours during the times noted at the beginning of this syllabus (the access information for these hours can be found on our class's Brightspace page). You can always arrange a different time to meet with me on Zoom if those do not work with your schedule, anywhere from 10 AM-4 PM, Monday-Friday. You may also use our class Question and Answer forum on Brightspace to ask about assignments or other work to get answers from other students or me.

**Self-motivation:** The challenge with online courses is you don't have the physical presence of a classroom with other students and a teacher around you to keep you motivated. Our weekly announcements and discussions will help combat this, but it is still your job to keep up with our those things as well as the other work for the remainder of the week: plan accordingly!

### Diversity and Discussion

We all come from different backgrounds and experiences, and we will also be reading each other's work (and the work from a wide range of authors with different backgrounds as well). This means we all must be open to understanding and learning from the course's content, as well as each other's experiences. Be respectful of each other and approach our readings, assignments, and discussions with an eye to learn.

### Academic Honesty

All work done this semester must be your own—anything else is plagiarism. **This includes all work—whether it is a minor or major assignment.** Use of "AI" programs such as ChatGPT is also prohibited (see Week 1's videos and notes for more info on this). When using someone else's ideas or words **for research purposes**, you must give that person credit to avoid plagiarism using appropriate documentation (we use MLA Documentation in this course). I follow Northland's Academic Integrity Policy. Please be aware that presenting another person's work as your own could result in your failing the assignment or this class, as well as being subject to further disciplinary action by the College.

### Deadlines and Assignments

Assignments and forum discussions will have a due date/time in their related sections on Brightspace. You may still turn in assignments after that point, but they will lose 10% of their value (one letter grade) for each day they are late. Remember that accidents happen—computers fail, e-mails are not always sent successfully, etc. Be sure to have your work completed and ready to submit well before the due date/time to ensure your assignments will not be late.

### Tutoring

You may want (or be required by me) to work with a tutor during the semester. You can find tutoring help in Northland's Academic Success Center. All writers improve their writing and other skills by getting help and feedback from others, and these are the people to go to for help (outside of your instructor). They're open most of the day, Monday-Friday, but there is an online tutoring service for evenings and weekends. For more information, visit the ASC page from the Northland website or the link in the Brightspace "Resources" tab.

### Grading

For each assignment, you will receive guidelines as well as clear grading criteria and standards for that assignment. Your work will be graded based on these criteria and standards—which will generally evaluate the assignment's development, organization, clarity, style, format, and correct mechanical usage. To receive an "A" in this course or on an assignment, your work must be excellent (keep in mind that a C is average). The following descriptions will help you understand my grading standards:

“A” work meets **all** of the grading criteria in a **superior way**.

“B” work meets **some** of the criteria in a superior way, but **falls short in others**.

“C” work is competent, but generally needs improvement in **some or most categories**.

“D” work needs **substantial improvement** in all or most areas.

“F” work **does not meet** the terms of the assignment.

## Grade Breakdown

You may check your grade throughout the semester on Brightspace.

- Discussions & Minor Assignments: *Discussion posts and responses, short writing assignments, peer reviews, etc.*: 40% of your final grade.
- Literature Essays: (*two different major writings covering a large concept from readings over the semester*): 60% of your final grade

**Important:** Your final grade is determined by the quality of your work overall. **There is no extra credit** and your grade is solely based on the quality of the work you do for class. So work hard, don't miss class, and ask questions if you have them.

## Course Schedule & Calendars

As noted earlier, our course content is broken down by each week of the semester. There will be a weekly announcement on Brightspace noting our goals and content for the week. Make sure to keep track of what you should be working on each week, and when we will be reading one of our books for the course, make sure to plan ahead so you can read it all in time. I will let you know when we will be discussing the books so you can best plan to read them, based on your schedule.

Our class's weekly work will be broken up into two or three units over the course of the semester, taking 5-8 weeks each. These units will be lightly “themed” around broader literature concepts that will help tie together the readings for each unit. We will be discussing those units more in announcements and other course materials, but you will also be able to find a calendar on Brightspace for each unit. These calendars will be located in the Content section of Brightspace (you can find the link to this section in the upper left of any portion of our Brightspace section), at the top of each unit in the Table of Contents.

This calendar will cover any video lectures, discussions, readings, and/or other assignments will be working on over the week. Use the calendar and our weekly announcement to plan your studying schedule and keep up with our work!