Course Description:
What makes a work of literature great? Who determines the value of a literary work? How can literature influence the reader and society as a whole? We will ruminate on these questions as we engage a variety of work by American authors. We will practice the art of the close read, evaluating the elements that comprise a text and intuiting the space between the lines. We will consider, challenge, and respond to texts in class discussions, blog posts, essays, and creative assignments. We will expand our literary vocabulary and writing technique so that we can craft arguments and communicate our ideas effectively. While readings are not confined to a single literary genre, most will orbit around the thematic conflict of polarity and plurality. You should leave this course with the ability and confidence to engage a text intellectually and creatively—and hopefully from a place of joy.

Learning Objectives
• Develop analytic readings skills necessary to read between the lines and interpret a range texts
• Formulate and communicate opinions and original arguments about a literary work
• Write thoughtful and coherent essays that are firmly grounded in the text and research
• Practice responding to literature formally, causally and creatively
• Trust your intuition as a reader and a writer; take risks and engage works using your unique creative lens

Required Materials
1) Journal
2) Course Reader
3) Dictionary (can be digital)
4) Additional material as instructed

Important Dates:
6/13 - Scene Workshop
6/16 - Final Scene + Process Paper
6/29 - Final Poetry Explication; Journal Collection
Semester Grading
Formal Papers: 60%
Journal: 20%
In-Class Participation/Quizzes: 20%

Unless otherwise noted, the up-to-date reading schedule, homework assignments, and essays will be posted on our class blog: [http://greatworkssummer1.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu](http://greatworkssummer1.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu)

Journal Reading Responses
You are required to respond to the readings and in-class writing prompts in your journal (a notebook dedicated to this course only)—you will be thankful for this come essay time. Please note:
a) The heading for each journal entry should include: assignment title, date, and author’s name.
(i.e. Reading 3 - 3/15 - Plath)
b) I will provide you with guidelines for each response on the blog or in class.
c) Responses are not formal papers; they should be thoughtful, creative, and questioning.
d) I will spot check your journals periodically throughout the semester, so it is important that you stay up to speed, check in with classmates when absent, and make up any missed assignments.

Participation
Participation begins with being present and punctual to class on a regular basis, and entails more than just showing up. You must come to class prepared with all required materials, engage in class discussions, and in group activities. Participation is not about knowing the right answer. It is about being present and contributing to the success of your peers. You will only receive an A in participation if you:
a) Arrive on time (you will miss in-class writing prompts/quizzes and disrupt the session if you are late)
b) Bring all required materials and annotate the readings (I will check periodically)
c) Speak 3+ times a week and participate in group activities
d) Are attentive when someone is participating (no phones, no chit chat, eyes on the speaker)

Late/Missed Assignment Policy Policy
Essays: Late essays will be penalized by 1/3 a letter grade for each day they are overdue (i.e. a B assignment that is one day late will be a B-). I will NOT accept papers that are over 3 days late.
Homework/Classwork/Quizzes: You can only make up missed work if you make arrangements with me in advance or within 24 hours of your absence. Even if your absence is excused YOU are responsible for making arrangements with me to make up any missed work.

In General: If you are having difficulty completing an assignment you must notify me before the deadline so that we can work out a special arrangement. I am happy to help and be flexible, as long as you communicate your needs.

**Attendance**

If you are absent or late:
- You cannot participate in discussions or in-class exercises, and this will be reflected in your final grade.
- Please do NOT email me to ask “what did I miss?” or “did I miss anything important?”! I cannot explain the entirety of a session over email, and of course you missed something important.
- Contact a classmate for notes, updates, and new material
- Email me to schedule a time to meet to go over new material, ask questions, arrange extensions.

If you anticipate a late arrival you must inform me in person or via email ahead of time. If you are late due to unforeseen circumstances such as a train delay or traffic, please enter the classroom quietly. A large portion of coursework is done during class time and cannot be made up, therefore persistent tardiness or unexcused absences will count negatively towards your final grade.

**Email Policy**

All emails sent to me must include your full name and course title. I will not open any links or attachments unless you have clearly stated in the body of the email what you have sent me and why. If you are sending me an attachment, you must send it in the form of a word doc, google doc, or pdf.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of stealing or rephrasing someone else’s work and claiming it as your own. Examples of plagiarism include the copying a passage word for word from another source without including quotes or a citation, or the act of taking a passage from a source and replacing or rearranging a few words to make the phrase sound more like it came from you (i.e. changing “plagiarizing is a waste of time” to “it’s a waste of time to plagiarize”). Plagiarism is also taking something you wrote for one assignment and passing it off for another or turning in a completely unchanged rough draft in place of a final draft.
This course is about developing your writing skills and voice. Therefore you should never feel tempted to plagiarize. **If you are caught plagiarizing anything such as an essay, blog post, or exercise you will receive an F in the course.** More information about plagiarism can be found at:
http://writingatqueens.org/for-students/what-is-plagiarism/

**Technology**
Out of class assignments rely heavily on technology, so you must have regular access to a computer and the internet. There are resources available such as laptops and printers in the library. In class, however, unless otherwise noted, we are a technology free zone.

**Classroom Behavior**
Treat your classmates and learning environment with respect. No hate speech, insulting comments or gestures (i.e. eye rolling) will be tolerated. There is no such thing as a right or wrong opinion and no point of view is superior. Only when there is harmony in the classroom can ideas be challenged and constructive criticism effectively delivered and received. If you are unsure how to phrase something productively, please ask. Additionally, please remember to clean up after yourself and discard and recycle rubbish. No “vaping” in class.

**Extra Help**
I am available for extra help during my posted office hours. You may drop in to my office hour, but setting up a time in advance guarantees I’ll save the time just for you. The Writing Center offers free help as well. For hours and information go to:
https://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/SupportPrograms/SupportCenter/Pages/WritingCenter.aspx

**Your Obligations as a Student**
This syllabus is a blueprint of the course and provides an overview of what to expect this semester. I have posted a copy of the syllabus on the class blog. Please note that assignments, due dates, and required readings are subject to change. If changes are made I will inform you verbally in class and on the course blog. If you are absent you it is your responsibility to contact another student to find out what you missed. There is no excuse for not knowing about a change, a policy or a due date.

It is important that you understand the syllabus. If you have any questions, or concerns about meeting the requirements, please contact me by 6/8.
Tentative Schedule: Readings and journal responses must be completed the day they appear on the syllabus. Should there be any changes, I will update the schedule on the class blog.

Week 1
M 6/6: Introduction; Syllabus; “How to Date a Brown Girl...” by Junot Diaz
T 6/7: “In the Cemetery Where Al Jolson is Buried” by Amy Hempel
W 6/8: “Drinking Coffee Elsewhere” by ZZ Packer; “Indian Education” by Sherman Alexie
Th 6/9: “Sagittarius” by Greg Hrbek; “Sea, Sea Rider” by Richard Brautigan

Week 2
M 6/13: Scene Rough Draft Due; Peer Review Workshop
T 6/14: TBD; Process Paper Outline
W 6/15: “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto; “Blackberrying” by Sylvia Plath
Th 6/16: Final Scene + Process Paper Due; “Mediation at Lagunitas” by Robert Hass; “Dreamwood” by Adrienne Rich

Week 3
M 6/20: “In Colorado…” by Eduardo C. Corral; “No More Cake Here” by Natalie Diaz; “A Supermarket in California” by Allen Ginsberg
T 6/21: “Together and By Ourselves” by Alex Dimitrov; “To You” by Frank O’Hara; “Peanut Butter” by Eileen Myles
Th 6/23: “A Body of Athletics” by Natalie Diaz

Week 4
M 6/27: Poetry Explication Outline
T 6/28: TBD
W 6/29: Final Poetry Explication Due; Journal Collection