

**MARY BALDWIN UNIVERSITY ON-LINE ADULT DEGREE PROGRAM COURSE
COURSE SYLLABUS FOR FALL SEMESTER 2020**

AS 270: Australia: A Cultural History

Instructor:

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Dr. Métraux is Professor Emeritus and Adjunct Professor of Asian Studies at Mary Baldwin University. He was a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University in Canberra in 2002 and is author of a book on Buddhism in Australia.

CORE AREAS: International Studies & Writing Emphasis

PURPOSE: Historical analysis of the cultural and sociological development of Australia as a modern nation. Topics include relations between native peoples and Europeans, evolution of a unique culture, and contemporary problems and prospects facing Australia today.

Blackboard: This on-line course is taught using the Blackboard Learning Management System. All course content as well as assignments and discussions will be conducted online within the course. Students may contact the professor directly by phone or email to deal with any specific questions or concerns

- **To enable better use of Blackboard and to assist you with submitting your assignments and for receiving feedback, please always use Blackboard for the submission of all your assignments. All essays must be in the form of attachments and uploaded in the appropriate location on Blackboard.**

REQUIREMENTS: Students must read all assigned material and respond to all questions listed below in standard good essay form. Since this is a writing emphasis class, students with individual essays having grades lower than B- are very strongly encouraged to rewrite the essay for a higher grade with the

instructor's guidance. In the case of a rewrite—the original grade is merged with the new rewrite grade for a final paper grade. It is strongly suggested that the student submit each essay at intervals of 7-10 days throughout the semester. All work must be received by the last date of the semester (Midnight on 14 December 2020) and any missing unexcused work after that date will be considered a failure.

Federal government guidelines require absolutely that all students registered in the course must submit a piece of work within two weeks of the start of the course. Therefore, you must submit at the very least the introductory ungraded quiz by Monday, 14 September 2020. It is *very important* to contact the professor *in advance* if you are unable to meet any of these deadlines.

This is an essay writing course. There are no tests per se. Essays are judged on their quality far more than their length, but it is expected that the first (Bryson) and the last (Relationships) essay will count 15% of your essay grade and should be 2.5-4.0+ double-spaced pages while other shorter essays which each count 10% of your essay grade should be 1.5-2.0+ double-spaced pages. Provide analysis of the key themes of what you have just read and avoid summaries. Each essay should have a strong thesis paragraph at the start. NOTE: You must write EVERY essay in the course in order to pass. If any one essay proves impossible to finish, you may perhaps negotiate a substitute essay with the instructor.

Please write essays using TNR 12—double space. You may use any one of the major citation systems as long as you use it correctly.

Every module in this course contains at least one discussion question. It is essential that students complete the discussion question(s) on schedule..

Students must follow all aspects of the MBU Honor Code.

The instructor strongly prefers all communication to be conducted by Email (dmetraux@marybaldwin.edu). Cell Phone: 540-290-3680-- calls are also very welcome (Call between 10AM-Midnight)

IMPORTANT DATES:

Important dates for submission of work

31 August 2020: Official Start of Semester

14 September 2020: Completed version of Introductory (non-graded) quiz on Australia (Note: Federal regulations require first assignment be submitted within two weeks of the course. This regulation is strictly enforced).

21 September 2020: First graded assignment due on Bryson book

14 December 2020@ Midnight: Final Project and all late papers are due (no exceptions)

Grading: Essays: 80%; Discussions 20%

Readings: Purchase these books by ordering at any book store or on line at Mary Baldwin, amazon.com, bn.com or other sites. They are all readily available on Amazon.com and BN.com. Many libraries including the MBU library have some or all of them as well. *All readings are available on Kindle at much cheaper prices!*

- 1. Bill Bryson, *In a Sunburned Country* (ISBN: 978-0767903868)**
- 2. Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career* (Many different publishers including ISBN: 978-0143105053 or substitute with movie *My Brilliant Career*)**
- 3. Doris Pilkington (Nugi Garimara). *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Read book or see movie of same title or both) (ISBN: 978-0702233555)**
- 4. Phyllis Edelson, *Australian Literature: An Anthology of Writing from the Land Down Under* (ISBN: 978-0345368003)**

Both movies *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* and *My Brilliant Career* offer faithful renditions of their namesake books. Copies of both films will be placed on library reserve for the Fall semester. These films are also available for cheap rental on line—try Netflix or Amazon Prime.

ESSAYS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

PLEASE NOTE: You absolutely must refer to the relevant readings for each of the following essay assignments! It is best to use at least some of the readings for each assignment to support your argument in each essay.

Essays 1-3 are due no later than the specified date. The rest of the essays have SUGGESTED due dates but must be done no later than midnight 14 December.

Module 1: Bryson Book (Weeks 1-3)

- Complete Introductory Quiz on Getting to Know Australia. You should answer all questions. Use a good on-line map of Australia and look up Australia-The World Fact Book-Central Intelligence Agency or look in Wikipedia article on Australia. **Due: 14 September 2020**
- Read Bryson book in its entirety
- Read articles on the linked websites
- Participate in the M1 Introductory Discussion
- Write an analytical book review of Bryson's work discussing some of his main themes and subjects: What kind of country is Australia? What makes Australia unique or different? What kinds of political and social problems exist in Australia (such as racism)? Does Bryson give the reader a good picture of life in Australia today? **Due: 21 September 2020 (15% of essay grade)**

Module 2: Rabbit-Proof Fence (Week 4)

- Read the book or view the film *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*
- Read the articles on the linked website
- Participate in the M2 Government Attitude discussion
- Essay: What does this book tell you about historical White Australian attitudes towards Native Australians (Aboriginals) and Australian government efforts to assimilate the natives and destroy their culture? Why did the girls in the story run away? (You may view the film in place

of book) **Due: 28 September 2020 3 February 2020 (10% of essay grade)**

Module 3: Miles Franklin (Week 5)

- Read Miles Franklin *My Brilliant Career* in its entirety or watch movie *My Brilliant Career*.
- Read the articles on the linked websites.
- Participate in the M3 Story Similarities discussion: To what extent are Miles Franklin and her main characters NOT well-behaved women
- Essay: Using Miles Franklin as your guide, write an essay on the overall status of women in Australia in 1900. What did Australian society of that period expect of women in their lives? How are Franklin and her main character Sybylla Melvyn different from other women you meet in this novel / movie? **Due: October 5 2020 (10% of essay grade).**

Note: The readings in all of the following modules are from Edelson's Anthology of Australian literature. Each related essay should be between 1.5-2.0 pages in length. When responding, be sure to use examples from the stories to support your major points. Read all stories in each section. (60% of essay grade). The additional web readings will help expand on the perspectives in the text readings.

All the following assigned essays are due by midnight 14 December 2020. However, it is very strongly recommended that you work on the essays and submit them on a regular basis regularly on the SUGGESTED due date to allow for better feedback. The recommended pace is one essay per week. Essays that are more than 2-3 weeks late may be downgraded. Do not wait until the very end of the semester to submit all remaining essays—the result will not be good.

Module 4: British-Australian Relations (Week 6)

- Read Edelson Introduction
- Read the articles on the linked websites
- Participate in the M4 Australian/British view discussion.

- Essay: Write a brief analysis of British-Australian relations since the early 1800s? What was the 19th century Australian view of Britain? 20th century view? Is Australia a truly independent nation today?
Recommended due date: 12 October 2020 (10% of essay grade)

Module 5: Australian Bush and Aboriginal Experience (Weeks 7-8)

- Read Part 1 of Edelson, pp. 1-52.
- Read: “The Aboriginal Experience”
- Read the articles on the linked websites
- Participate in the M5 Racism discussion
- Participate in the M5 What is Australia’s view of the “Bush” discussion.
- Essay: What is Australia’s view of the Bush? Why don’t more Australians live in the Bush? **Recommended due date 19 October 2020 (10% of essay grade).**
- Essay: How do contemporary aboriginal writers perceive the nature of their experiences with white Australia? **Recommended due date: 26 October 2020 (10% of essay grade)**

Module 6: Convict Origins and WWI (Weeks 9-10)

- Read the Convict section.
- Essay: Describe the reality of convict life in Australia two centuries ago.
Recommended due date: 2 November 2020 (10% of essay grade).
DON’T FORGET TO VOTE 3 November.
- Read “The First Days in the Trenches” and the section on WW I in the Introduction.
- Read the articles on the linked web sites
- If possible, view the film *Gallipoli*
- Participate in the M6 Convicts and WW I discussion
- Essay: What was the Australian view of the British during World War I? What effect did WW I have on British-Australian relations and the development of an independent Australian identity? **Recommended due date 9 November 2020 (10 %of essay grade)**

Module 7: American Dreams (Week 11)

- Read “American Dreams” by Peter Carey
- Read the articles on the linked websites
- Participate in the M7 Australian national identity discussion
- Essay: How does author Carey want Australians to re-evaluate their idea of their own country? Note that the author means for the village in this story to be a metaphor for the whole of Australia. **Recommended due date 16 November 2020. (10% of essay grade).**

Module 8: Relationships (Weeks 12-14)

- Read Part III of Edelson (177-278)
- Read the articles on the linked websites.
- Participate in the M8 Relationships discussion
- Essay: Based on what you read here, write a very detailed 4.5-6.0+ page (double-spaced) portrait of life in contemporary Australia. Comment in detail on such matters as the world view of Australians, their happiness in life, the good / bad aspects of marriage there, their welfare system etc. Where does one find love and happiness? Are marriages happy and true? Are homosexual relationships accepted? Stronger than heterosexual ones? What effect does the welfare system (dole) have on individuals and families **Required due date 14 December 2020 at midnight. (15% of essay grade)**
- **Please note that there are discussion boards in each module throughout the course. Please be sure to participate in the discussion for that portion of the course. Each discussion is tied to the readings and essays within that module and should be done preferably just before writing the assigned essay.**

