Introduction
This course introduces you to a wealth of fascinating literature about Nevada, placing it in the context of Nevada history, geography, and culture, and with a particular focus on ethics. As we read, we will explore a variety of concerns: What does it mean to possess a “sense of place,” and how do you get one if you don’t have it? Does sense of place lead to a sense of responsibility toward a place? How is Nevada portrayed in literature? Who are the major Nevada authors? How have different groups experienced Nevada’s landscape? What clashes have occurred and ethical conundrums arisen during Nevada’s settlement and economic development? Do insiders and outsiders write about and treat Nevada differently? Will reading about Nevada change the way you experience the state? Films, guest speakers, and possible field trips complement the readings.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to:
- read, interpret, and analyze Nevada literature with attention to content, historical and cultural context, genre, and language
- identify and analyze the ethical issues in Nevada, such as gaming, prostitution, treatment of Native Americans, and nuclear waste disposal (CO 12)
- identify the multiple ethical interests at stake in Nevada’s environmental and economic movements (CO 12)
- defend a position about what it means to have a an ethical responsibility and/or a right to place (CO 12)

Silver Core Objectives
This course satisfies CORE OBJECTIVE 12 – Ethics
Students will demonstrate understanding of the ethical principles in general or in application of specialized knowledge, results of research, creative expression, or design processes. Students will demonstrate an ability to recognize, articulate, and apply ethical principles in various academic, professional, social, or personal contexts.

Course requirements directly related to CO 12 include the Creative Paper, the midterm, and the final exam. I also encourage you to use your cogitations to explore ethical issues raised by the readings.

Texts
Literary Nevada: Writings from the Silver State, ed. Cheryll Glotfelty
readings posted to WebCampus
one other book, chosen by your group

WebCampus and Classmate Contact
Course materials, including assignments, will be posted to WebCampus. However, the choice of
specific readings (for Thursdays) will be announced in class on Tuesday, and will not be on
WebCampus. Please exchange contact information with at least one classmate; that way if you
miss Tuesday's class, you'll be able to get the specific reading assignment for Thursday. If that
route doesn't work out, you may email or call me.

Grading
30%  Quizzes and Cogitations
15%  Creative Paper with an ethical valence (CO 12)
10%  Discussion Guide (in-class discussion leading + written guide)
10%  Book Club Report
15%  Midterm (CO 12)
15%  Final exam (CO 12)
  5%  Participation

We will use the plus and minus system for the final grades: 93-100 = A ; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+;
83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 67-69 = D+; 63-66 = D; 60-62 = D-;
below 60 = F.

Participation, Attendance, Paper Format
This class aims for excellent discussion. Participation will be evaluated as follows:  5 = excellent
contributions to class discussions, 4 = good contributions, 3 = fine contributions, 2 = occasional
contributions, 1 = respectful listening.

Attendance matters. Perfect attendance will raise your final course grade by a step (ex. “B”
becomes “B+”). 1-3 absences has no effect on your final grade. More than three absences lowers
your grade, the more absences the lower the grade. 2 tardies = 1 absence.

All work for this class should be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font or an
equivalent, with 1" margins. Pages after p. 1 should be numbered in the upper right corner, and
the piece stapled in the upper left corner.

Statement on Late Work
Papers must be ready at the beginning of the class period in which they are due. Late papers will
not be accepted.

Disabilities, Tragedies, and Trips
If you have a disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me and the Disability
Resource Center (Thompson Building 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate
accommodations. I will be happy to work with you. Similarly, if you have a death in the family
or other tragedy this semester, please tell me, and we will work out a plan. If you are on a sports
team or have another legitimate reason to miss class, let me know in advance (and in writing) so
we can make arrangements.

**Quizzes, Cogitations, and Extra Credit**
A discussion class works well only when everyone has done the reading attentively. I have found that classes are much better when I create an incentive for students to do the reading on time. Accordingly, 30% of your grade will be based on your performance on reading quizzes and cogitations (response papers). Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class on the day when we begin a new unit; missed quizzes may not be made up. Cogitations (normally due on Thursdays) should be one page, typed, double-spaced. (On the day that you lead discussion and submit your Discussion Guide, you are excused from a cogitation.) Focus your cogitation on one, two, or three pieces, selected by that week’s discussion guides. First, reread those pieces and mark them up in your book, underlining key phrases, jotting down comments in the margins, interacting with the text. Cogitations should not be a summary of the piece; rather, they should be your response to the piece and analysis of it. Use your cogitation to digest the reading, contemplate ethical issues raised by the reading, and create ideas—open up lines of thinking--for worthwhile, probing class discussions. Unless otherwise announced, each cogitation will be worth a maximum of three points: 3 = good job, 2 = acceptable job, 1 = weak. Cogitations are due at the beginning of class. I do not accept late work. I will announce Extra Credit opportunities from time to time that will help you make up missed points in the Quizzes and Cogitations category.

**Creative Ethical Paper: Personal Essay, Creative Prose, or Poetry about Nevada (CO 12)**
I would like to encourage you to submit your work to the James MacMillan writing contest, which honors "the best poetry or prose about the state of Nevada." The deadline for submissions is in March. The creative paper in this class will prepare you to submit your work to this contest. I will encourage you to write creative nonfiction (a personal essay) or a short story, and we will have a series of writing exercises and workshops leading up to your finished paper. You may submit poetry, but class exercises will center on prose. As you work on your paper you, as a writer, will gain a special insight into the course readings as you will have faced the choices and challenges that other Nevada authors confront.

The special criterion for your creative piece is that it must engage with an ethical issue. Nevada has historically profited from its status as a “state of sin.” We have or have permitted gambling, drinking, easy divorce, quickie marriages, prostitution, strip clubs, prize fighting, and atomic testing. Our state has harbored swindlers, speculators, con artists, crooks, and cheaters. Your story in some way should tread on ethically controversial ground, even if it does not explicitly advocate a particular ethical position. We'll discuss many selections from the anthology as examples.

This paper should be at least 1,500 words, but it may be substantially longer if necessary to do justice to your idea. We'll talk more about this paper in the first weeks of the semester to clear up questions. Workshop groups will determine which papers are selected to be read to the class; students who read their work earn extra credit in participation.

**Discussion Guide**
As a member of this class, you will be part of a project to develop teaching materials that community college instructors can use to teach Nevada literature. A typical week in our class will use Tuesdays (beginning with a quiz on the assigned reading) to present a broad overview of a particular unit of the *Literary Nevada* anthology. Most Thursdays will be devoted to a much closer analysis and student-led discussion of one, two, or three selections from that week’s unit.
(cogitations on these works will be due). Early in the semester, you will sign up to be the
discussion guide on a given day. For that day you will prepare supplementary materials and
discussion questions for a particular selection and lead class discussion of that piece. You will
submit both a hard copy of your Discussion Guide (which will be graded) and email me a digital
copy (attached as a Microsoft Word .doc) so that I can include it in a Teacher’s Guide that I will
prepare (you will be credited by name). A sample Discussion Guide is posted to WebCampus.
I’ll clear up any questions you have in class. Your grade for the Discussion Guide includes both
the quality of class discussion and of your written Guide. You may choose a partner and work
together; each person will get the same grade on the assignment.

Book Club Report
1200-1500 words. Anthologies provide a useful overview of a field, but it is also rewarding to
discuss a book-length work in its entirety. Accordingly, you will be part of a small-group Nevada
book club in this class. Your book club will agree on a book to read, read it by the specified date,
and discuss it in class on our book club day. (Your group may choose to continue discussion via
email or after class.) You will then write a report that reviews the book, shares your opinion of it,
speculates on why you respond to it the way you do, and summarizes how your other group
members responded to the book (and maybe why) and how their responses opened up new
insights, challenging and enriching your understanding of the work. We’ll discuss this
assignment further in class.

Exams (CO 12)
There will be a take-home midterm and final exam, consisting of several short essays in response
to selected questions. Throughout the semester you will have input into formulating exam
questions. These questions will ask you to synthesize and reflect on the readings and the ethical
issues we raise in class. Note that to fulfill CO 12, at least half of the questions of the midterm
and final exam will ask you to analyze ethical issues in the readings.

UNR’s Mandatory Syllabus Statements

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: "Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under
false pretenses constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic
dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student's enrollment without
a grade, giving an F for the course or for the assignment. For more details, see the University of
Nevada, Reno General Catalog."

Statement of Disability Services: "Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments
or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Thompson
Building, Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations."

Statement on Audio and Video Recording: "Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or
unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This
class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In
order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to
record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments
during class may be recorded."

Statement for Academic Success Services: "Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center
(775) 784-4422, Tutoring Center (775) 784-6801, and University Writing Center (775) 784-6030."
These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

**Statement on Online Course Evaluations:** "Your chance to evaluate this English course will appear two weeks before the last day of classes in the form of a new course on your WebCampus home page. This new course contains only the evaluation survey. These online course evaluations are extremely important to your instructor and to the Department of English, so please take a few minutes to complete your course evaluation when it becomes available. The evaluation is completely anonymous and your comments can never be connected with your name. Instructors cannot see the evaluation course on WebCampus and will not have access to the contents of these evaluations until after final grades have been posted."

**Tentative Schedule** (expect some changes)*

*Ethical issues that will be discussed in satisfaction of CO12 will come up throughout the regular course readings and discussion. Topics addressing CO 12 include: mining, Native American land claims, nuclear development, gaming, and so on.

T 1/20  Introduction
R 1/22  Sense of Place discussion; clarify course requirements. See handout for homework.

T 1/27  Wild Nevada (63 pp.) 723-785
R 1/29  discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________,
_________________

T 2/3  visitor Jack Hursh
R 2/5  Nevada history (read the introductions to the 13 chapters of *Literary Nevada*); Nevada Trivia game; guide to finding Nevada literature

T 2/10  Travel Writing (65 pp.) 485-549
R 2/12  discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________,
_________________

T 2/17  Contemporary Fiction (103 pp.) 619-722; Book clubs form (order book immediately after class)
R 2/19  discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________,
_________________

T 2/24  Draft of Creative Paper due (bring 3 hard copies to class); writing workshops
R 2/26 **Creative Paper due:** book club book check (2 points if you bring it; 1 point if you have ordered it); New Nevada Writers: live readings and posting of selected papers

T 3/3 Reno (76 pp.) 263-338; visitor Alicia Barber; candidate midterm questions due

R 3/5 discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________, ___________________.
Midterm handed out.

T 3/10 Contemporary Poetry 551-617; close reading a poem of your choice (follow instructions on handout); Book Clubs meet (must have read at least 25 pages of the book)

R 3/12 Midterms due; **Field Trip: Meet at Nevada Historical Society at 2:40** (1650 N. Virginia St.)

T 3/17 and R 3/19 SPRING BREAK—no class

T 3/24 Native American Stories (27 pp.) 1-27: ___________________, ________________
R 3/26 visitor Anthony Layton

T 3/31 Mining (77 pp.) 101-177

R 4/2 discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________, ___________________.

T 4/7 Rural Nevada, and Cowboy Poetry (83 pp.) 179-261; Book clubs meet for 20 minutes (must have read half the book)

R 4/9 discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________, ___________________.

T 4/14 Las Vegas (87 pp.) 339-425

R 4/16 discussion guides: ___________________, ___________________, ___________________.

T 4/21 Nuclear Nevada (57 pp.) 427-483; ___________________, ___________________.

R 4/23 Literary Nevada Trivia questions due; film: Peter Kuran’s *Trinity and Beyond: The Atomic Bomb Movie* (1995), shown in class
T 4/28  Book Clubs meet (must have finished the book); candidate questions due for final exam

R 4/30  Review; Conclusion; Literary Nevada Trivia; Final exams handed out

FILL OUT COURSE EVALUATION ON WEBCAMPUS

T 5/5  **Book Club Report due;** Book Clubs report to class

Thurs., May 7, 12:30-2:30 p.m.  Final Exam