

English 320: American Literature I

Fall 2008
2:00-2:50 MWF
4019 Wescoe
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Office Hours: 3:00-4:00 MWF
and by appointment

Course Description: This course is an introduction to American Literature from the Colonial Period to the Civil War. We will read from the major genres of the period: stories, tales, poetry, history, letters, autobiography, travel literature, captivity and slave narratives, etc. Students will be involved in the process of syllabus formation and have a chance to both choose texts for class reading and prepare texts for class discussion. Students should expect to do quite a bit of reading and writing in this course. The literature of this time period presents a unique opportunity to inquire in to issues of identity, nationality, power relations, conflicts among groups of people, and other issues that concern the many people who encountered each other during this time and in this place. Students will be expected to develop interesting questions for us to explore as we work through the literature. Often the questions are most interesting when they reveal the complexity of a situation and cannot readily be answered. Together we ask questions and practice critical analysis. Students should expect to think deeply and broadly, and to discuss quite often with classmates in class.

Admission to English courses numbered 300 and above is limited to students who have completed the freshman-sophomore English requirements or their equivalents.

The Department of English reserves the right to terminate administratively the enrollment of any student who misses two consecutive class meetings during the first two weeks of the semester. Should an emergency situation cause the student to miss two consecutive class meetings, the student should contact the instructor(s) or the English Department, 864-4520, immediately. Students are expected to submit promptly requests to drop should they decide to disenroll from English classes.

Course Goals:

By the end of English 320, students should be able to do the following:

Demonstrate broad background knowledge of American literature from the Colonial period to 1865

- * **Contextualize a text generically and historically/culturally**
- * **Inquire into individual and cultural issues explored in these literary texts**
- * **Engage confidently in scholarly conversations about texts**

Closely engage literary texts

- * **Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of a text's rhetorical situation**
- * **Respond to literature through different writing genres appropriate to the study of English**

Required Text:

The Heath Anthology of American Literature, Volume One A and B (5th Edition)

Recommended Text:

Lunsford, Andrea. *The Everyday Writer* **or**
Faigley, Lester. *The Brief Penguin Handbook*.

Evaluation:

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Paper 1: | 25% | Final Exam: | 20% |
| Paper 2: | 25% | Participation: | 10% |
| In-Class Writings: | 10% | | |
| Discussion Preparation Writings: | 10% | | |

In this course we will be using the new +/- grading scale, approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to describe intermediate levels of performance between a maximum of A and a minimum of F. Intermediate grades represented by plus or minus shall be calculated as .3 units above or below the corresponding letter grade.

Papers: Students will write **two** 6-9 page papers, one that is based on inquiry and one that requires close engagement with a text or texts. Students are encouraged to come up with their own paper topics within the parameters of the assignment. Students should clear topics with me before they begin writing, and we will have conferences to discuss the inquiry paper. The papers will be due by 5:00 pm in my office on the day that is indicated on the schedule. Late papers will lose a letter grade for each day they are late.

In-Class Writings: On most class days, you will write something at the beginning of class to generate discussion. These writings will help you to keep up with the reading and will take the place of a midterm exam, as will the discussion preparation writings discussed below.

Discussion Preparation Writings: About once a week in first half of the semester, we will have discussions of materials related to the readings. These discussions are to give you practice with inquiry and will prepare you to write the first paper. To prepare for these discussions you will complete an assignment located on Blackboard and bring it with you to class on the day of discussion.

Participation: On the days that we have discussion of the readings or materials related to them, one group member should be assigned to take notes each time, and these notes will be turned in at the end of the class. Students will either respond to discussion

questions from me or generate discussion questions themselves to answer in the groups. **The participation portion of your grade will comprise of the quality of your participation in discussion and attendance.**

Final Exam: The final exam will be a take home final due on the day of the scheduled final (December 19) by 4:00 pm. Questions for the final will be generated from discussion, and I will give you more information about it as we get closer to its date.

Attendance: Class participation and discussion are an important part of this class; therefore, attendance is essential. What we do in class is important for meeting the course's goals, and all of our class sessions will depend on your participation in some activities that will ensure that you understand and perform well on graded assignments. Therefore, you cannot expect to do well if you do not attend class. Of course, speak to me if you have a medical or other crisis that will make you miss several classes or if your absence is for a religious holiday or University-sponsored event. I give special consideration to attendance when determining borderline grades.

Academic Dishonesty: Stealing and passing off as your own someone else's ideas or words, or using information from another's work without crediting the source, is called "plagiarism." Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the Internet or published sources, submitting an entire paper written by someone else, submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work), and copying another student's work (even with the student's permission). In order to avoid unintentional plagiarism and to represent your work honestly, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources, whether directly quoted (even a few words) or paraphrased. Please see your instructor if you have any questions about documenting sources.

Because one of the goals of this course is to help you improve your writing, plagiarism hurts you as much as it does anyone. If you plagiarize another's work, you will not be receiving the needed feedback to improve your own writing. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any type of plagiarism in this class. All incidents of plagiarism will be penalized, reported, and kept on file in the English Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Provost's Office.

Writing Help: For help with your writing, I strongly encourage you to contact KU's writing centers, called Writer's Roosts. At a Writer's Roost you can talk about your writing with trained tutors or consult reference materials in a comfortable working environment. You may ask for feedback on your papers, advice and tips on writing (for all your courses), or for guidance on special writing tasks. Please check the website at <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/> for current locations and hours. The Writing Center welcomes both drop-ins and appointments, and there is no charge for their services. For more information, please call 864-2399 or send an e-mail to writing@ku.edu. The website is loaded with helpful information about writing of all sorts, so even if you consider yourself a good writer, check it out!

Disabilities Statement: Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing your course work should consult with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodating your needs. You should also contact the Office of Disability Resources in 22 Strong Hall or contact them at 785-864-2620 or consult the website at <http://www.achievement.ku.edu/disability/>.

Important Dates (to be included in the reading schedule):

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|----------|---|
| 8/29 | begin Unit I: Colonial Period to 1700 |
| 9/1 | Labor Day |
| 10/13 | begin Unit II: Eighteenth Century |
| 10/17 | Fall Break |
| 10/22 | first paper due date |
| 11/3 | Unit III: Early Nineteenth Century: 1800-1865 |
| 11/26-28 | Thanksgiving Break |
| 12/8 | second paper due date |
| 12/10 | last day of class |
| 12/12 | Stop Day |
| 12/19 | Final exam due 4:00 pm |

Schedule of Assignments

(subject to change)

(DPA= date a Discussion Preparation Assignment is due
Assignments can be found on Blackboard)

Week 1:

August 22F No Class – look at assignment on Blackboard and read through syllabus

Week 2:

25M Introduction to the class; **DPA 1 due**

27W distribute reading schedule; paper assignments; **DPA 2 due**

Unit I: Colonial to 1700

29F Native American Oral Literatures and Narrative (18-22) “Talk Concerning the First Beginning” (22-36), “Changing Woman and the Hero Twins” (36-48), “Raven and Marriage” (59-63), “The Bungling Host” (64-65) and “Creation of the Whites” (65-66)

Week 3:

Sept. 1M **Labor Day**

3W Cluster: American in the European Imagination (106-12); **DPA 3 due**

5F discussion groups – **meet at Spencer Research Library to look at maps; DPA 4 due**

Week 4:

8M Columbus (119-31); de Vaca (139-52); Champlain (219-24)

10W Cluster: Cultural Encounters: A Critical Survey (132-38); Pueblo Revolt (195-207); **DPA 5 due**

12F John Smith (255-69); Handsome Lake (802-4)

Week 5:

15M Bradford Of Plymouth Plantation (324-46)

17W Morton New English Canaan (294- 307)

19F discussion groups – creative responses to texts **DPA 6 due**

Week 6:

22M Rowlandson A Narrative of Captivity and Restoration (437-68)

24W John Williams Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion (533-43); Briton Hammon
“Narrative of Uncommon Sufferings” (1137-43)

26F discussion groups – read Tompkins article on Blackboard; **DPA 7 due**

Week 7:

29M Cotton Mather (507-33); Sewall (496-506)

Oct. 1W Increase Mather (readings on Blackboard)

3F discussion groups – pedagogy; **DPA 8 due**

Week 8:

6M Bradstreet (394-413)

8W Sor Juana (186-195)

10F discussion groups; **DPA 9 due**

Week 9:

Unit II: Eighteenth Century

13M Knight (584-602)

15W Crèvecoeur (921-59)

17F **Fall Break**

Week 10:

20M Jefferson Notes on the State of Virginia (990-1010)

22W Franklin Autobiography, Part I (828-76); **Paper 1 due date**

24F Franklin Autobiography, Parts II and III (876-90)

Week 11:

27M Equiano Interesting Narrative (1152-1185)

29W discussion groups; **DPA 10 due**

31F Foster The Coquette (1340-59)

Week 12:

Nov. 3M Brockden Brown “Somnambulism” (1373-87)

Unit III: Early Nineteenth Century, 1800-1865

5W Emerson “American Scholar” (1609-21) “Self-Reliance” (1621-38)

7F Thoreau “Walking” (1803-24)

Week 13:

10M Douglass Narrative (1879-1945)

12W Douglass Narrative (1879-1945)

14F Jacobs Incidents (2029-56); Sojourner Truth (2092-99); **Extra Credit DPA due**

Week 14:

17M Irving "Rip Van Winkle" (2153-65), "Sleepy Hollow" (2165-84)

19W Hawthorne "Minister's Black Veil" (2267-75), "The Birthmark" (2276-87),
"Rappaccini's Daughter" (2287-2306)

21F Poe "Ligeia" (2459-72), "The Black Cat" (2495-2501), "The Facts in the Case of
M. Valdemar" (2515-21)

Week 15:

24M Melville "Benito Cereno" (2669-2726)

26W **Thanksgiving Break**

28F **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 16:

Dec. 1M Stoddard "Lemorne vs. Huell" (2823-36)

3W Whitman "Song of Myself" (2937-82)

5F Dickinson's selected poems

Week 17:

8M **Paper 2 due**; Dickinson's selected poems

10W evaluations and preparation for final exam

Final exam time: Friday, December 19, 1:30-4pm

Mather, Increase. *A Further Account of the Tryals of the New-England Witches. and Cases of Conscience Concerning Witchcraftes adn Evil Spirits Personating Men.* 1693. Boston: J. Dunton. EEBO: Early English Books Online. 25 July, 2008.