

Department of English & Writing Studies

American Literature Survey**English 2401E (002)**

Fall/Winter 2017-18

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Office: AHB 1G33**Office Hours:** Wed 11:00-12:30, Thurs 10:30-12:00, and by appointment**Teaching Assistant:** Sarah Harrison**Email:** sharri94@uwo.ca**Office:** IGAB ON20C**Office Hours:** Mon 2-3 and by appointment
Mon-Wed**Class Location:** AHB 2R21**Class Time:** Mondays 3:30-5:30pm, Wednesdays 3:30-4:30pm**Antirequisite(s):** English 2341E, 2342F/G, 2343F/G, 2344E, 2345F/G, 2346F/G and 3664E, or the former English 2308E.**Prerequisite(s):** At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or 1042E or both of English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A survey of American literature from the period of imperial exploration and contact in North America to the postmodern era. In this class, we will read some of the most fascinating literary works of the United States in a variety of modes and genres—from novels to abolitionist propaganda to sentimental poetry. We will consider the aesthetic and formal properties of each text and consider how writers were inspired by the social conditions, ideological conflicts, economic forces, and political developments of their times, such as Indian Removal and slavery. As we study the evolution of major artistic movements and periods, we will also trace the development of important assumptions, myths, and fundamental beliefs about the United States that still influence American discourse today.

In this survey, we will also pay close attention to the voices that are heard—and not heard—in different moments of US history. The pressure of attempting to read 400 years of literary history will force us to pose some difficult questions about the limits of the American literary canon. Why do we read what we read, and who benefits from that? How have ideas of what constitutes “literature” (or “America,” for that matter) changed over time? What could lesser-known writers contribute to our understanding of the US nation and its literature? And is it possible to read so-called canonical writers in a way that produces new kinds of knowledge?

Readings will include novels such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time*, Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*, and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*; short fiction by Herman Melville, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Henry James; personal narratives such as Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*; and poetry by Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Langston Hughes, and Allan Ginsberg.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Identify different literary traditions in the US and explain their development, noting their key literary characteristics, their historical period, their intellectual tradition, and their relation to each other
- Generate original, incisive arguments about literature that pay attention to the structure, rhetoric, genre, and historical context of literary works
- Express ideas clearly in oral and written form, using appropriate textual evidence, literary terms, scholarly criticism, theoretical concepts, historical contexts, and insights from class discussions
- Formulate a research question, offer and receive peer review, and revise written work based on feedback
- Summarize and cite secondary sources responsibly, develop basic critiques of them, and discuss them productively to generate new interpretations of texts
- Demonstrate a basic awareness of scholarly approaches to the study of US literature, such as new historicist, feminist, queer, and African American studies; use specialized research methods such as library databases

COURSE MATERIALS:

Norton Anthology of American Literature, Shorter Eighth Edition, 2 volumes. Eds. Nina Baym et al. ISBN: 978-0393918885

Douglass, Frederick, and Harriet Jacobs. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, and Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. New York: Modern Library, 2004. ISBN 0-345-47823-1

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Bantam, 2003. 9780553210095

Hemingway, Ernest. *In Our Time*. New York: Scribner, 2003. ISBN 9780684822761

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*. London: Faber and Faber, 1988. ISBN 9780571200337

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*. New York: Vintage, 1987. ISBN 97814000334

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES:

The final mark for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Essay #1 (2-3 pages).....	5%
Essay #2 (5-6 pages).....	10%
Midterm.....	10%
Essay #3 (4-5 pages).....	10%
Research paper proposal.....	pass/fail
Research paper (8-10 pages).....	20%
Class attendance and participation.....	5%
Quizzes (best 8 of 12).....	5%
Final exam (cumulative).....	35%

A student must receive a passing mark for both term work and the final examination in order to receive

a passing mark for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam marks average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default mark of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

I try to respond to emails within 48 hours. I’m happy to discuss your ideas anytime during office hours; if you can’t come in person, I am available by phone (my number is at the top of the syllabus). If you can’t attend my regular office hours please contact me and we can set up an appointment.

TIMETABLE:

You are expected to have completed the assigned reading prior to the first class in which a work is being discussed. Please bring hard copies of assigned readings to class.

N.B.: we may discover that we want to spend more time on certain readings and less time on others. I’ll consider changing the schedule if such a change would benefit most students’ learning in this course. If readings are modified, they will not vary significantly in page length.

1. THE AMERICAN PROJECT: PROMISES AND BETRAYALS	
Mon. Sept 11:	Introductions. Bradford and Winslow, from “Mourt’s Relation” (Norton) Àlvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, from “The Relation...”
Wed. Sept. 13:	Excerpt from John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity” (Norton) Roger Williams, “From <i>The Bloody Tenet of Persecution</i> ,” “A Letter to the Town of Providence” (Norton) Download and read the following letter on OWL: Letter from indentured servant Richard Frethorne
Mon. Sept. 18 :	Anne Bradstreet, “The Prologue,” “The Author to Her Book,” “Before the Birth of One of Her Children,” “In Memory of My Dear Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet,” “Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House” (Norton)
Wed. Sept. 20:	Hawthorne, <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
Mon. Sept. 25:	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
Wed. Sept. 27:	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>
Mon. Oct. 2:	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> A link to the following essay will be posted on OWL. Download and read for class: David Leverenz, “Mrs. Hawthorne’s Headache: Reading <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> .” <i>Nineteenth-Century Literature</i> 37.4 (1983): 552-75. MLA database information session—needed for Oct. 17 & term paper
Wed, Oct. 4:	Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (Norton)
Oct. 9-11:	THANKSGIVING AND READING WEEK—NO CLASS

3. VISIONS OF AMERICA: TRANSCENDENTALISM AND ABOLITIONISM	
Mon, Oct. 16:	Thomas Jefferson et al. "The Declaration of Independence" (OWL) Phillis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America," "To The Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth," "To His Excellency General Washington" (Norton)
Wed, Oct 18:	First short paper due (2-3 pages) Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance," "Nature" Ch. 1-5 (Norton) Go on the MLA database, search for, and download the following essay: Eric Wilson, "'Terrible simplicity': Emerson's metaleptic style." <i>Style</i> 31.1 (Spring 1997): 58-80.
Mon, Oct. 23	Henry David Thoreau, selections from <i>Walden</i> (Norton)
Wed, Oct. 25:	Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (Norton)
Mon, Oct 30:	Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (Norton)
Wed, Nov. 1:	Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (read entire novel, not the excerpts provided in Norton)
Mon, Nov. 6:	Jacobs con't Download the following essay on OWL: Whitsitt, "Reading Between the Lines: The Black Cultural Tradition of Masking in Harriet Jacobs's <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> "
Wed, Nov. 10:	Jacobs con't
Mon, Nov. 13:	Jacobs con't Whitman, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer"
Wed, Nov. 15:	Whitman, "Song of Myself" sections 1-13, 16-19 (Norton)
Mon, Nov. 20:	"Song of Myself" 24, 48-52 (Norton) Emily Dickinson, "I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –", "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain"
Wed, Nov. 22:	Dickinson, "Tell all the truth but tell it slant –", other poems TBA (Norton) Peer-review session for fall term paper
Mon, Nov. 27:	Dickinson, "After great pain, a formal feeling comes" "There's a certain Slant of light" (Norton)
5. THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD AND AMERICAN REALISM	
Wed, Nov. 29:	Download the following reading on OWL, print out and bring to class (do not use the excerpts in Norton): Turner, "from The Significance of the Frontier in American History" FALL TERM PAPER DUE (5-6 pages)
Mon, Dec. 4:	Download the following reading on OWL, print out and bring to class (do not use the excerpts in Norton): Zitkala-Sa, from <i>Impressions of an Indian Childhood</i>
Wed, Dec 6:	Kate Chopin, "Desiree's Baby"
TBA	Midterm scheduled during December exam period
Winter Break	

Mon Jan. 9:	Henry James, "Daisy Miller: A Study" (Norton)
Wed Jan 11:	Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (Norton)
6. MODERNIST EXPERIMENTS	
Mon Jan. 16:	F. T. Marinetti, From "Manifesto of Futurism" (Norton) Ezra Pound, From "A Retrospect," "In a Station of the Metro", "Portrait d'une femme" (Norton) William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow", "This is Just to Say" (Norton)
Wed Jan 18:	T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," (Norton)
Mon Jan 23:	T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land" (Norton)
Wed. Jan. 25:	"The Waste Land" (con't)
Mon. Jan. 30:	Wallace Stevens, "Anecdote of the Jar," "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," "The Snow Man" (Norton)
Wed. Feb 1:	TBA
Mon. Feb. 6:	Ernest Hemingway, <i>In Our Time</i>
Wed. Feb. 8	<i>In Our Time</i>
Mon. Feb. 13:	<i>In Our Time</i> Second short paper due (4-5 pages)
Wed. Feb. 16:	<i>In Our Time</i>
Mon. Feb. 20:	READING WEEK
Wed. Feb. 22:	READING WEEK
7. THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE	
Mon. Feb. 27:	W. E. B. DuBois, from <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> , ch. 1, 3 (Norton) Paul Lawrence Dunbar, "Sympathy," "We Wear the Mask," "Frederick Douglass" (Norton) Langston Hughes, "I, Too," "The Weary Blues", "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (Norton)
8. POSTWAR AND POSTMODERN AMERICAN LITERATURE	
Wed. Mar. 1:	Sylvia Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i>
Mon. Mar. 6:	Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i> (con't)
Wed. Mar. 8:	<i>The Bell Jar</i> (con't) Research paper proposal due
Mon. Mar. 13:	<i>The Bell Jar</i> (con't) A link to the following book excerpt will be posted on OWL. Download and read for class: From Marta Caminero-Santangelo's <i>The Madwoman Can't Speak: Or Why Insanity is Not Subversive</i>
Wed. Mar. 15:	Jack Kerouac, "Belief and Technique for Modern Prose" (Norton) Allan Ginsberg, "Howl" (Norton)
Mon. Mar. 20:	Ginsberg, "Howl" (con't), "A Supermarket in California" (Norton)
Wed. Mar. 22:	Research paper draft peer-review session Sherman Alexie, "At Navajo Monument Valley Tribal School," "Pawn Shop," "Crow Testament"
Mon. Mar. 27:	Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i>
Wed. Mar. 29:	<i>Beloved</i>

	RESEARCH PAPER DUE (8-10 pages)
Mon. Apr. 3:	<i>Beloved</i>
Wed. Apr. 5:	<i>Beloved</i>
	Final Exam (cumulative): Time and Date TBA

OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Attendance:

Attendance is graded, and if you want to do well, you need to come to class regularly. If there is a reason why you are not attending class, please come and speak to me about it. The process for requesting academic accommodation on medical or other grounds is described in the “Accommodations” section near the end of this syllabus. Students who miss more than two classes may be barred from taking the final examination.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays as soon as possible, and no later than one week before a test or two weeks before a major exam. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices.

Participation:

This class depends upon regular and active participation from all students: this involves reading the course texts carefully before class, **bringing texts to class**, listening actively, and responding thoughtfully to other students. Your participation mark is designed to measure your attendance, participation, and evidence of consistent preparation and active learning. You must bring your assigned text to class (please print out documents distributed via OWL). Good decorum and civil behavior is expected from all students at all times. In this class we will often be discussing difficult or sensitive topics. Please be collegial and understanding towards your peers.

Quizzes and other reading assignments:

Unannounced participation assignments will be given over the course of the year; I will count the best 8 out of 12, and they will be worth 5% of your final grade. They will vary in format (including in-class pop quizzes, group work questions, and online discussion board posts) but all of them will require brief responses to questions about the assigned reading. In-class assignments and quizzes cannot be made up. Students seeking academic accommodation for in-class participation assignments will have the mark for that day’s assignment excluded from their total.

Essays:

There are 4 essays due for this class: two short essays (2-3 pages and 4-5 pages respectively), a fall term paper (5-6 pages), and a final research paper (8-10 pages) which will require a proposal. Papers in English should be written in MLA format. Further details of these papers will be announced later in the course. I encourage you to discuss your papers with me in office hours as you work on them. On the day the essay is due, please submit a hard copy of your essay in class and upload a copy of it to Turnitin.com via OWL.

Late policy:

The penalty for late papers will be 5% per day. Extensions may be granted in the case of a documented personal or medical emergency; I do not give extensions for computer/email or printer problems.

If you are submitting a paper late, you must upload it to OWL (which functions as the official timestamp) and put an identical copy in the essay drop box outside the English department in AHB 2G02. Both copies must arrive on the same day. Late penalties will be applied for each day of the week, including weekends and holidays.

Exams:

This course will have a mid-term and a final exam. Students must pass both term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students who fail the final examination (regardless of their term mark) automatically fail the course.

MORE COURSE POLICIES:

Electronics in the classroom:

Please be respectful by turning off your cellphone (unless you're responsible for a dependent or you're dealing with a family emergency; if this is so, alert me before class begins). The use of laptops and other electronics in class is forbidden unless these devices are being used to engage with class material. If you want to use a computer to take notes, please request an appointment to discuss the matter with me. Any use of electronics for non-course-related purposes will result in one warning and, should a second incidence arise, removal from the course.

Intellectual property:

The sale or distribution of class notes, handouts, slides, rubrics, and other material to individuals or groups who are not registered in the class (including commercial websites) is prohibited.

Accommodations:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

For further types of academic accommodation including accommodation for students with disabilities, students in reserve forces, students observing religious holidays, please see

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg111.html>. If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see the SSD to arrange for a formal request for accommodation and inform me as soon as possible. We can then discuss the best solution.

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

If you need help:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Other services:

Wellness Centre: www.wec.uwo.ca

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Office of the Ombudsperson: www.westernu.ca/ombuds