

EN 209-008 Course Policy and Syllabus Fall 2004, 307 Morgan, 8:00 & 9:30

Instructor: John Pursley

Office: 208 Rowand-Johnson

Office Hours: 11:00-12:30 Tuesdays & Thursdays

1:45-2:45 Thursday or by appointment

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Required Materials:

- 1) *Norton Anthology of American Literature, Volumes A & B*
- 2) You will also be responsible for a variety of other readings, which will be handed out periodically throughout the semester.

Course Description: The goal of this course is to immerse ourselves in American literature from its earliest beginnings to 1865, the end of the Civil War. Throughout the semester we will particularly address the notions writers challenge and subvert, the questions they posit and answer, and the tenets they despise and embrace. The emphasis, therefore, is on the primary materials. Thus, we will examine in detail as much of the American literature from the period as possible. The focus of our discussions will be on how the material reflects the trends, philosophies, styles, and attitudes of the time.

Many of the readings in this class will be challenging. You will often have multiple readings due for each class period, and our daily class goal will be to create a synthesis of these texts and understand how they speak to one another, reaching beyond the traditional boundaries of culture, race, class, gender and sexuality.

Requirements

Class Participation: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Your presence in class and arrival *on time* is important to the structure of this course and will be reflected in your final grade. Only four absences will be permitted—save these for debilitating sickness and real emergencies. All absences after four, *regardless of the reason*, will result in a reduction of your final grade by 3%. (i.e., a fourth cut becomes an 88% B+ into an 85% B, a fifth cut, 81% B-, etcetera).

Classwork: All work is to be read in its entirety on the first day it is assigned. You will be held accountable for what is said in class. You will often be introduced to key terms that are likely to show up on the exams. Taking notes as you read helps your retention and will serve you well come test time. I strongly recommend that you underline or highlight important passages in your textbook. You'll be glad you did when the tests and paper roll around.

Grades:

- Journals & Quizzes = 30%
- Midterm Exam = 15%
- Paper 1 = 15%
- Paper 2 = 20%
- Final Exam = 20%

The Paper: Your papers will vary in length; your first paper will be 3-5 pages, and your second paper will be 5-7 pages long and on a topic of your choosing; however, all topics must be approved by me in advance. This will help you develop a thesis statement, clarify your thoughts, and help with your paper's organization. Your paper must be presented in MLA format and is due at the beginning of class on the due date. **Late papers will not be accepted.** Any computer related problems, such as hard-drive crashes, long lines in the computer labs, or power outages, are not acceptable reasons for submitting a paper late. If you must be absent on the day the final paper is due, please make arrangements in advance.

Journal Entries/Quizzes: Your active participation in this class is important. I will also be using occasional unannounced quizzes that will ensure that you are reading the material and that you are prepared for class. As the semester progresses we will begin to integrate journals, which will be an outside literary analysis component to our regular in-class literary analysis. These journals are designed to challenge you as scholars of literature to develop the means to both discuss and analyze literature critically, as well as allow you the chance to better participate and direct the classroom discussions to those things that *you* found most important to the text.

Honor System: If you use the words or ideas of others, give them credit. The University's policy on plagiarism is quite strict, and I enforce it adamantly. If you plagiarize, (1) your paper will fail, (2) you may fail this course, and (3) you may even be expelled from the University. Please, do not find yourself in this situation. If you are ever in doubt as to whether you have used another's ideas, simplify everything and give proper reference where it is due. You can never get penalized for being cautious. If you have any concerns about plagiarism, please come talk to me.

Due Dates: Assignments and papers **must** be turned in on time. Even if you can't come to class, I still expect you to turn in the necessary work to me before class.

Americans with Disabilities Act: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the English Department and the University are committed to providing appropriate support for students with disabilities, including learning disabilities. A student who wants to request disability accommodations should contact Disabilities Services (348-4285) and bring the paperwork to me.

Syllabus

August—

H 8.26 Introduction: Distribution of Course Policies/Syllabus and Class Cards

“No Earth, No Water, Nothing”: Stories of the Beginning of the World & Tales of Early Conquest

T 8.31 Introduction Cont., “Literature to 1700” (A 3-16)

September—

September 1—Last day to register or add a course without penalty

H 9.2 “Stories of the Beginning of the World” (A 19-33)

T 9.7 Christopher Columbus *from* “Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage,” *from* “Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage” (A 34-37), Bartholomé de las Casas *from* “The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies,” *from* “The Coast of Pearls, Paria, and the Island of Trinidad” (A 38-42), Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca *from* “The Relation of Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca” (A 58-70)

H 9.9 John Smith *from* “General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles,” *from* “A Description of New England,” *from* “New England’s Trials” (A 103-120)

“Coyote, Skunk & Prairie Dog”: The Native American Trickster Tales

T 9.14 Winnebago “Felix White Sr.’s Introduction to Wakjankaga,” *from* “The Winnebago Trickster Cycle” (A 122-131), Mourning Dove “Owlwoman and Coyote (A 140-143), Navajo “Coyote, Skunk, and the Prairie Dogs” (A 150-156), **Assign Paper 1**

“A People of God in the Devil’s Territory”: American Literature Before 1700

H 9.16 William Bradford *from* “Of Plymouth Plantation (Books 1 & 2)” (A 156-179)

T 9.21 John Winthrop “A Model of Christian Charity” (A 205-217), Roger Williams *from* “A Key into the Language of America” (A 226-235)

H 9.23 Mary Rowlandson “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson” (A 308-327)

T 9.28 Mary Rowlandson “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson” cont. (A 327-340), Cotton Mather *from* “The Wonders of the Invisible World” (A 390-397)

H 9.30 Anne Bradstreet “The Prologue,” “A Dialogue between Old England and New; Concerning Their Present Troubles, Anno, 1642” (A 238-247), “To My Dear Children” (A 272-275)

“The Way to Wealth & the Wrath of God”: American Literature After 1700

October—

- T 10.5** Jonathan Edwards “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”(A 464-466, 498-509), Benjamin Franklin “The Way to Wealth” (A 515-522), “Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America” (A 534-537), **Paper 1 Due**
- H 10.7** Olaudah Equiano from The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavas Vassa, the African, Written by Himself” (A 747-766)
- T 10.12** Olaudah Equiano from The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavas Vassa, the African, Written by Himself” cont. (A 766-781), Judith Sargent Murray “On the Equality of the Sexes (A 782-791), Phillis Wheatley “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (A 808-810)
- H 10.14** **Midterm Exam**

“Is ‘This’ the Upshot of Your Experiment?” American Literature 1820-1865

- T 10.19** Washington Irving “Rip Van Winkle” (B 978-992), William Apes “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (B 1078-1084), **Assign Paper 2**
- H 10.21** Nathaniel Hawthorne “Young Goodman Brown” (B 1247-1250, 1263-1272), “The Birth-Mark” (B 1289-1300)
- T 10.26** Nathaniel Hawthorne “Rappaccini’s Daughter” (B 1313-1333)
- H 10.28** Edgar Allan Poe “The Masque of the Red Death,” (B 1507-1510, 1567-1571), “The Imp of the Perverse,” “The Cask of Amontillado” (B 1588-1597)

November—

- T 11.2** Edgar Allan Poe “To Helen,” “The Raven,” “To _____ . Ulalume: A Ballad,” & “Annabel Lee” (B 1510-1511, 1518-1524)

November 3—Last day to drop a course with a grade of “W”

- H 11.4** Herman Melville “Bartleby the Scrivener” (B 2287-2292, 2330-2355)
- T 11.9** Ralph Waldo Emerson “Self-Reliance,” “The Poet” (B 1103-1106, 1160-1191)
- H 11.11** Frederick Douglass *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (B 2029-2059)
- T 11.16** Frederick Douglass *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (B 2059-2097)
- H 11.18** Henry David Thoreau “Resistance to Civil Government (B 1788-1807), Lydia Maria Child “Mrs. Child’s Reply” (B 1094-1103)

“I Look in Vain for the Poet Whom I Describe”: Two “American” Poets

- T 11.23** Walt Whitman “Song of Myself” (B 2127-2131, 2146-2163), **Paper 2 Due**
- H 11.25** **No Classes – Thanksgiving Holiday**
- T 11.30** Walt Whitman “Song of Myself” cont. (B 2163-2189), “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” (B 2226-2232)

December—

- H 12.2** Emily Dickinson “67,” “258,” “280,” “441,” “449,” “465,” “712” (B 2499-2524)
- T 12.7** TBA
- H 12.9** Review for Final

December 13-17 Final Exams