

English 3327-M51 American Literature to 1865

Fall 2021 **WEB**

Professor Theron Britt

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Office Hours: online via *Zoom*

TEXTS:

Robert Levine, et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*

Shorter Ninth Edition, Volume 1: Beginnings to 1865

ISBN: 978-0-393-26452-4 [Please be sure to purchase this particular edition; there are many different Norton editions of American literature available.]

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will trace through a variety of literary and cultural documents the development of American literature from the beginnings up to the second half of the 19th century. We will examine how American writers, faced with the prospect of inventing new ways to understand and represent a new and quickly changing social order, constructed, critiqued, and then constantly revised competing ideas of “America” and American identity. We will begin with colonial settlement and then explore a large body of literature that includes the Puritans, the European engagement with America’s first “others”—Native Americans—the American Revolution, the American Transcendentalists, issues of slavery and race, and mid-19th century American Realism.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the development of American literature from the early English explorations of North America in the seventeenth century, through to the middle of the nineteenth century.
- Have a critical understanding of how “America” has been variously defined across two and a half centuries through and in relation to the course readings.
- Identify influential American writings from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and relate these works to their historical context.
- Interpret and analyze, both orally and in writing, specific works of influential American writers before 1865, with attention to issues of both breadth of coverage and depth of analysis.

WEB Instruction:

- Instead of having on-campus meetings, our course will be online and asynchronous via *eCourseware*. This means that we will NOT have a specific meeting time. **BUT I will offer to those who can attend one online class meeting per week via Zoom.** For purposes of review, I will record these meetings and post access to them via *eCourseware*.
- Instruction is divided up into weekly units. Readings, quizzes, short papers, and exams will be scheduled for each week.
- **Students will have to download an app or otherwise sign up for Zoom.** Access to *Zoom* is available to registered students without cost through The University of Memphis.

Moreover, there should be a *Zoom* app that will work on almost any device—smartphone, laptop, desktop, or tablet. You can create an account and sign into *Zoom* with your UofM ID through The University of Memphis website:

<https://www.memphis.edu/umtech/teaching/ummedia/zoom.php>

- **All exams, papers, posted discussion responses, and grading** will be handled online in *eCourseware*.
- **Office hours** will happen online via *Zoom*.

ASSIGNMENTS, WRITTEN WORK, and GRADES: The course will be graded on the basis of **1,000 points** as follows:

- **Three midterm exams and a final exam** of equal weight, each worth **150 points**. The midterm exams and final exam will be based on the assigned readings and class discussions. There will be three questions on each exam, with the expectation of an answer for each being roughly a typed page and a half. You will be given two to three days to complete an exam.
- **Frequent quizzes over the reading**, worth a total of **100 points**.
- **Three short response papers** (two pages each) over the reading material, worth a total of **150 points** (50 points each). Response papers should be approximately two typed pages (double-spaced) and will be on assigned topics comparing two or more of our class readings. Response papers turned in after the class for which they are due will suffer major point reductions.
- **Discussion posts** in response to a specific prompt about the weekly readings, worth a total of **150 points** (15 points each).
- **Attendance and participation** are required. Attendance will be measured through online posted **Discussions** of the assigned reading.
- **Optional or Bonus Paper Assignments.** To substitute for a missed quiz or just to improve your grade you will have two options to write short papers (3-5 pages) on the material that was missed, or for extra credit (25 points each), one in the first half of the semester, and one in the second half. The optional short papers for extra credit will be on assigned topics. These short papers are expected to conform to the *MLA Handbook, 8th edition* Works Cited citation format. You can either buy the *Handbook* or look up what you need online. See: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html
- **Plus/minus grading.** Note that final grades will be rated on the plus/minus scale as follows: an “A+” 966-1000; an “A” 935-965; an “A-” 900-934; a “B+” 866-899; a “B” 835-865; a “B-” 800-834, and so on.
- **Preparation.** As for an on-campus class, this class will cover a broad range of issues and texts and consequently means that you have a good amount of reading to do.
- **Your written work** may be submitted to **Turnitin.com** for an evaluation of the originality of your work and, where appropriate, proper use and attribution of sources. By taking this course, you agree that all written assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included in *Turnitin.com*’s restricted access database solely

for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: In general, late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangements, though exceptions may be made for medical, financial, or familial emergencies. If a problem arises that makes it difficult to impossible for you to finish an assignment on time, the earlier that you are able to contact me about it the better, as this class moves quickly through the reading material and the writing assignments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. All work submitted for the class must be your own, and you are not allowed to use previously submitted academic work to fulfill requirements. If you use the work of others in your assignments (including anonymously published analyses, comments, or postings on websites), you must acknowledge and accurately cite their contributions. Plagiarism of any kind or extent will result in failure on the assignment and other consequences as per University policy, which can include failure in the course, suspension, and/or expulsion from the university. For further information, please see “Academic Dishonesty” at the website for Judicial and Ethical Programs: <http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/>.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: For further information on University policies regarding both online and classroom conduct, plagiarism, and other issues, please see the website for the Office of Judicial and Ethical Programs: <http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/>.

DISABILITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS: Reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be provided to students with disabilities. Students who have a disability or condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to contact **Disability Resources for Students** (DRS) to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modification or accommodations. Reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be provided to all students with disabilities who present a memo from DRS. Any student who may need class or test accommodations based on the impact of a disability is encouraged to discuss your specific needs with me in private. Students with disabilities should also contact DRS at 110 Wilder Tower, 678-2880 or at www.memphis.edu/drs. DRS coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND COMMUNICATION: The CWC serves all members of the University of Memphis (UofM) community (undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff) as they work to become successful writers and speakers. CWC consultants are trained in writing- and speech-tutor methodology and can provide one-on-one feedback on any writing or speech in any stage of development. While the CWC welcomes the opportunity to assist clients with their writing and/or speech, it does not function as an editing service. While COVID-19 continues to demonstrate its presence, all CWC consulting will take place via Upswing, UofM’s online academic support online platform. Students can schedule online appointments via Upswing by visiting the following link: <https://memphis.upswing.io/>. Once logged in, students should search “writing” in the search bar and scroll all the way down. By choosing

“writing” or “Center for Writing and Communication,” CWC consultations will populate first. ***Students are strongly encouraged to use CWC consultants whenever possible, rather than Upswing consultants.***

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1	<p>Introduction: The Promise of “America” John Smith “A Description of New England” (66-69) <i>August 20: Last day to add or change sections</i></p>
WEEK 2	<p>William Bradford “Of Plymouth Plantation” Bk 1: (73-82); Bk 2: (82-87); and “Mr. Morton of Merry . . .” (87-90). John Winthrop “A Model of Christian Charity” (93-104). Drop Period - Courses dropped on or before August 31 will not have grades assigned and will not appear on your transcript. Courses dropped <u>after</u> August 31 to October 2 will have “W” grades assigned and will appear on your transcript. Courses cannot be dropped online after October 2nd.</p>
WEEK 3	<p>Mary Rowlandson “A Narrative of the Captivity . . .” (132-151) Anne Bradstreet, poems t.b.a. (112 and following) First Response Paper due</p>
WEEK 4	<p>Jonathan Edwards “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (192-203) First Midterm Exam</p>
WEEK 5	<p>Benjamin Franklin “The Way to Wealth” (208-214) and “Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America” (216-220) J. Hector St. John De Crèvecoeur “What is an American?” (323-332)</p>
WEEK 6	<p>Thomas Paine “Common Sense” (339-345) Phillis Wheatley, poems, t.b.a. (420 and following) Olaudah Equiano “The Interesting Narrative . . . of ... Equiano” (372-405) Second Response Paper due</p>
WEEK 7	<p>Washington Irving “Rip Van Winkle” (516-527) James Fenimore Cooper “The Last of the Mohicans” Ch. III (530-536) William Apess “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (545-550)</p>
WEEK 8	<p>Second Midterm Exam Nathaniel Hawthorne “The Minister’s Black Veil” (685-694) <i>October 18: Last day to drop a class and still receive a “W”; no refund</i></p>
WEEK 9	<p>Nathaniel Hawthorne “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (655-668) Edgar Allan Poe “The Tell-Tale Heart” (762-766)</p>

WEEK 10	Margaret Fuller "The Great Lawsuit" (806-814) Third Response Paper due Ralph Waldo Emerson "Self-Reliance" (596-613)
WEEK 11	Henry David Thoreau from <i>Walden</i> Ch. 1, "Economy" (920-962) Henry David Thoreau <i>Walden</i> Ch. 2 "Where I Lived . . ." (962-972)
WEEK 12 Nov	Third Midterm Exam Harriet Beecher Stowe <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (840-878)
WEEK 13	Harriet Beecher Stowe <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (840-878) Harriet Jacobs "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" (879-899)
WEEK 14	Walt Whitman "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (1135) Last Day of Class
WEEK 15	FINAL EXAM due November 24th, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 noon