

English 3327-001 American Literature to 1865

Spring 2017 Patterson Hall 213 M/W 2:20-3:45 CRN 11899

Professor Theron Britt

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TEXTS:

Nina Baym, et al. ***The Norton Anthology of American Literature***
Shorter Eighth Edition, Volume 1: Beginnings to 1865
ISBN 978-0-393-91886-1

Course syllabus and other materials will be posted on UMDrive; go to the appropriate course section (3327 Spring 2017) at: umdrive.memphis.edu/tbritt/public

AIMS AND ORGANIZATION:

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.

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 **200 points**.
- **Frequent quizzes** over the reading material, worth a total of **200 points**.
- **Attendance and participation** are required.
- 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. *Also, extra credit can be earned via a class presentation on an assigned topic.*
- *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.*

This is a survey course that will cover a broad range of issues and texts and consequently means that you have a good amount of reading to do. You should of course do your reading *before* class, and to speed that end *your participation grade will be based in part on your attendance, but will focus most on what you have to contribute to class discussions.*

Response papers will be approximately two pages (double-spaced) and will be on assigned topics designed to encourage you to think about the reading material ahead of class and formulate a response that you can share with others. Response papers will not be accepted

after the class for which they are due.

The midterm exams and final exam will be in-class and based on the assigned readings and class discussions. Your exams will ask you to identify the work and the author of specific passages from the reading and then relate that passage to larger themes in the work.

The optional short papers for extra credit will be on assigned topics. You will be expected to do scholarly research and to engage with issues or themes brought up in the course. Papers should conform to the *MLA Handbook* Works Cited citation format. You can either buy the *Handbook* or look up what you need online. Late papers will be penalized 10 points for each day late (exceptions granted for valid medical excuses). All optional short papers (but not response papers) must be submitted in hard copy and also in electronic format (an email copy will do). Your written work may be submitted to **Turnitin.com** (details on this process will be given in class) for an evaluation of the originality of your work and 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. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

No cell phones or laptops to be used during class. Violation of this rule will lead to deduction of points.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangements, though exceptions may be made for emergencies. The earlier that you are able to contact me 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/>.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of the development of American literature from the first English explorations of North America in the sixteenth century, through to the middle of the nineteenth century.
- Understand the relationships between different generations of American writers.

- Have a critical understanding of how “America” has been variously defined through and in relation to the course readings.
- Identify important American writings from the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and relate these works to their historical context.
- Interpret and analyze, both orally and in writing, the works of important American writers before 1865, with attention to issues of both breadth of coverage and depth of analysis.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES: For further information on University policies regarding 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.

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1	Jan 18	Introduction: The Promise of America John Smith “A Description of New England” (69-72) <i>January 20: Last day to add or change sections</i>
WEEK 2	23	William Bradford “Of Plymouth Plantation” Bk 1: 74-76; “Dealing with the Natives” (83-86); “Mr. Morton of Merry . . .” (86-89).
	25	John Winthrop “A Model of Christian Charity” (91-102). <i>January 17-30: DROP Course AND NOT receive a “W”</i>
WEEK 3	30	Mary Rowlandson “A Narrative of the Captivity . . .” (127-143)
Feb	01	Jonathan Edwards “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (209-220)
WEEK 4	06	First Midterm Exam
	08	Benjamin Franklin “The Way to Wealth” (236-242) and “Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America” (244-247)
WEEK 5	13	J. Hector St. John De Crèvecoeur “What is an American?” (309-319)
	15	Thomas Paine “Common Sense” (324-331) Thomas Jefferson, “The Declaration of Independence” (339-344).

WEEK 6	20	Alexander Hamilton and James Madison <i>from</i> "The Federalist" No. 1 and No. 10 (345-353).
	22	Olaudah Equiano "The Interesting Narrative . . . of ... Equiano" (355-387)
WEEK 7	27	Washington Irving "Rip Van Winkle" (470-482)
Mar	01	James Fenimore Cooper "The Last of the Mohicans" Ch. III (485-491) William Apress "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (498-504).
WEEK 8		<i>SPRING BREAK MARCH 6-12</i>
WEEK 9	13	Second Midterm Exam
	15	Nathaniel Hawthorne "Young Goodman Brown" (619-628) <i>March 17: Last day to drop a class and still receive a "W"; no refund</i>
WEEK 10	20	Nathaniel Hawthorne "The Minister's Black Veil" (409-18)
	22	Edgar Allan Poe "The Tell-Tale Heart" (714-718) Edgar Allan Poe "The Black Cat" (695-701)
WEEK 11	27	Ralph Waldo Emerson "Self-Reliance" (549-566)
	29	Henry David Thoreau <i>from Walden</i> Ch. 1, "Economy" (858-900)
WEEK 12 Apr	3	Henry David Thoreau <i>Walden</i> Ch. 2 "Where I Lived . . ." (901-910)
	5	Third Midterm Exam
WEEK 13	10	Margaret Fuller <i>from</i> "The Great Lawsuit . . ." (752-760)
	12	Harriet Jacobs "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" (819-839)
WEEK 14	17	Frederick Douglass <i>Narrative of the Life</i> , selections (946-1002)
	19	Herman Melville "Benito Cereno" (1128-1183)
WEEK 15	24	Herman Melville "Benito Cereno" (1128-1183)
	26	Review
WEEK 16 May	3	FINAL EXAM May 3, from 1-3 p.m.