
C O U R S E S Y L L A B U S
E N G 3 7 0 : A M E R I C A N L I T E R A T U R E I

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Office Hours: TTH 2:30-3:30
and M 3:00-4:00; and by appt.

COURSE INFORMATION:

Term: Spring 2014
Time: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 – 2:15 PM
Location: Liberal Arts Building 205
Course website: <http://www.craigcarey.net/spring2014eng370/>

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS: (Please buy the editions indicated here.)

Nina Baym, ed., *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (Shorter Eighth Edition) (Vol. 1),
978-0393918861

Hannah W. Foster, *The Coquette* (Oxford Paperbacks), 978-0195042399

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (Oxford World's Classics), 978-0199554867

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

ENG 370: American Literature I. 3 hrs. Surveys American literature from its beginnings to the Civil War.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This is the first of two courses comprising a selected survey of American literature, culture, and literary history. In this course, we will explore literature written during the period of discovery, exploration, and colonization; the age of Enlightenment and revolution; and a century of literary nationalism, reform, and Civil War. We will read across multiple genres while reflecting on the concept of “American literature” in the context of geographical, political, religious, intellectual, and literary change. Course requirements include active participation, informal writing exercises, three short papers, and a final exam.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students should have improved their ability:

- To understand the formal and literary strategies used by different American writers from diverse cultural backgrounds and traditions.
- To consider how cultural, technological, and political conditions informed how and what people wrote, and for what purpose.
- To read across a variety of different genre and media, contextualizing forms of expression in the wider context of historical forces.
- To understand “literature” as a category that encompasses not just fiction and poetry, but a range of genres including travel writing, sermons, personal narratives, histories, sketches, essays, tracts, speeches, and pamphlets.
- To contextualize 20th century literature within the wider history of American literature.
- To recognize the influence of cultural differences such as gender, ethnicity, race, geography, and class on the historical practice (and categorization) of reading, literature, and interpretation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

(February 24 is the last day to drop the course without academic penalty.)

PARTICIPATION:	20%
INFORMAL WRITING:	25%
THREE PAPERS:	30%
FINAL EXAM:	25%

PARTICIPATION (20%):

Students are expected to come to class prepared and on time, ready to actively participate in the class discussion. Given the “survey” nature of the course, preparation for the class involves more than just reading the texts. You should plan to keep detailed notes on each text you read. I suggest keeping your notes organized around different categories: for example, for each text you might keep track of main points and ideas, literary and formal properties, questions or confusions, and connections to other texts. Keeping good notes in this class will be essential for doing well on the exams.

As for in-class participation, I expect every student to contribute to the overall quality of discussions, which means that you should come to class having thought about the readings and ready to offer your own reflections, comments, and questions. The quality of your contributions is as important as their quantity. Your participation grade will also be influenced by in-class activities.

INFORMAL WRITING (25%):

About once a week, you will be asked to complete short informal writing assignments attached to the weekly readings. These short assignments are designed to help you digest, process, and synthesize the readings *before* class, facilitating your ability to contribute to class discussion. They will take many different forms throughout the semester, including blog posts, discussion boards, and in-class quizzes. Information about the assignments will be posted weekly on the blog. It is your responsibility to stay informed with the latest assignment.

These assignments are designed to help you process the readings *before* class, so they must be completed before the start of class. I will not accept late submissions. If you are absent, you are still responsible for any writing assignment due that day. I will drop your lowest grade on these assignments at the end of the semester. All of them will be evaluated on a simple 5-point scale.

Rating	Characteristics
5	<i>Exceptional.</i> The assignment reflects in-depth engagement with the topic. The writing is clear, creative, focused, and developed, connecting ideas at the highest level. It integrates examples with explanations and analysis, fleshing out ideas with sophistication. It likewise demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications.
4	<i>Good.</i> The assignment reflects strong engagement with the topic. The writing is clear, focused, and reasonably developed. Shows flashes of insight and critical awareness.
3	<i>Satisfactory.</i> The assignment reflects moderate engagement with the topic. The writing is clear, but fewer connections are made between ideas. Insights are suggested, but not fully developed or pursued.
2	<i>Underdeveloped.</i> The assignment reflects passing engagement with the topic. The writing is vague and consists mostly of summary or description. Few connections are made between ideas.
1	<i>Limited.</i> The assignment displays little evidence of engagement with the topic.
0	<i>No Credit.</i> The assignment is not completed or displays no engagement with the topic.

THREE PAPERS (30%):

Over the course of the term, students will write three short papers of about 2-3 pages. Each paper will address a different unit of the course, though students will have some leeway as to who and what they choose to write about. Paper topics will be discussed in advance, with ample time for students to draft, revise, and discuss the papers. I will also be available during my office hours and by appointment to discuss the assignments in more detail. In general, outside research is not required for the papers, but students are encouraged to draw on historical and academic research to support their positions.

FINAL EXAM (25%):

Details about the final exam will be discussed in class. Sections on the final exam will likely consist of matching and identification (i.e., key terms, authors, decades, texts), short answer questions, and a take home essay. Keeping good notes throughout the term will be critical for doing well on the exam.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**GRADING**

Grades are earned, not given. Students should not expect to earn a grade of an A by simply completing the assignments and showing up for class. I use a standard 100-point grading scale in which 90-100=A, 89-80=B, and so forth. Final grades will not be rounded up.

- A work is considered superior or excellent. The student demonstrates deep critical thinking and sophisticated use of language throughout the semester.
- B work is above average. It still meets the standards of A work but may not have the same level of excellence or consistency.
- C work indicates satisfactory, college-level work.
- D and F grades represent work that is below college level.

I will not discuss grades until *at least 24 hours* after handing back your work. This is to give you time to carefully review your work and my written comments on it. I will likewise not discuss grades over email. These matters can be discussed during my office hours or by appointment.

LATE WORK

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period noted on the syllabus. No informal writing assignments will be accepted late. Formal papers that are turned in late will be lowered one letter grade for each calendar day they are late.

ATTENDANCE

The attendance policy is that there is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Every student is allowed a maximum of 4 absences. Any absence over that number will count directly against your final grade. I will deduct 5 percentage points from your *final grade* for every absence starting with your fifth. If you miss more than seven classes you will automatically fail the course.

There is no need to alert me of an upcoming absence. You may send an email as a courtesy, but please do not ask me to provide you with material that you missed. If you are absent on a day when written work is due, you are still responsible for completing the assignment. If it is not an online assignment, you should either send it with a classmate or email it to me as an attachment before the start of class. Please rely on your classmates to provide you with notes and announcements that you miss. You should also regularly check the course website for current information. I will not make an exception regarding an assignment because you were not in class when it was assigned or changed.

EMAIL

I am happy to respond to questions by e-mail, and I try to do so whenever possible within 24-48 hours. Before you contact me, however, please make sure the information you are seeking can't be located either

on the syllabus, the course website, or by asking one of your classmates. When writing emails, students should conform to acceptable email etiquette and use a salutation, correct language, and a closing with their full name.

ASSISTANCE

I enjoy working with students to help improve their skills. I encourage you to use me a resource. Feel free to stop by my office hours or to make an appointment to discuss grades, assignments, readings, and any other matter related to the course or your future goals.

DIGITAL ETIQUETTE

To ensure responsible and attentive participation, all cell phones and/or other devices (iPods, etc.) should be turned off *before* you enter the classroom. If your phone rings once during class, we'll laugh and I'll ask you to turn it off. If your phone rings again during the semester, I'll ask you to leave and this will count as an absence. If I see anyone sending text messages during class, I will also provide one warning and then mark you absent.

You may use a laptop or tablet to take notes in class. However, in-class laptops also present temptations that many students find irresistible. So to be clear: you may not use a laptop or tablet in class to follow a game, check your friends' statuses on Facebook, respond to email, post a Tweet, etc. Such activities not only distract you but they distract anyone around or behind you. If you often seem distracted by what's on your screen, I will ask you to put your laptop away, perhaps for the duration of the semester. If the problem continues, I will ask you to leave the class for the day; this will count as an absence.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

USM's policy is that students conduct themselves in a respectful manner in keeping with the academic environment. Among other things, this means maintaining polite discourse in class discussion and a non-combative attitude with both the instructor and fellow classmates. I reserve the right to ask any student not adhering to this behavior to leave the classroom and/or to drop the course.

WRITING CENTER

Students should follow their own best practices when it comes to their writing practices, but all students can benefit from crafting multiple drafts and visiting the USM Writing Center. As stated on their website, "The Writing Center is a free tutorial service available to any USM student who wants assistance with a writing project. We offer one-on-one writing instruction that's designed to help you become a more effective writer. This tutorial service is offered on a walk-in basis or by appointment (on the hour for 45 minutes). However, the appointments often book up several days in advance, so making an appointment is always a good idea." The Writing Center is located in Cook Library. Appointments can be scheduled by phoning (601) 266-4821 or by visiting their website located at <http://www.usm.edu/writing-center>.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, which is the presentation of someone else's words or ideas as your own, is a serious offense in the academic community and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined in the USM Undergraduate Bulletin as follows: "Plagiarism is scholarly theft, and it is defined as the unacknowledged use of secondary sources. More specifically, any written or oral presentation in which the writer or speaker does not distinguish clearly between original and borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Because students, as scholars, must make frequent use of the concepts and the facts developed by other scholars, plagiarism is not the mere use of another's facts and ideas. However, it is plagiarism when students present the work of other scholars as if it were their own work. Plagiarism can be committed in a number of ways:

1. Reproducing another author's writing as if it were one's own;
2. Paraphrasing another author's work without citing the original;

3. Borrowing from another author's ideas, even though those ideas are reworded, without giving credit; and
4. Copying another author's organization without giving credit.

Please feel free to ask if you are ever unsure about what constitutes plagiarism or if you need any help in synthesizing, quoting, and/or citing a source. For more information on plagiarism, visit the USM library website's section on plagiarism: <http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/whatisplag.php>. The library website also offers a Plagiarism Tutorial: <http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/plagiarismtutorial.php>

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty can take the form of plagiarism and/or cheating, neither of which will be tolerated. The following is from the USM Undergraduate Bulletin: "When cheating is discovered, the faculty member may give the student an F on the work involved or in the course. If further disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the student should be reported to the Dean of Students. In addition to being a violation of academic honesty, cheating violates the Code of Student Conduct and may be grounds for probation, suspension, and/or expulsion. Students on disciplinary suspension may not enroll in any courses offered by The University of Southern Mississippi."

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

This course follows all university regulations for students with disabilities. If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Address: The University of Southern Mississippi
Office for Disability Accommodations
118 College Drive # 8586
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Telephone: (601) 266-5024 or (228) 214-3232 *Fax:* (601) 266-6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the *Mississippi Relay Service* at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) or email Suzy Hebert at Suzanne.Hebert@usm.edu.

CHANGES

All parts of the syllabus and the course, including the schedule, are subject to change to meet the needs of students in the course. Please consult the course website for the most up-to-date information.

PAPER FORMAT

In order to help me grade fairly, all assignments (except those completed in class) must be typed, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins. Assignments of more than one page must be stapled. To reduce padding, include only your name and the course number in the heading (e.g., Mary Smith, ENG 370).

Course Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, readings are from *The Norton Anthology* (Shorter Eighth Edition)

Week 1: Contact and Exploration

- 01/14 Introduction to the course and each other. What is Early American Literature?
 01/16 Read “Beginnings to 1700,” pp. 3-19
 Christopher Columbus, “Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage” (1493) and
 “Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage” (1503), pp. 25-28
 Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *Relation of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca* (1542), pp. 29-35

Week 2: Early Settlement

- 01/21 John Smith, from *The General History of Virginia* (1624), pp. 57-69
 01/23 John Smith, “A Description of New England” (1616), pp. 69-72
 Thomas Harriot, from *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588). You
 can access the text online at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/harriot/harriot.html>. Read selections from
 “The First Part: Of Merchantable Commodities,” then scroll to the bottom and study the pictures.

Week 3: Puritan Typology

- 01/28 William Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation*, pp. 74-86
 Last day to drop full semester classes and receive 100% financial credit
 01/30 Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*
 (1682), pp. 126-143

Week 4: Early American Poetry

- 02/04 Anne Bradstreet, “The Author to Her Book,” “Before the Birth of One of Her Children,” “To My
 Dear and Loving Husband,” “A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment,” “Here
 Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666,” and “To My Dear
 Children,” pp. 119-126.
 02/06 Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” “To the University of Cambridge,
 in New England,” and “To S.M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works,” pp. 403-404,
 409-410.

Week 5: The Enlightenment

- 02/11 Read “American Literature 1700-1820,” pp. 157-169
 Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography* [Part One], pp. 248–271
 02/13 Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography* [Part Two], pp. 293-308
 Benjamin Franklin, “Advice to a Young Tradesman, Written by an Old One” (1748) and “Hints
 For Those That Would Be Rich,” from *Poor Richard’s Almanack* (1737) (copy)

Week 6: The Black Atlantic

- 02/18 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789), pp. 355-387
 02/20 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789)
Paper #1 Due

Week 7: The Rise of the Novel

- 02/25 Hannah W. Foster, *The Coquette; or, The History of Eliza Wharton* (1797), pp. 1-100
 02/27 Hannah W. Foster, *The Coquette; or, The History of Eliza Wharton* (1797), pp. 101-169

Week 8: American Transcendentalism

- 03/04 No class (Mardi Gras holiday)

- 03/06 Read “American Literature 1820-1865,” pp. 445-463
 Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (1836): Intro and Ch. 1 (pp. 508-511), plus Ch. 4 (pp. 516-520).
 Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar” (1837), pp. 536-549.

Week 9: Spring Break

- 03/11 Spring Break
 03/13 Spring Break

Week 10: Transcendental Experiments

- 03/18 Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden* (1854): “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For,” “Solitude,” and “Spring,” pp. 901-926
 03/20 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), pp. 1-57

Week 11: Utopian and Gothic America

- 03/25 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), pp. 58-181
 03/27 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), pp. 182-247

Week 12: Slavery and the South

- 04/01 Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839), pp. 702-714
 04/03 Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), pp. 818-839

Week 13: Melville, Magazines, and the Marketplace

- 04/08 Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener” (1855), pp. 1102-1128
 04/10 Herman Melville, *To be announced*
Paper #2 Due

Week 14: American Poetry I

- 04/15 Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” (1855), pp. 1024-1067 (focus on sections 1-24)
 04/17 Explore *The Walt Whitman Archive*: <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/>
 Walt Whitman, “Beat! Beat! Drums!” “Cavalry Crossing a Ford,” and “The Wound-Dresser” (1079-1082)

Week 15: American Poetry II

- 04/22 Emily Dickinson, *Poems* #112, 124, 202, 340, 355, 359, 409, 479, 519, 591, 764, and 1263.
 04/24 Reread Dickinson Poems; also “Letter Exchange with Susan Gilbert Dickinson” and “Letters to Thomas Wentworth Higginson” (pp. 1215-1219)
 Explore the *Dickinson Electronic Archives*: <http://www.emilydickinson.org/>

Week 16: The Emergence of Realism

- 04/29 Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron Mills* (1861), pp. 1219-1246
 05/01 Final Exam Review
Paper #3 Due

Final Exam: Thursday, May 8, 1:30 – 4:00 PM