

AML 2070: 03A5

Survey of American Literature

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Office Hours: Wednesday (Pd. 8), Friday (Pd. 8)

Fall 2013
Time: M, W, F (Pd. 7)
Place: MAT 0251

Course Description and Goals

In this course, we will conduct a survey of American literature, by reading from a range of this country's most historically influential and aesthetically compelling texts. Proceeding chronologically, we will begin with selections from the early American colonial period, before moving on to texts from the revolutionary era and the early days of the nation's founding, through the nineteenth-century Romantic period, up to the early twentieth-century Modernist period, and concluding in the ongoing Post-modernist period of the present day. While most of our readings will come from *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (shorter 8th ed.), we will also read three complete novels: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*, William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. As this course will introduce students to a wide variety of genres, styles, and subjects in American literature, students will ideally develop a broadened appreciation of literature's possibilities, as well as a greater understanding of how their preferred aesthetic approaches emerge from and are situated within a larger American literary context.

This class is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:
<<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>>.

Texts

Required Texts

Baym, Nina, ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, shorter 8th ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2012. Print.

Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Blithedale Romance*.

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*.

Assignments

Weekly Response

300 words, due: a day of your choosing.

Every week, I would like you to submit one reading response, of 300 words a piece, commenting on that particular class day's reading. (For example, if you submit a response on Wednesday, you should comment upon Wednesday's reading.) While you may respond to anything about the text that interests you, you must quickly move beyond summary to offer your personal interpretations or reflections.

Essay 1: Close Reading

1200 words, due: Monday, Sept. 9

In this essay, you will offer a close reading of one of the shorts texts that we have read so far, explicating what you understand as the text's central message. Pointing to concrete examples in the text, show how the author's use of literal and figurative language convey this message.

Essay 2: Character Analysis

1200 words, due: Monday, Oct. 7

In this essay, you will compose a character analysis of one of the characters in Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*. Taking into account this character's background, personality, physical appearance, beliefs, tastes, fears, comments, and other characteristics, explain how Hawthorne's portrayal of this character functions thematically within the larger context of the novel.

Essay 3: Commentary 1

1800 words, due: Wed., Nov. 6

In this essay, I would like you to offer a commentary on Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. In your view, what is this novel about? Try to find one key theme to discuss. Considering Faulkner's use of formal structure, characterization, tone, sensory details, diction, rhyme, and rhythm, show how the novel comments on this theme.

Essay 4: Commentary 2

1800 words, due: Wed., Dec. 4

As in the last essay, I would like you to offer a commentary, this time on Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. In your view, what is this novel about? Try to find one key theme to discuss. Considering Morrison's use of formal structure, characterization, tone, sensory details, diction, rhyme, and rhythm, show how the novel comments on this theme.

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Essay 1 (1200 words) - 10%

Essay 2 (1200 words) - 15%

Essay 3 (1800 words) - 25%

Essay 4 (1800 words) - 25%

Weekly reading responses (300 words each) - 10%

Attendance and Participation - 15%

A: 94-100 (4.0)

A-: 90-93 (3.67)

B+: 87-89 (3.33)

B: 84-86 (3.0)

B-: 80-83 (2.67)

C+: 77-79 (2.33)

C: 74-76 (2.0)

C-: 70-73 (1.67)

D+: 67-69 (1.33)

D: 64-66 (1.0)

D-: 60-63 (.67)

E: 0-59 (0)

A - You successfully completed the assignment at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Your paper reveals that you have grappled deeply with the assignment's topic. Your paper is clearly structured, thoroughly supported, and persuasive.

B - You successfully completed the assignment at a moderately high level. Your paper reveals that you have thought deeply about the assignment's topic, and have developed a largely persuasive argument, although your work may need slight revisions in terms of structure and/or content.

C - While your paper reveals that you have given some thought to the assignment's topic, your paper seems more of a rough draft than a final version, and requires substantial revisions, likely in terms of both structure and content, in order to persuade the reader. On top of that, while your

prose is likely readable, there may be significant grammatical problems which need to be ironed out.

D - You did what the assignment required of you at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The paper's main ideas are poorly supported, and an organizational structure is difficult to discern. Frequently, writing at this level may suffer from grammar problems which are so serious as to render portions of the paper nearly unreadable.

E - Papers which earn Es fail to show that the writer has given even mild consideration to the assignment's topic. The paper offers slim to no support for its argument, and an organizational structure cannot be discerned. Importantly, if any of the paper has been plagiarized, it will also receive a failing grade.

Course Policies

Text and Workshop Requirements

- All assignments should be computer generated and professional in appearance.
- Bring two copies of drafts on all peer review days.
- Drafts should be complete and polished.
- Submit all assignments before the beginning of class on the due date.
- If you need an extension on a paper, please speak to me beforehand.
- I will accept late papers, but I will take 5% off of the paper's grade for each class period (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) that passes from the due date.
- Students may revise one of the first three essays by the final day of class. The revised grade will supersede the original grade.

Attendance

- Be present, on time, and prepared.
- When you miss class, you are responsible for getting any assignments in on time (i.e., by the beginning of class) and making up any work. You may e-mail a copy of your essay to me if you are absent.
- If you have an emergency (e.g. family issue or extended illness), please contact me, so that we can work out an arrangement for you to complete an assignment or the course in a satisfactory way.

Grade Appeals

If you have questions regarding your final grade, see me first. After we meet, if you want to appeal your final grade, see or call Carla Blount in the Department of English. The English Department will consider appeals for final semester grades, not individual assignment grades. Note that such grade appeals may result in higher, lower, or unchanged grades.

General Education Requirements

Composition

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>

Writing Requirement (formerly Gordon Rule)

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>

University Policies

Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Schedule

Week One (Aug. 21 – 23)

Wednesday: Course Introduction

Friday: William Bradford (p. 72 – 89), John Winthrop (p.90 – 101)

Week Two (Aug. 26 – 30)

Monday: Anne Bradstreet (p. 110 – 125), Mary Rowlandson (p. 126-142)

Wednesday: Jonathan Edwards (p. 177-220)

Friday: Thomas Paine (p. 323 -336), Thomas Jefferson (p. 337 – 344)

Week Three (Sept. 2 – 6)

Monday: (No class – Labor Day.)

Wednesday: Washington Irving (p. 467 – 481)

Friday: **Peer Review – Essay One**

Week Four (Sept. 9 – 13)

Monday: **Due- Essay One;** Olaudah Equiano (p. 354 – 386), Phillis Wheatley (p. 401-411)

Wednesday: Ralph Waldo Emerson (p. 482 – 514, 539 – 555)

Friday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Week Five (Sept. 16 – 20)

Monday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Wednesday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Friday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Week Six (Sept. 23 – 27)

Monday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Wednesday: Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*

Friday: Margaret Fuller (p. 749 – 760), Frederick Douglass (p. 934-45, and Chapters I, VI, VII, IX, and X of the *Narrative*)

Week Seven (Sept. 30 – Oct. 4)

Monday: Emily Dickinson (p. 1189 – 1218)

Wednesday: Walt Whitman (p. 1005 – 1008, “Preface to *Leaves of Grass*,” “Song of Myself,” “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”)

Friday: **Peer Review – Essay 2**

Week Eight (Oct. 7 – 11)

Monday: **Due – Essay 2**; Booker T. Washington (p. 1631- 1640), W. E. B. DuBois (p. 1715 - 1731)

Wednesday: Gertrude Stein (p. 1898 – 1910) Robert Frost (p. 1911 – 1925)

Friday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Week Nine (Oct. 14 – 18)

Monday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Wednesday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Friday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Week Ten (Oct. 21 – 25)

Monday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Wednesday: William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*

Friday: Zora Neale Hurston (p. 2123- 2134)

Week Eleven (Oct. 28 – Nov. 1)

Monday: Elizabeth Bishop (p. 2287 – 2296)

Wednesday: Langston Hughes (p. 2221 – 2228), James Baldwin (p. 2511 – 2522)

Friday: Robert Lowell (p. 2482 – 2492), Anne Sexton (p. 2557 – 2562), Sylvia Plath (p. 2600 – 2607)

Week Twelve (Nov. 4 – 8)

Monday: **Peer Review – Essay 3**

Wednesday: **Due – Essay 3**; Allen Ginsberg (p. 2538 - 2548)

Friday: (No class – Homecoming)

Week Thirteen (Nov. 11 – 15)

Monday: (No class – Veteran’s Day)

Wednesday: Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*

Friday: Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*

Week Fourteen (Nov. 18 - 22)

Monday: Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*

Wednesday: Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*

Friday: Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*

Week Fifteen (Nov. 25 – 29)

Monday: Denise Levertov (p. 2507 - 2709); John Ashberry (p. 2744 – 2748)

Wednesday: (No class – Thanksgiving)

Friday: (No class – Thanksgiving)

Week Sixteen (Dec. 2 - 4)

Monday: **Peer Review – Essay 4**

Wednesday: **Due – Essay 4**; Louise Erdrich (p. 2779 – 2791); Adrienne Rich (p. 2563 – 2576); last day of class