

## COURSE POLICIES

AML 4213 (Early American Literature), sec. 05F2

### Early American Life Writing

**Dr. Jodi Schorb**

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Phone: (352) 392-6650 x281 (checked weekly)

#### Office Hours & Location (Fall 2013)

**TUR 4334**

**Drop In Office hours on Tuesdays 3:00-4:30pm. Additional meetings on Thursdays 4:00-5pm.**

If these times conflict with other classes, or if you need further help, additional meetings at alternative times are often available with 1 day notice. Meetings at alternative times are encouraged & welcomed: just speak to me in class or email me in advance to arrange a time.

#### Course Overview:

*The course meets in TUR 2306 on Tuesdays period 7 (1:55-2:45), and Thursdays periods 7-8 (1:55-3:50)*

This course will introduce students to a range of early American life writing composed between 1600 and 1830, including conversion narratives and spiritual autobiographies, captivity and slave narratives, travel narratives, and secular accounts of exemplary lives.

Puritans and heretics, ministers and merchants, Quakers and witches, settlers and displaced American Indians, exemplary citizens and criminals, captives, prisoners, and slaves: how did the diverse populations of early America "compose" themselves and adapt their complex personal experiences into legible literary forms?

Students will learn to analyze the form, function and development of life writing prior to the emergence of "autobiography" as a formal genre. Secondary reading on life writing will assist in honing expertise and tools for literary analysis. Assignments include short analysis papers, group work, and a longer essay involving primary and secondary research.

#### Required texts:

1. **Coursepak** is to be purchased after week 2 through **Xerographic Copy Center**, 927 NW 13<sup>th</sup> St (just south of Applebee's); phone 375-0797 for hours and directions, or refer to their webpage at <http://www.xerographicgainesville.com>

**Books** (used and new) are ordered through the campus bookstore in Reitz; <http://www.bsd.ufl.edu/G1C/bookstore/bookstore.asp>. These editions are selected for a reason and some of the editions might be available in ebook via [penguin.com](http://penguin.com)

2. Wendy Martin, ed. *Colonial American Travel Narratives*. Penguin Classics; ISBN 0-14-039088-X (List price: \$17)
3. Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography and Other Writings*. Penguin Classics; ISBN 9780142437605 (recommended but not required edition). List price: \$11)
4. *Unchained Voices: An Anthology of Black Authors in the English-Speaking World of the 18th Century*. Ed. Vincent Carretta; U Press of Kentucky; ISBN 9780813190761. (List price: \$30)

You are *required* to have both a valid Gatorlink account and access to our course learning site (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu>), as well as software that can open files in .pdf format **OR** .doc (or .docx) format. You will submit files electronically through E-Learning-Sakai, and receive assessed work back on E-Learning-Sakai.

**Assignments and Grading:**

Homework A (Reflection on Life Narrative and Audience, Purpose)	10%
Homework B (4-5 pages; Analyze a Narrative of Your Choice from Unit B using the "Toolkit" Resource)	20%
Homework C (4-5 pages; Analyze a Narrative of Your Choice from Unit C)	20%
Final Essay (a 7-8 page paper integrating primary and secondary research)	30%
Regular participation & preparation (which incorporates group work, homework exercises, peer workshops, pop quizzes, and/or informal reading reflections)	20%
	<b>100%</b>

*You can consult with me at any time if you want an estimate of your grade or course standing.*

**About the Written Requirements:**

Assignments and in-class work are designed to demonstrate your continued engagement with the readings (primary and secondary) and ideas posed in class, as well as your ability to develop interesting close reading and analysis of the texts. For this reason, I structure the flow of assignments based on a sequence of shorter reflective, then analytical, assignments, culminating in a longer essay. This pedagogical plan allows you to get both practice and feedback on your writing and on research techniques before the longer essay is due.

**Final Essay (30%), see assignment handout available by midsemester.**

- In addition to the homeworks, you will complete one 7-8 page essay completed in two stages (written peer draft, final paper)
- You are allowed to bring a draft to my office or to the campus writing center, and encouraged to consult with me on your topic or your outline.

**Extra Credit:**

You are allowed to complete one bonus analysis paper (4-5 pages) similar to assignment "C" for the class, worth 20%, on texts of interest in Unit D (see syllabus). If you submit an extra credit assignment, tell me how you want to apply the extra work: to boost your attendance and participation grade, or to replace the grade on Homework B or Homework C. (If for some reason the grade is lower than the analysis you hoped to replace, the higher grade will stand.)

### Grading Expectations for Essays:

**A-range essays** establish and sustain a complex and original argument that demonstrates sophisticated engagement with the course concerns and the unit's themes, contexts, and assigned readings. A-level essays provide attentive, rich, and original close reading to illuminate the complexities of language and theme in their chosen texts. They are well-organized, well-supported, well-developed, and written in an engaging and clear prose style.

**B+ essays** are very good in nearly all the above counts: they are most often well-organized, well-supported, and clearly written, with strong but often less-fully-sustained moments of analysis and argument.

**B/B- essays** are competent and capable; they could be made stronger with **either** better organization, more complex development, more sustained examples, a stronger prose style, **or** less recurrent grammatical problems.

**C-range** essays are passable and often promising, but have **multiple** key areas that need considerable improvement: thesis strength, argument focus, level of analysis, development, organization, style, recurrent grammatical problems that interfere with clarity and ability to persuade.

**D-level** essays often hold promise, but are not yet "there" as far as narrowing down, organizing, and sustaining a viable idea in readable prose.

**F essays** fail to meet the basic criteria of argument, organization, and mechanics, or may be too off topic by failing to respond in any meaningful way to the assignment, or they contain passages that are plagiarized.

### Grading Expectations for Homeworks:

**A-range:** Homeworks marked excellent are thoughtful, careful, developed, and clearly presented. They show clear engagement with the unit's themes and contexts, strong comprehension of the text, and they offer sustained and original close reading that successfully illuminates the assignment.

**B-range:** Homeworks marked very good are competent and capable, but would benefit from **either** more complex development, fuller explanation or examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

**C-range:** Promising, but has **multiple** areas that require considerable improvement: more rigorous engagement with the assignment, stronger development of ideas, improved focus (in identifying the issue or guiding the reader through your analysis), fuller explanation of examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), and/or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

**D or below:** Off track or inadequate, either because it is too brief, lacks comprehension, is carelessly composed, or presents a superficial response to the topic.

### Grading expectations for Course Participation & Preparation:

To earn an "A" for regular participation and preparation, the A level student is **consistently** prepared and engaged. They have their materials handy and are able to refer to specifics in their materials during class. They are able to make connections from the readings and/or build productive discussion from class discussion. They contribute to the ongoing discussion by responding thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful group understanding. They contribute regularly and are active listeners in small group work. They abide by the attendance policy. While they may not speak every session, if this person was not a member of the class, the quality of student discussion would diminish.

B range participants **mostly** meet the above criteria, C range participants **occasionally** meet the above criteria, D range participants **rarely** meet the above, F range participants **fail** to meet passable criteria.

**Grading Chart (Letter to Number Conversion):**

You'll get a letter grade on all your written work. I will then record the corresponding number in my gradebook. This chart is used to convert letter grades to numeric grades on all your papers and assignments. The parentheses include the range of numbers that apply to the corresponding letter. This chart is also used to determine your final grade in the course:

A+	(97-100)
A	(93-96)
A-	(90-92)
B+	(87-89)
B	(83-86)
B-	(80-82)
C+	(77-79)
C	(73-76)
C-	(70-72)
D	(66-69)
F	(65 or under)

**Grade appeals:**

In the unlikely event that a student wishes to appeal his or her final grade, the student should consult Prof. Stephanie Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dept. of English Main Office. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

For more information, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

**Extensions, late penalties and late policies:**

Assignments may be graded down one half grade (i.e. 5 points) for each calendar day they are late.

Late work will be graded but will NOT contain detailed instructor's margin comments, just a short explanation of the final grade.

If you feel your situation warrants an extension, you can request an extension; however, I reserve the right to deny the request, especially when poor time management, technology failures, recurrent tardiness, recurrent requests for extensions, or frequent lack of class preparation factor into the need for more time.

**Attendance, Participation, Preparation:** I expect you to attend class regularly, rarely missing class.

**You are allowed 3 absences** (no explanation needed), although it is unusual for students to avail themselves of all 3. Upon a fourth absence, your final grade will be lowered up to one letter. Successive unapproved absences (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>....) will continue to lower your final grade. Speak to me in conference if you are facing unusual circumstances that affect your ability to abide by these expectations; if your situation warrants an adjustment to the requirements, we can discuss a solution in advance of the end of semester.

Habitual **tardiness** will be marked as absenteeism and lower your attendance/participation grade.

**A handful of days may be marked on the syllabus in bold as "mandatory attendance": these days you must attend** (unless you have an excused absence that day, like a medical note). Skipping these days with an unexcused absence will impact your attendance/participation grade.

**The success of the class requires your active presence.** A strong class doesn't just happen by chance: it involves each of us committing to creating a learning community attentive to each other's ideas, writing, and the readings. For this reason, participation and preparation are essential. I expect you to be here on time, having thought about the readings, ready to speak about things you thought about as you read, and ready to listen and respond when put in groups. Be an attentive listener, and share when called upon. Having an off week is to be expected. But if you have a pattern (i.e. consecutive days) of unpreparedness, or you seem to habitually rely on others to carry the weight of the work and discussion, expect your participation grade to be notably lower than that of your peers.

**Be conscious of what you can do to facilitate your peers' discussion and your peers' engagement.** I value directness (articulating your feelings and questions about readings), but also courtesy and sharing discussion time so that a conversation can build. Be conscious of annoying behaviors or dismissive gestures: don't walk

away from groups during small discussions, do not distract others with your electronic devices or any web surfing, look at the person speaking, and wait for break to leave the classroom during small group work.

**If you miss a class, you are responsible for coming prepared to the next class.** Therefore, while you do not need to explain your absence to me, you should either contact me or another student before the next class meeting and make arrangements to pick up missed handouts, key announcements, or assignments. (Get notes from a fellow student.) Do not show up in class and ask if you missed anything: find that out beforehand from a fellow student, and arrive prepared.

**Electronics:** Laptops are discouraged. If you use laptops you must sit in the front; ipads or kindles are ok. Electronics are for viewing class materials only; I reserve the right to restrict your in class use of electronic devices if distracting or disruptive.

**Reading Notes:** Let's face it, we read a lot, and even read attentively, then forget a lot by the time we step in the classroom. Get into the habit of reserving a space in your notebook for a momentary pause and reflection when you complete the day's assignments, jotting down a few informal ideas to jump start class discussion. This will help your participation and preparation immensely.

You might reserve space for: *initial reactions* (things to share at check in; broad responses to the week's readings); *more in-depth reflection points*: these are the things you wish to speak most to in class, or write more about, or to hear others' opinions on (this may include passages from secondary sources that interest you). If you take copious notes or mark up your texts a lot, you will benefit from taking the time to "pull out" a few thoughtful ideas for class or for assignments from the bulk of your scribbles.

**My role**, in general, will be to provide relevant background and context for thinking about the readings and their significance or importance, then step back, prompting you with questions that help you apply and develop your readings, facilitating the ensuing discussions, and incorporating class ideas into the flow of discussion, to help you come to a fuller understanding and engagement with the text. Lecturing and rote learning are therefore not a prominent part of my pedagogy.

**Please speak to me** if you are having issues that are affecting your attendance or performance, or if there is something about the class that is bothering you and you feel it could reasonably be addressed/modified.

#### **Plagiarism and Honor Code:**

Plagiarism is intellectual theft and fraud. It means passing off someone else's work (including borrowed words and phrases) as one's own. It occurs when one fails to acknowledge the source(s) of ideas, quotations, or information. It also occurs when someone else supplies the content of **any part** of one's paper or assigned work, even if that person is unknown (i.e. paper bank, a webpage, wikipedia). When in doubt, cite. If you have concerns or questions about documenting sources, or wish to report a suspected plagiarism, consult with me in office hour.

Plagiarism does not include incorporating feedback from classroom peers into your essays, as long as another student does not significantly revise the paper by contributing direct and substantive language to the paper or substituting their arguments for your own.

**All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code.** The UF Honor Code information page specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>  
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

#### **Instructor Evaluation:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

**Additional information:**

**UF Disability Resource Center** strives to provide quality services to students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, to educate them about their legal rights and responsibilities so that they can make informed decisions, and to foster a sense of empowerment so that they can engage in critical thinking and self-determination.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>  
001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall), 352-392-8565; [accessuf@dso.ufl.edu](mailto:accessuf@dso.ufl.edu)

If you have a documented disability, please set up a confidential discussion with me before week three to discuss how this may impact your performance and how I can best accommodate your needs.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

**UF Reading & Writing Center** offers UF students help becoming better readers and writers, including study skills sessions, test preparation workshops, and 30-minute sessions of individual help with essay drafts. The website includes multiple resources, including MLA citation guides, annotated bibliography writing guides, and resume guides.

<http://www.at.ufl.edu/rwcenter/index.html>  
302 Tigert Hall; (352) 392-6420

**UF Counseling and Wellness Center** offers individual counseling, wellness counseling, couples counseling, problem solving help, CERC crisis services:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>  
3190 Radio Road; (352) 392-1575

**Sexual Harassment, UF Student Affairs:**

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.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty\\_staff/fees\\_resources\\_policies/sexual\\_harassment/](http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/)

## COURSE SYLLABUS

AML 4213 (Early American Literature), sec. 05F2  
**Early American Life Writing**

The course meets in TUR 2306 on Tuesdays period 7 (1:55-2:45), and Thursdays periods 7-8 (1:55-3:50)

### Unit A: Introduction and Foundations

Week 1:

- R 8/22 Course Overview, Requirements, and Expectations.
- ELS site demo (accessed via <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>)
  - About Life Narrative (powerpoint)
  - About Homework A
  - Preparing for next class

Week 2:

Tu 8/27 About Life Writing. To prepare for class:

- Download and read the following on ELS; "Autobiographical Acts" by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, from *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*.
- Consult the online archive "First-Person Narratives of the American South" (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/>) and follow the assigned homework prompt.

R 8/29 Continue discussion of life writing.

Preparation: Bring a draft of the Homework "A" to class. You will discuss your ideas and drafts in small groups to strengthen your thinking about the topic.

**The final version of Homework A is due by Sunday 9/1 by 10pm to ELS**

### Unit B: Pre-18th Century Life Writing

Week 3: Early Encounters with the Unknown.

Tu 9/3 Cabeza de Vaca, excerpts from *Relation of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca* (1542), on ELS

R 9/5 Captain John Smith, from *General Historie of Virginia* (1624); briefly note the difference from the earlier promotional tract for American settlement, *Description of New England* (1616). Read also Richard Frethorne, Letters to His Parents from Virginia (1623), on ELS

Week 4: Puritan Autobiography

Tu 9/10 Thomas Shepard, *Autobiography* (1646) plus Ann Bradstreet, "To my Dear and Loving Children" (1660s), Coursepak.

R 9/12 Michael Wigglesworth, from the *Diary of Michael Wigglesworth* (1653-1657), Coursepak.  
In class activity: Attempt to recast your life narrative in the genre of spiritual autobiography.

Week 5-6, Indian Captivity Narratives

Tu 9/17 Mary Rowlandson, *A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682), in Martin, *Colonial American Travel Narratives*: 1-48.

R 9/19 Rowlandson, continued. Toolkit Assignment in-class practice and discussion.

### Unit C: Composing 18th-century Selves: Travelers, Servants, Captives, Criminals, and Slaves

Tu 9/24 John Gyles, *Memoirs of Odd Adventures, Strange Deliverances, & etc.* (1736), coursepak.

Week 6: Travel Narratives

R 9/26 Sarah Kemble Knight, *The Journal of Madam Knight* (1704-05, pub. 1825), in Martin, *Colonial American Travel Narratives*: 49-76. Plus scan Martin's introduction for information about travel narratives as a genre and the genre's importance.

**Homework B Due by Sunday 9/29 by 10pm to Sakai (Analysis of an assigned narrative of your choice, applying the Autobiography "Toolkit" resource)**

Week 7: Travel Narratives (continued)

Tu 10/1 Begin William Byrd II, *The Secret History of the Line* (1729, unpublished until 1929), in Martin, *Colonial American Travel Narratives*, 77-172;

R 10/3 Finish discussion of Byrd's "Secret History," plus excerpts from Byrd's *Secret Diaries*. Coursepak.

Week 8: 18th Century Conversion Narratives

Guiding question: How do marginalized female Quaker indentured servant and "free" black writers adapt the genre of religious conversion narrative to write themselves into print?

Tu 10/8 Elizabeth Ashbridge, Elizabeth Ashbridge, *Some Account of the Fore Part of the Life of Elizabeth Ashbridge* (1755), Coursepak

R 10/10 Britton Hammon, *A Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings, and Surprising Deliverance of Briton Hammon, a Negro Man* (1760) and John Marrant, *Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black* (1785), both in *Unchained Voices*, pp. 20-25 and 110-133.

Week 9: Criminal Confession Narratives

Guiding question: How do criminals adapt the genre of religious conversion and religious confession to write themselves into print?

Tu 10/15 Patience Boston, *The Faithful Narrative of the Wicked Life and Remarkable Conversion of Patience Boston* (1738), coursepak and background on the genre by Daniel Cohen, from *Pillars of Salt*, Coursepak.

R 10/17 Joseph-Bill Packer, *A Journal of the Life and Travels of Joseph-Bill Packer* (1773), coursepak  
Rachel Wall, *Life, Last Words, and Dying Confession* (1789), coursepak  
Johnson Green, *The Life and Confession of Johnson Green, who is to be Executed*, in *Unchained Voices* (1786), 134-142

Week 10, Slave Narratives

Tu 10/22 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life . . .* (1789; 1794), in *Unchained Voices*, 185-243.

R 10/24 Finish Equiano, 243-289. Also read: Belinda, "Petition of an African Slave, to the Legislature of Massachusetts" (1782), in *Unchained Voices*, 142-145, and scan the piece by Equiano's friend and collaborator, Quobna Ottobah Cugoana, *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of Slavery* (1787), in *Unchained Voices*, 144-179, taking note of how personal autobiography are integrated into their petitions/essays.

Week 11, Slave narratives (cont'd)

Tu 10/29, Venture Smith, *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, A Native of Africa* (1798), in Carretta, *Unchained Voices*.  
William Grimes, *The Life of William Grimes, The Runaway Slave, Written by Himself* (1825), Online.

R 10/31 Small group, student-led discussion on Venture Smith and/or William Grimes. Read whatever narrative you were NOT assigned to read for Tuesday 10/29 class. Reflect on the discussion and reflection questions provided to you in class on 10/29. Also, give some thought to what text you might write on for Homework C; I'll allot some brief time for you to swap ideas in class.

**Homework C Due (Textual Analysis of Unit 3 subject of interest) by Sunday 11/3 by 10pm to Sakai.**



**Unit D: The Emergence of Modern Autobiography**

Week 12

Tu 11/5 *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Part 1 (composed in 1771): Penguin Classics edition, Introduction through page 70.

R 11/7 *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, Part 2 (composed in 1784): Penguin Classics edition, through page 93. Also read this provocative argument about Franklin and plan to discuss:

- Stephen Carl Arch, from *After Franklin: The Emergence of Autobiography in Post-Revolutionary America, 1780-1830*, coursepak

Week 13

Tu 11/12 Finish discussion of *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*: Scan through Part 3 (composed in 1788), reading as much as you can (i.e. pages 93-176).

R 11/14 Stephen Burroughs, *Sketch of the Life of the Notorious Stephen Burroughs, Given by Himself* (1811; first published 1798), coursepak

Week 14:

Tu 11/19 Elizabeth Munro Fisher, *Memoirs of Mrs. Elizabeth Fisher of the City of New York* (1810), coursepak

R 11/21 K. White, *Narrative of the Life, Occurrences, Vicissitudes and Present Situation of K. White* (1809), coursepak

**Optional Extra credit analysis (on an interpretive issue of your choice in Unit 4, modern autobiography) due by Sunday 11/24, 10pm to ELS**

Week 15/16

Tu 11/26 TBA, wrap up; discuss essays.

R 11/28 Thanksgiving holiday, no class...

Tu 12/3 **Peer workshop on final essays: \*Mandatory Attendance\***

**Final essay due by Sunday 12/8, 10pm to ELS**