

**AML 2070: Survey of American Literature (#10556)- Fall 2018**  
**Narrating America: from Colony to Empire**

**Instructor Name:** Deepthi Siriwardena

**Course meeting times & locations:** T: Period 8 - 9 (3:00 PM - 4:55 PM) R: Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM) at Anderson Hall 0021

**Office Location and Hours:** TUR T:1.00PM-2.30PM

**Instructor Email:** deesiri@ufl.edu

**Course Description:**

In this introductory course, we will encounter and converse with an array of interesting historical figures - Founding Fathers to US Presidents, Native Americans to African American voices and highly trained intellectuals to “good” Puritan housewives (and a host of “bad” women too!) as we survey American literature from 16th century to the present. Based on texts of a variety of genres that are considered foundational to American studies/literature, we will unpack the concepts of “New World”/ “Promised Land” and explore the significance and figurations of the frontier, its expansion both westwards and outwards as our expansive survey follows America’s trajectory from a colony to an empire. Our exploration will be loosely organized around the idea of rebels/rebelliousness - a quality much prized in the construction of “Americanness.” We will use the thematics of rebelliousness as a launching pad to approach the more abstract questions relating to identity, nation and nationality as well as citizenship and belonging that have become staple themes of American literature. Listening to a host of historical voices and taking into account their historical and cultural contexts, the students of AML 2070 will undertake a survey that will help them understand the fraught origins leading to the complex conditions of American literature/nation as they learn to critically reflect on what it means to be “American”.

As well as providing enjoyment, literature serves as a record of the cultural and historical moment in which it was written. Keeping this in mind, students are expected to contextualize their readings and produce well-supported, persuasive essays building their own arguments about the texts we discuss in class. This course is expected to deepen your understanding of American culture and literature and improve your skills of close reading and literary analysis giving you the knowledge, skills and confidence to tackle upper-level classes on American literature and culture.

**General Education Objectives:**

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the

writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

### General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### Required Texts:

- Twain, Mark, et al. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn : A Case Study in Critical Controversy*. Boston, MA : Bedford/St. Martin's, c2004
- Rowlandson, Mary White, approximately 1635-1711. *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God : Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed : Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson and Related Documents*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St.Martin's, 2018 (second edition)
- Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St.Martin's, 2008
- Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Vintage, 2007. (TBD text)
- Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*. New York: Vintage, 1989.

### Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Assignments	Word count	Points
<p><b>Close Reading Paper</b>            Conduct a close reading analysis of an assigned passage from Mary Rowlandson's Captivity narrative. In a close reading, you focus on a small (e.g: approximately 500 words) section of the text to identify literary facets such as language, vocabulary, point of view, characterization, symbolism, tropes, etc. While you are focusing on a small section of the text, you may begin to see larger patterns in the text. A close reading is a building block of a literary analysis</p>	700	100
<p><b>Critical Response paper</b>            Literary texts generate critical responses from their readers. Reading, understanding and responding to this critical scholarship, enriches your understanding of the text and its context. Such engagement with critical scholarship also forms the preliminary steps of writing literary research papers.            For this assignment, you will pick two critical essays on Mark Twain's <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> that are concentrated on a single topic (e.g: race or gender etc) and write a critical response paper. Your paper should</p>	1500	180

<p>briefly explain the arguments made by the two critics, assess their merits and demerits and craft your own response to them based on your own reading.</p>		
<p><b>Final Paper</b>  This paper requires you to bring together the close reading skills and critical response skills you practiced throughout the semester in writing a final literary analysis. For this essay, you will develop a strong and clear <i>argument</i> about a topic we have encountered in class. The paper may be based on one or more texts. You need to draw on and respond to at least 3-4 scholarly and peer reviewed sources in your argument. The final paper should demonstrate the ability of the writer to do a critical close reading, historicize the text or topic, and synthesize scholarly sources. Students should discuss potential paper topics with the instructor a few weeks in advance of the due date. Check the Weekly Schedule for dates.</p>	2000	300
<p><b>Quote Responses</b>  This on-going assignment allows you to practice your close reading and argument-building skills throughout the semester. You will complete five quote entries and responses over the course of the semester. For each entry, you will choose a brief passage (approximately five to ten sentences) from a text we discuss in class and conduct a close-reading of the passage. These responses should be approximately 250 -300 words and in the form of a coherent paragraph with a topic sentence and quotes from the selected passage. Your entries will be posted on a Canvas discussion thread. After making your own entry, you need to read and comment on at least one classmate's entry. Your response should be approximately 100 words and build on your classmate's entry in some way. To receive credit for the assignment and fulfill the word requirement, your journal entries and responses should not be free-responses; instead, they should be <i>mini-arguments</i> in which you make a claim and analyze textual evidence to support your claim. See the schedule for entry and response deadlines</p>	1800	300  (60*5)
<p><b>In class activities and Class Participation</b>  Participation is a crucial part of success in this class. Students will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, peer reviews, and other in-class activities. Be prepared for unannounced activities on the readings or classroom discussion. In preparation for class, students are expected to come to each class session with at least one question/comment/criticism of the assigned reading and share it with the class during discussion.  Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. Missing a peer review will result in a 10% deduction from the final grade of the essay.</p>		120

**Course Policies:**

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.

2. **Attendance:** Because of the participatory nature of this course, attendance is crucial. After three absences, each subsequent absence will result in a letter-grade deduction from your final grade (4 absences: 10% off final course grade, 5 absences: 15% off final course grade). **Six absences will result in the automatic failure of the overall course.**

Excused absences are for participation in university sponsored events (e.g: athletic meets etc), religious holidays or state requirements like court appearances or jury duty. To be considered an excused absence, the student should produce a note of excuse from the relevant authorities and must inform the instructor *prior* to getting absent. If you are absent, you are still responsible for knowing the material and for turning in any assignments due that day (except for in-class activities that may be assigned on that day.)

If you have a medical condition that will use up more than your 3 allotted absences, you should contact me and provide documentation.

Latecomers receive partial absences and must see me after class so I know you attended. You are responsible for keeping track of your absences.

To be considered present, students are expected to bring the required reading for the day to class with them.

For more information on UF attendance policy see

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

3. **Paper Format & Submission:** All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, and every page should include your name and a number. All papers should be submitted on Canvas. All citations must be in the MLA format.
4. **Late Papers/Assignments:** I do not generally accept late papers. However, depending on the case you make for extenuating circumstances, I will consider a request for an extension if you approach me at least two days before the assignment is due. A late paper or other assignment will lose half a letter grade for each day it is late. I advise completing all assignments early to ensure that you can print or submit them without problems.
5. **Participation:** The quality and frequency of your contributions to class discussions determine the participation grade. Learning to participate effectively in discussions, is an important professional skill that you need to develop. Please do not hesitate to ask questions and offer your impressions- even your confusions – because it is your input that will enrich our discussions.
6. **Paper Maintenance Responsibilities.** Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
7. **Canvas and Email:** Be sure to check Canvas often for announcements, assignments, readings, and updates to the schedule. When emailing me, please allow at least 24 hours for a response.

8. **Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism.** Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
9. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
10. For information on UF Grading policies, see:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
11. **Grade Appeals.** In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
12. **Course Evaluations.** Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course:  
<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>
13. Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>
14. **Classroom behavior and netiquette:** The best classroom experience comes from students respecting each other and the instructor. This includes everything from coming to class on time, to refraining from private conversations during class, to not texting during a lecture. You are encouraged to join in class discussions, and varying views are welcomed, but please refrain from using obscene or offensive language and from interrupting others.  
  
As I may assign in-class work that need to be submitted on Canvas, you are required to bring laptops and tablets to class. However, these devices are to be used only for accessing texts or doing the work the instructor has assigned. If you are not using a soft-copy of the text, you are required to put away the devices during discussion time. If I see that you are using them for any purpose other than class requirements (e.g: accessing social media, texting etc.), I will mark you absent.
15. **UF's policy on Harassment:** UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:  
<http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>
16. **Policy on environmental sustainability.** Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

## Grading/Assessment Rubric

In each written assignment, I will be looking at:

1. **Content:** How strong is your argument, development, and support? Is there a clear and complex thesis statement? Do you display a firm understanding of the text and does your content seem relevant to your assignment? Do you provide adequate support in terms of quotes from both the primary and secondary sources? Are the sources well synthesized?
2. **Organization:** How well-structured are your paragraphs? Do they have clear topic sentences and does the para support ideas introduced in the topic sentence? Do your overall ideas flow well with proper transitions? Instead of sounding like a catalogue of ideas, does the essay show a sense of development/progression while supporting the thesis statement?
3. **Style:** Do you display a firm grasp of vocabulary in terms of apt word choice? Is your word choice suitable to the context, genre and discipline? Do your sentences display complexity and logical structure? Is there sentence variety (a mix of simple, complex and compound sentences) Are your sentences overly long or awkward or are they well-crafted and read smoothly?
4. **Mechanics:** How frequently do you make errors in grammar, spelling, MLA citations, paper formatting (title, page numbers, due dates etc) ?

### “A-level” Paper

- Follows and meets all the requirements in the assignment guidelines
- The thesis (or argument) is clearly articulated, original, and well-supported; the argument is analytical rather than descriptive. \*Important note: An “A” paper usually goes beyond analyses and ideas shared in class.
- Subsequent paragraphs build on and support the paper’s central thesis or argument
- Examples and evidence from the texts back up (but do not subsume) your own critical analysis
- The writing is clear and dynamic with varied sentence length and structure.
- The paper is free of most grammatical and spelling errors.
- MLA formatting is uniformly (and correctly) followed throughout.
- Should have a distinct and strong conclusion that does not simply rehash the paper’s original thesis

### “B-level” Paper

- Follows and meets most of the requirements in the assignment guidelines
- Has a good thesis, but the wording might be less clear and/or fluid or weaker in its argumentation
- Still builds up and supports the paper’s main argument but does not create compelling nor strong connections between the ideas presented in each paragraph
- Does not analyze textual evidence as critically or as in depth as the “A” paper
- Puts forth a solid argument but may have unclear language, spelling, or grammatical errors and superficial or vague analysis in a few places
- MLA formatting is uniformly (and correctly) followed throughout
- Conclusion is strong

### “C-level” Paper

- Follows and meets some of the requirements in the assignment guidelines
- Does not clearly articulate or fully develop thesis; it is more descriptive rather than analytical
- Does not wholly engage with or defend the paper’s key argument throughout

- The writing is largely incoherent and disorganized but may have instances of proper analysis and clear argumentation
- Does not incorporate sufficient textual evidence to support the main argument and claims
- MLA formatting is not uniformly (nor correctly) followed throughout
- Lacks a clear conclusion

**“D-level” Paper and below**

- Does not meet any of the requirements in the assignment guidelines
- Lacks a clearly articulated and well-developed thesis
- Does not engage with or defend the paper’s key argument throughout
- Does not successfully incorporate any textual evidence to support the main argument and claims
- Shows blatant disregard of proper grammar and punctuation
- The writing is vague and has several errors in analysis and argumentation
- Does not follow MLA formatting guidelines
- Lacks a conclusion

**Grading/Assessment Rubric:**

<b>A</b>	93-100%	<b>B</b>	83-86.9%	<b>C</b>	73-76.9%	<b>D</b>	63-66.9%
<b>A-</b>	90-92.9%	<b>B-</b>	80-82.9%	<b>C-</b>	70-72.9%	<b>D-</b>	60-62.9%
<b>B+</b>	87-89.9%	<b>C+</b>	77-79.9%	<b>D+</b>	67-69.9%	<b>E</b>	0-59.9%

**Tentative Weekly Schedule:**

Week	Date	Reading Material	Work Due
<b>Unit 1: Colony</b>			
1	R 8/23	Introduction	
2	T 8/28	Excerpt from "The Winnebago Trickster Cycle" Christopher Columbus "Letter of Discovery"	
	R 8/30	John Winthrop from "The Model of Christian Charity"	Quote response 1
3	T 9/4	William Bradford excerpt from "Of Plymouth Plantation" & Cotton Mather excerpt from "A People of God in the Devil's Territories"	
	R 9/6	Discussion: How to do a close reading? + Preface to Mary Rowlandson's <i>Sovereignty and Goodness of God</i>	
4	T 9/11	Rowlandson's <i>Sovereignty and Goodness of God</i> Beginning -20th Remove	
	R 9/13	Rowlandson cont. - 20th Remove-End	
<b>Unit 2: Nation</b>			
5	T 9/18	John De Crevecoeur: "What is an American?" Thomas Jefferson: "Preamble to the Declaration of Independence"	Peer review draft of close reading
	R 9/20	Ben Franklin: "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America"	
	T 9/25	Mark Twain: <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> Chapter 1-18	
6	R 9/27	<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> - cont. Chapter 19-25	
	T 10/2	<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> - cont. Chapter 26 -32	Quote response 2
7	R 10/04	<i>Huckleberry Finn</i> - cont. Chapter 33-last	
	<b>Unit 3: Nation's Margins</b>		
8	T 10/9	Toni Morrison: <i>Playing in the Dark</i> : Introduction	Peer review draft of Critical Evaluation
	R 10/11	Edgar Allen Poe: "The Black Cat"	
9	T 10/16	Kate Chopin: <i>The Awakening</i> Chapter 1-30	
	R 10/18	<i>The Awakening</i> - Cont. Chapter 31-last	Quote response 3
10	T 10/23	Morrison, <i>The Bluest Eye</i> 1-164 (TBD)	
	R 10/25	<i>The Bluest Eye</i> - cont 164 – final (TBD)	
11	T 10/30	Richard Wright: "The Man who was almost a Man", "The Man Who Killed a Shadow"	
	R 11/01	Gwendolyn Brooks: "The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmet Till" "A Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi"	Quote response 4
12	T 11/6	Sherman Alexie: "Captivity". Introduction to the Final Paper	
	R 11/8	Alexie: "Crow Testament" "Pawn Shop"	
13	T 11/13	Maxine Kingston: <i>The Woman Warrior</i>	
	R 11/15	<i>The Woman Warrior</i> - cont.	Overview of the Final Paper with secondary sources
<b>Unit 4: Empire</b>			
14	T 11/20	Roosevelt: "Strenuous Life" Trask: "From a Native Daughter"	
	R 11/22	<i>No class - Thanksgiving</i>	
15	T 11/27	Watch: <i>Blue Hawaii</i> , Michael Puleloa "Something in the Wind"	Quote Response 5
	R 11/29	Conferences for the final paper + Course Evaluations	
16	T 12/04	Discuss: <i>Moana</i> . Peer Review of the Final paper	
	R 12/6	No class - Reading days	
	F 12/7		<b>Final Paper due by midnight (12/7)</b>