

# AML 2070-0473

## Survey of American Literature

**Instructor:** Anthony E. Jones

**Place:** Matherly Hall (MAT) Rm. 117

**Class Time:** MWF 7<sup>th</sup> period (1:55-2:45)

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**Office:** TUR 4108

**Office Hours:** M and W 6<sup>th</sup> per or by appt.

### Course Description:

Genres as diverse as captivity narratives, sermons, poetry, short stories, personal letters, autobiography, and novels make up the multifaceted canon of American Literature from the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries. In this course, we will conduct an analytical survey of this literature, proceeding chronologically from the early colonial era through the revolutionary, Romantic, Modernist, and current Post-modernist periods. Issues of identity (religious, regional, political, philosophical, linguistic, racial, etc) stirred tensions both in the authors and their audiences. By examining the artistry of the individual texts, as well as some of the social and political contexts for these works, we will come to recognize that defining terms like *beauty* and *worth* in American Letters is elusive at best. Who makes these choices, and why should they have an impact? Furthermore, to what degree do the texts under survey articulate our diverse cultural and ethnic heritage? How do they reflect a voice that some consider *uniquely* American? These are some of the queries we will undertake together in this course, and in so doing, we will enter a larger historical debate about American literary studies.

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>

### Course Objectives and Structure:

The primary goals of AML 2070 will be to give you a working knowledge of American literature from its Puritan beginnings through the end of the twentieth century as well as to aid in your development as a writer. Ideally, by the end of this course, you will have the tools necessary for writing about these (and other) texts in a knowledgeable, critical fashion. This course will blend lecture, class discussion and writing. As a result, you will be required to actively participate in classroom discussions. Additionally, you will learn how to read contextually and rhetorically, form arguments, and write coherently about literature. You will be responsible for writing response papers for the assigned readings and sharing your ideas in class. The critical thinking and communication skills you learn here will extend beyond this class and ensure your success in your other courses, in your future career, and in your daily

**Required Texts**

Baym, Nina, ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (ISBN: 0393918858)

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. (ISBN: 0060838671)

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. (ISBN: 9780307476302)

**Optional Texts**

Beatty, Jerome, ed. *New Worlds of Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (ISBN: 0393963543)

Oates, Joyce Carol. *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*. (ISBN: 9780199744398)

**Course Policies:****Attendance:**

AML2070 is a participation-oriented course, which means that you will build your skills and gain knowledge incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Attendance is crucial in engaging with other students about the reading and writing assignments. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Consequently, if you miss more than three periods during the semester, you will fail the entire course. Only those absences involving military service; court-mandated obligations, such as jury duty and court testimony; university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, are exempt. Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your three allowed absences. Please provide a doctor's note. Each absence beyond two may lower your overall grade. If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Please do not come late to class; arriving late disrupts the entire class. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent. Being tardy three times will equal one absence. Save your absences for when you're really ill.

**Preparation:**

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class. Extensions can be negotiated in advance of deadline; late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

**Mode of Submission:**

All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman or Calibri font and double-spaced. Be sure to staple papers before submitting hard copies. Your final drafts should be polished and proof read. Students will be notified in class whether a paper is to be submitted on Canvas or in hard copy.

**Technology**

Cell phones must be silenced or on vibrate. Laptops are not necessary for this class and must be kept shut and put away.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism: A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.
- c. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment authored by the student and submitted for another course.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007

<<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/iudicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code. 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>

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and a report filed with the Dean of Students Office. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if the student fails to know and employ proper documentation techniques.

Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor for class group work, all work must be your own.

Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

**Academic Honesty:**

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Honor Code, available in its full form at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>. The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, resubmission, and misrepresentation.

**Graded Materials:**

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material. Students must wait 24 hours after a paper is returned before contacting the instructor regarding his/her grade on that paper.

**Classroom Behavior and 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/scer/sexual/>

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage with controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

**Students with Disabilities:**

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

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

**Online Evaluation Process:**

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>.

**Assignments:****Weekly Response**

250 words, due MWF for a total of 14 responses for the course. Each is worth 20 points.

Every week, I would like you to submit one reading response of 250 words each, commenting on that particular class day's reading. (For example, if you submit a response on Monday, you should comment upon Monday's reading.) While you may respond to anything about the text that interests you, you must quickly move beyond summary to offer your critical interpretations or reflections based upon evidence from the text. The weekly response may also be used to pose questions about or offer criticism of the reading text.

**Essay 1: Commentary 1**

1400 words

In this essay, I would like you to offer commentary on Hurston's *Their Eyes were Watching God*. What do you see as the most important theme or issue being addressed in the novel? Try to find one key theme/issue to discuss. Considering Hurston's use of formal structure, characterization, tone, sensory details, diction, rhyme, and rhythm, demonstrate how the novel comments on this theme/issue. What is your critique of the author's execution of this theme?

**Essay 2: Commentary 2**

1400 words

As in the previous essay, I would like you to offer commentary, this time on McCarthy's *The Road*. What do you see as the most important theme or issue being addressed in the novel? Try to find one key theme/issue to discuss. Considering McCarthy's use of formal structure, characterization, tone, sensory details, diction, rhyme, and rhythm, show how the novel comments on this theme/issue. Again, what is your critique of the author's execution of this theme?

**Assignments and Grade Distribution****Points**

Essay 1 (1400 words) - 30%	300	
Essay 2 (1400 words) - 30%	300	
Weekly reading responses (14@250 words each) - 28%	280	
Attendance, Participation, Unannounced Quizzes - 12%	120	= 1000pts.

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. The assignment contains no errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

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. The assignment is almost completely without errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

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. While your assignment may be readable, it contains some errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax.

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 many problems in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax which are so serious as to render portions of the paper nearly unreadable.

E - Papers which earn E's fail to show that the writer has given any consideration to the assignment's topic. The paper offers slim to no support for its argument, and an organizational structure cannot be discerned. The paper contains an unsatisfactory number of errors in grammar, spelling, and/or syntax. Importantly, if any of the paper has been plagiarized, it will also receive a failing grade.

### Course Schedule

#### Week 1 (Jan. 6-8)

W- Introduction: Purpose and Goals

#### *American Literature: Beginnings to 1700*

F- Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation* (81-90)

#### Week 2 (Jan. 11-15)

M-Bradstreet, various poems (119-21)

W-Rowlandson, *Narrative* (127-43)

F-Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World* (151-55)

#### *American Literature: 1700-1820 (Enlightenment)*

#### Week 3 (Jan. 18-22)

M-No Class Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

W-Pontiac, "Speech at Detroit" (223-24); Occom, *A Short Narrative* (225-27);  
Tecumseh, "Speech to the Osages" (232-3)

F-Paine, *Common Sense* (324-31); Jefferson, *Autobiography* (339-44)

#### Week 4 (Jan. 25-29))

M-Equiano, *Narrative of the Life* (355-87)

W -Phyllis Wheatley, various poems (403-11)

F-Charles Brockden Brown, *Edgar Huntly* (414-43)

***American Literature: 1820-1865 (Romanticism)***

- Week 5** (Feb. 1-5)  
 M- Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (470-82)  
 W - Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans* (485-91)  
 F-Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (549-66)
- Week 6** (Feb. 8-12)  
 M-Hawthorne, "The Birth Mark" (645-56)  
 W-Poe, "The Purloined Letter" (724-37)  
 F-Whitman, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (1069-73), "When Lilacs in the Door-yard Bloom'd" (1082-88)
- Week 7** (Feb. 15-19)  
 M-Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1102-28):  
 W-"The Portent" (1183)  
 F-Dickenson, (1206-07 #479), (1207-08 #591), (1212-13 # 1096)

***American Literature: 1865-1914 (Realism/Naturalism)***

- Week 8** (Feb. 22-26)  
 M-Twain, "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" (1285-89);  
 W- Chesnut, "The Wife of His Youth" (1649-57)  
 F-James, "The Art of Fiction" (1738-40); Chopin, "The Story of an Hour" (1609-1611)
- Week 9** (Feb. 29-Mar. 4)  
 Spring Break—No Classes

***American Literature: 1914-1945 (Modernism)***

- Week 10** (Mar. 7-11)  
 W-Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily" (2182-88)  
 W- Frost, poems (1918-21)  
 F-Glaspell, "Trifles" (1926-36)
- Week 11** (Mar. 14-18)  
 M-Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
 W-Zora Neale Hurston  
 F-Zora Neale Hurston

- Week 12** (Mar.21-25)  
M-Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* (1939-47);  
W-Hemingway, “The Snows of Kilimanjoro” (2205-21)

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*American Literature since 1945 (Postmodernism)*

F-Bellow, *The Adventures of Augie March* (2407-16)

- Week 13** (Mar.28-Apr.1)  
M-Peer Review of Essay 1  
W- Plath, “Morning Song,” “Lady Lazarus,” “Daddy,” “Blackberrying” (2602-07)  
F-Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

- Week 14** (Apr.4-8)  
**M- Essay 1 Due**, Cormac McCarthy,  
W-Cormac McCarthy  
F-Cormac McCarthy

- Week 15** (Apr. 11-15)  
M-Peer Review of Essay 2  
W- Ginsberg, “A Supermarket in California” (2548-49);  
Rich, “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning” (2569-70)  
F-King, “I have a Dream” (2577-82)

- Week 16** (Apr. 18-20)  
**M-Essay 2 Due**, Lee, “Eating Alone,” “Eating Together”  
W-Course Reflections—**Last Day of Class**