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ENLT 224.01: American Literature to 1865

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The University Of Montana

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English 224: American Literature to 1865

Section 1, 11:10-12:30, LA 304

Section 2, 2:10-3:30, LA 303

Professor Bergman

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:00, Wednesdays 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

Course Description:

In this course, we will examine the way literature has shaped and been shaped by some of the important historical events and ideological forces in our nation's history, such as Calvinism, slavery and abolition, the development of a national identity, westward expansion, the industrial revolution, and the "woman question." Since literary history is an interaction between the dominant ideas of a given time period and the individuals who grapple with those ideas, we will seek to discover the extent to which the work we read challenges or endorses existing ideals. Although we will explore texts within their historical, political, and literary contexts, we'll also spend time developing close reading skills.

Course Objectives: To familiarize students with some of the range and diversity of early American literature; to introduce students to major movements in the history of American literature; to deepen students' interpretative and critical skills, both by discussing literary critical practice and by engaging in it; to improve students' verbal skills of argumentation and articulation of ideas through large and small group discussion; to improve students' skills of written argumentation through writing and revising essays.

Texts:

Baym, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 5th Ed. Vol. 1

Foster, *The Coquette*

Murfin and Ray, *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*

Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual* (Both in the bookstore at ENLT 000)

Grading:

2 essays (4 pages)	15% each
1 revision essay (7 pages)	25%
midterm exam	15%
final exam	20%
participation	10%

Requirements:

Writing assignments: You will have several opportunities to work on your critical writing in this course. You will write two short essays, exploring and interpreting a text of your choosing from a list of possible topics. In a third essay, you will revise and expand one of the earlier papers. Students must complete all written work in order to pass English 224. Essays may be submitted to me in class, or placed in my campus mailbox (in LA 133) by 5:00 p.m. on the due date. Essays will be deducted one letter grade for each weekday they are late, unless arrangements are made with me prior to the due date.

Participation: The reading is fairly heavy for this course, and it is required. (If you have several heavy courses this semester, you may want to consider taking this at another time.) There are two ways for you to demonstrate that you've read the assignments for each day. One is to do well on the exams (more on that below). The other is to participate in the discussions. I will often distribute discussion questions for the readings that will provide a starting point for our discussions. Think about these questions prior to class and be prepared to share your answers. I'll assume you're ready.

Attendance: Obviously, to participate regularly, you'll need to be here. This is a discussion-based course, and I'm a stickler for attendance. More than 3 absences will adversely affect your grade in the course. More than 6 absences will result in failure. If extreme circumstances arise, do talk to me.

Exams: The instructions for your final exam will read as follows:

PART I (40 points):

For four of the passages below (7 to choose from), name the author (full names, please) and the work, and make a brief analytic statement connecting some element or elements in the passage specifically to some relevant point made in class -- about the work, the style, the author, the time period, its literary or historical movement, etc.

Point breakdown here: author name = 3 pts., work name = 2 pts., connection = 5 pts.

[The Midterm will consist only of this first part, asking you to identify five of seven.]

PART II (60 points):

Answer four of the following questions (7 to choose from) in cogent, detailed, substantial paragraphs (approximately 1 page each). Provide examples from the text under consideration and references to class discussion and lectures to support your answers.

Questions in this section will ask you first to define or explain some term or movement that we've covered in this class and to demonstrate how that operates in a

particular literary piece. Terms and movements might include such things as Calvinism, Romanticism, Gothic, etc.

Notice that for both parts of this exam you will need to refer to ideas discussed and information given in class. I strongly recommend that you take notes throughout the semester.

Students with disabilities who will need accommodation should see me early in the semester.

Course Schedule:

- 9/4 Course Introduction
- 9/6 Colonial Period to 1700
Cabeza de Vaca, "The Relations of Álgvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (AL 42-51)
- 9/11 Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Book I, chs. 1, 4, 9, 10; Book II, chs. 11, 13
(AL 165-169, 174-187, 191)
[added Pima and Iroquois creation tales]
- 9/13 Rowlandson, "A Narrative..." (AL 297-330)
- 9/18 Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "Contemplations," "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment," "In Memory of ... Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet," "In Memory of ... Grandchild Anne Bradstreet," "For Deliverance from a Fever," "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of our House..." (AL 247-278)
- 9/20 Bradstreet continued
Hacker, 106-108, 138-141
Essay #1 assigned
- 9/25 Enlightenment and American Independence
Franklin, "Autobiography" (AL 524-569, 574-585)
Occom, "Brief Narrative," (AL 612-619)
- 9/27 Freneau, "On the Emigration to America...", "On the Religion of Nature"
(AL 815-816, 821)
Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America," "To the University of Cambridge, in New England," (AL 825, 828-829)

- 10/2 Jefferson, "Declaration of Independence" (AL 715-719)
 The Declaration of Sentiments (handout)
 Douglass, *The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro* (AL 2057-2076)
- 10/4 *Workshop for Essay #1. Bring 4 copies of your draft with you to class.*
 Hacker 118-122
- 10/9 Foster, *The Coquette* (5-94)
- 10/11 Foster, *The Coquette* (94-169)
Essay #1 due
- 10/16 Romanticism and American Individualism
 Emerson, "Nature" (AL 1073-1085 [through section IV])
- 10/18 Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (AL 1126-1143)
Essay #2 assigned.
- 10/23 Bryant, "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl" (AL 1039-1042)
 Whitman, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" (AL 2168)
- 10/25 MIDTERM
- 10/30 Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (AL 1508-1522)
- 11/1 Poe, "Ligeia" (AL 1499-1508), "The Purloined Letter" (AL 1550-1563)
- 11/6 *Workshop for Essay #2. Bring 4 copies of your draft with you to class.*
- 11/8 Westward Expansion
 Bryant, "The Prairies" (AL 421 - 428)
 Cooper, from *The Pioneers* (AL 981-996)
 Kirkland, "A New Home – Who'll Follow?" (AL 1051-1060)
 Cherokee Memorials (AL 996-1005)
- 11/13 Sentimentalism and Slavery
 Stowe, from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (AL 1645-1706)
Essay #2 due
- 11/15 Douglass, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (AL 2000-2057)
Final essay assigned
- 11/20 Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (AL 1719-1739)
- 11/22 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

11/27 Capitalism and Industry
Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (AL 2330-2355)

11/29 Davis, *Life in the Iron-Mills* (AL 2534-2560)

12/4 Poetic Conclusions
Whitman, "Song of Myself" (AL 2096-2138)
Final Essay Due

12/6 Whitman, "Song of Myself" cont.; "Live Oak, with Moss" (AL 2146-2150)

12/11 Dickinson, all poems in Norton (AL 2491-2525)

12/13 Finish Dickinson
Wrap up

FINAL EXAM: Section 1, Thursday, Dec. 20, 10:10 – 12:10, in our usual room
Section 2, Monday, Dec. 17, 3:20 – 5:20, in our usual room