**American Literature I--CRN 23484**

**Spring 2016**

**10:50-12:05 TR**

**Irby 313**

**Instructor: Conrad Shumaker**

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**Office hours: MWF 8-9, 1:30-2:30; TR 8-9, 12:30-1:30; and by appointment**

**Texts:** *The Norton Anthology of American Literature,* 8th ed., vols. A and B

**Course description:** This is a survey of American Literature from the beginnings to about 1850. We will focus ­largely on the "major" authors but try at the same time to give a fuller sense of developments in the period by looking at the works of writers outside the mainstream (Ameri­can Indians, women, and African Americans, for example). There are two objectives in a course such as this: first, you should gain an understanding of the major issues in American literature and their relation to the culture that has produced both them and you; second, you should learn more about how to read literature in general and American literature in particular. In pursuit of the latter goal, the classes will consist mostly of discussions in which I will ask *you* to discover what is happening in key passages. Keep in mind that the kinds of questions I ask in class are the kinds of questions you will need to ask yourself as you write your papers and prepare for exams. I will also occasionally provide explanations of literary terms or historical background and demonstrations of how to look for important details in what you read. Because the class will be primarily discussion, it's important that you come to class having read the works and thought about them. Otherwise you'll probably be lost and there will be no summary and lecture to help you get found.

**Assignments**: A midterm exam and a final will measure how well you understand the larger issues associated with the literature and the culture by asking you to consider general questions about the period. You will demon­strate your ability to read closely by writing two short (3‑5‑page) papers in which you either explicate a short poem or a short passage from a longer work or analyze a particular aspect (e.g., narrative voice, imagery, theme, structure, etc.) of a longer work (see attachments). In addition you will keep a daily reading journal in which you record your responses to the works we read.

**Grading**: The midterm will count 10% and the final will account for 20% of your grade. The papers will each determine 20%, and the journal 20%, and participa­tion will account for the rest. You will be able to rewrite one paper for a new grade. I will be happy to talk your papers over with you and give you suggestions about how you can improve them, and you’re welcome to bring in rough drafts so we can discuss them.

**Dire Warnings, etc**.:

**Late papers** will be penalized a grade point unless you have a good excuse. No paper will be accepted if it is more than a week late. If you don't come and tell me why your paper is late, I will assume that you have no excuse. *Daily journal entries will not be accepted late.*

**Classroom Behavior:** You are expected to be in the classroom when the period starts. If you are tardy (i.e., arrive after your name comes up on the roll) three times, it will count as one unexcused absence. You are also expected to remain in class during the entire period, unless you have arranged with me ahead of time to leave early. If you have a cell phone or other electronic communication device, please make sure that it’s turned off and put away the entire time you’re in the classroom. If you use your cell phone during class time (to answer or make a call, send or read a text, etc.) you will be asked to leave and counted absent for that day.

It is a requirement of the course that you obtain copies of the required texts and bring them to class on the days when we discuss them. The study of literature involves looking closely at particular examples of language, so if you don’t have the text with you, you can’t participate fully in the discussion. If you come to class without your text, you will be warned the first time and then charged with half an absence after that.

Please do NOT plan to use a computer in class unless you have a disability that makes it necessary: you will need to be looking closely at the pages of your book, and having a computer on your desk interferes with that activity, as well as with your ability to contribute to discussion.

**Miss class at your own risk.** Discussions are an important part of the course, and you can't participate in them if you aren't present. If you miss four times without a legitimate excuse, your final grade will be lowered one point, since you have failed to complete the participation requirement of the course. If you have a legitimate excuse, you can do an extra assignment to make up for what you've missed by not being in on the discussion. If you need to miss class, please don't call the department office; the secretary doesn't need more calls to answer. If you need to find out something or discuss a late paper, call my extension, listed at the top of this syllabus. If you're desperate, my home phone number is 470-1768.

**Academic Integrity*:*** The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**Student Evaluations:** Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom, and they aid the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking by logging in to myUCA between April 12 and May 2 and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

**Other Important Information:**

**An Emergency Procedures Summary** (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

**Title IX Disclosure:** If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to “student-on-student” or “employee-on-student”), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs, and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on the specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. *\*Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.*

**Student Handbook:** Please familiarize yourselves with the policies included in the Student Handbook, especially the sections on sexual harassment and academic policies.

Finally, UCA adheres to the requirements of the **Americans with Disabilities Act**. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135.

**Readings**

1/7No readings–Introduction to course

1/12 Cherokee Story–“The Bear Man,” (handout). Lame Deer, “The Circle and the Square” (handout)

1/14 Winnebago Trickster Stories (*Norton Anthology*, 101-110); “The Box of Daylight” (video)

1/19 Navajo Creation Story (25-34)

1/21 Wrap up Indian stories

1/26 Introduction to Puritans. Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (166-77)

1/28 Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Chapter IX (131) through “The First Thanksgiving” (144)

2/2 Bradford, 144-48 (through “Prosperity Brings Dispersal . . .,”); 154-55 (“A Horrible Truth.”)

2/4 Bradstreet, three poems on the deaths of her grandchildren (230-31)

2/9 Bradstreet, “Before the Birth of One of Her Children” (225-26), “To My Dear Children” (235-38).

2/11 Rowlandson, “Narrative of the Captivity,” 256-69, 280-88

2/16 Edwards, “Application” from “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (434-41).

**Paper I Due**

2/18 Hawthorne, “The Minister’s Black Veil” (**Vol. B**—409-18).

2/23 Franklin, “Remarks Concerning the Savages . . .” (476-80), *Autobiography*, 481-504 (to the end of the story of Keimer and the new religion).

2/25 Franklin, 509-10 (the story of Ralph’s girlfriend); 517-18 (“Principles and Morals”)

3/1 Crevecoeur, “What Is an American” (604-14)

3/3 Wheatley, “On Being Brought From Africa to America” (762-64), “To His Excellency, General Washington” (772-73), Letter to Samson Occom (774).

3/8 Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (**Vol. B**—373-86)

3/10 Irving, “Rip Van Winkle” (29-41).

3/15 Poe, “To Helen” (633-34), “The Raven” (637-40), “Annabel Lee” (643-44).

3/17 Poe, “The Black Cat” (695-701)

3/22, 24 **No Class–Spring Break**

3/29 Emerson, “The American Scholar” (243-56)

3/31 Emerson, “The Divinity School Address” (256-69) **Paper 2 due**

4/5 Thoreau, “Where I Lived . . .” from *Walden* (1023-33)

4/7 Thoreau, “Baker Farm” (1085-90)

4/12 Douglass, *Narrative* (1182-1201)

4/14 Douglass, concluded (1201-39) **Rewrites due**

4/19 Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivener,” (1483-1509)

4/21 Whitman, selected poems

4/28, 11:00-1:00 **Final Exam**