

ENGL 2312: AMERICAN LITERATURE I

Dr. Lori Leavell	Spring 2016
Office: Irby Hall 401	MWF 1:00-1:50
Contact: (501) 450-5118; lleavell@uca.edu	CRN#: 27466
Office Hours: MWF 9:30-Noon, M 3:00-4:30, and by appointment	Irby 310

“In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?” (Sydney Smith, 1820)

“The inhabitants of the United States have, then, at present, properly speaking, no literature.”
(Alexis De Tocqueville, 1840)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Observers of American culture during the eighteenth century wondered what literary production would look like in a democracy, and they continued to do so throughout the nineteenth century: Who would produce literature? What forms would it take? Who would read it? Who would evaluate it? While books and printed material imported from Europe constituted a large portion of what Americans read (thanks, in part, to a lack of international copyright law until 1891), by the 1840s a number of literary writers in the US were seeking to earn a living by the pen even as authors continued to complain about the problem of American readers. With these sorts of circumstances and conflicts in view, our approach to literary history will take into account the experiences of the period’s writers as well as readers.

Students sometimes are surprised by the range of texts filling the pages of the anthology and this syllabus with sermons, appeals, and letters alongside more readily recognizable literary texts (poems and fiction). You can bring the same analytical skills to bear on this material. Along these lines, this literature will require us to take into account historical context in a way that might be new to some of you. Good readers are able to zoom in to the level of sentence, phrase, and word, but they also can zoom out to take into account cultural and historical contexts. This class will help you develop both skills. Because it is a survey course, you should gain a thorough grounding in literature of the period. But it is also my hope that you come away from the course with the sense that engaging this particular body of texts can help us think about the role of literature in contemplating the past, illuminating the present, and imagining the future.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Along with examining a body of literature that developed during this period, this course will provide instruction in the techniques and methods of literary analysis as well as focus on the variety of purposes that literary writing has served in the United States. Four broad goals will guide our study:

- To trace a history of writing in the United States up to the Civil War.
- To recognize some of the historical, political, and cultural forces relevant to literary production in the United States from the colonial period to the Civil War.
- To become familiar with and adept at implementing the principles of literary analysis.
- To hone reading, writing, analytical, and research skills.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, eighth edition, volumes A and B.
- Rowson, Susanna. *Charlotte Temple*. 1794. Ed. Cathy N. Davidson. New York: Oxford UP, 1986.
- Electronic texts available on Blackboard—to be printed and brought to class.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, CIVILITY

Attendance: More than three absences/instances of tardiness is considered excessive. Three absences (for whatever reason) will not alter one's grade; however, each subsequent absence/tardiness will result in the deduction of five points from the final grade. Please be aware that seven absences, regardless of the reasons, will result in a grade of WF/F for the course.

Participation and Civility: This course is discussion-based, its success depending on the contributions of the participants. If a full schedule will prevent full participation, please take the course another time. Bring to class the readings to be discussed. Extend respect and courtesy to one another and to the literature. In this spirit, please be on time and remain engaged for the duration of the class. Take care to power down and put away all electronic devices before class begins. Make it a point to voice comments and questions every class while being respectful and considerate of others so that no one person dominates the discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS

Blackboard Questions: On Mondays and Wednesdays by 9:00 am, students will submit to Blackboard two questions provoked by the readings assigned for the day's class. Strong literary analysis begins with asking the right questions; this assignment is designed not only to encourage students to remain engaged with the readings but also to help them hone the art of asking good questions. These questions will inform the lecture and discussion. Submitting questions constitutes the minimal form of participation. Throughout the semester students should take an active role in sharing with the class their insights and concerns about the readings.

Three papers (3-4 pages): Before each paper is due, students will receive an assignment sheet, with specific requirements.

Three Writing Workshops: Workshops allow students to receive feedback on their writing from a classmate and to hone the skills of close reading and analysis by applying them to a peer's paper. To participate, students must arrive on time with a complete, typewritten draft of the paper. Missed workshops cannot be made up.

Article Summary (2 pages): Students will work with a research partner to select a peer-reviewed, scholarly article from an academic journal about a primary text read in class. Research partners will work together to understand the article. Each student will work individually to compose a summary.

Two Exams: Both exams will follow the same format (key terms, mini-essays, and one full essay). Mid-term exam will span two class periods. Final will be taken during the scheduled 2-hour exam period.

POINT DISTRIBUTION

Exams: Two @ 80 points each	=	160
Papers: Three @ 80 points each	=	240
Participation: Twenty sets of questions @ 3 points each	=	60
Article Summary: 25 points	=	25
Workshops: Three @ 5 points each	=	15
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Total Points	=	500

Points will be converted to percentages to yield final grades according to the following scale:

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
Below 60%	=	F

REQUIRED EVENT

The College of Liberal Arts Student Research Symposium will take place on April 20 and 21. These two days will consist of student presentations, and the Symposium guest, Dr. Laurie Green (University of Texas, Austin), will deliver a talk each night. In lieu of our class meeting on April 20, you are required to attend Dr. Green's talk at 5 pm on Thursday, April 21 in the Student Center. Extra credit will be available for those who attend and write about student presentations.

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. Academic misconduct in this course will result in a failing grade for the assignment and possibly for the course. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

EVALUATIONS

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SUMMARY

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.*

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

If you have questions about the university's academic policies, please consult the relevant sections of the UCA Student Handbook. UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.

Monday	Wednesday	Friday
<p>January 11</p> <p>John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (166-76)</p>	<p>January 13</p> <p>Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "The Author to Her Book," "Before the Birth of One of Her Children," "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "In Memory of My Dear Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet" (207-37)</p>	<p>January 8</p> <p>Introductions</p> <p>January 15</p> <p>Benjamin Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i>, Book I (480-526)</p>
<p>January 18</p> <p>Dr. Martin King, Jr. Holiday</p>	<p>January 20</p> <p>Franklin, Book II (526-42)</p>	<p>January 22</p> <p>Franklin, continued</p>
<p>January 25</p> <p>J. Hector St. John De Crèvecoeur, from <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> (604-24)</p>	<p>January 27</p> <p>Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America," "To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth," "To the University of Cambridge," "To Rev. Samson Occom" (763-774)</p>	<p>January 29</p> <p>Wheatley, continued</p>
<p>February 1</p> <p>Draft Paper #1</p>	<p>February 3</p> <p>Paper #1 Due Alexis De Tocqueville, from <i>Democracy in America</i> (BB)</p>	<p>February 5</p> <p>Susanna Rowson, <i>Charlotte Temple</i> (Volume One, 5-62)</p>
<p>February 8</p> <p>Rowson, (Volume Two, 63-120)</p>	<p>February 10</p> <p>"Novel Reading: A Cause of Female Depravity" (BB)</p>	<p>February 12</p> <p>Washington Irving, "The Author's Account of Himself" and "Rip Van Winkle" (25-41)</p>

February 15 David Walker, from <i>Appeal</i> (791-95), and Elias Boudinot (357-60)	February 17 William Apess, “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (154-59)	February 19 Catch up and Review
February 22 Midterm: Day 1	February 24 Midterm: Day 2	February 26 Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (369-85)
February 29 Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar” (243-55)	March 2 Emerson, continued	March 4 Edgar Allan Poe, “William Wilson. A Tale” (667-80)
March 7 Workshop #2	March 9 Due Paper #2 Meet in Torreyson #117	March 11 Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (1170-1208)
March 14 Douglass (1208-39)	March 16 Douglass, continued	March 18 No Class Dr. Leavell at a conference
March 21 Spring Break	March 23 Spring Break	March 25 Spring Break
March 28 Partner Work: Bring Article	March 30 Henry David Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government” (964-80)	April 1 Article Summary Due Whitman, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed” (1402-8)

<p>April 4</p> <p>Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” (1330-73)</p>	<p>April 6</p> <p>Whitman, continued</p>	<p>April 8</p> <p>Emily Dickinson, “Some keep the Sabbath going to Church” (1668), “I like a look of Agony” (1672), “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain” (1673), “After great pain, a formal feeling comes” (1677), “I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—” (1685), “Tell all the truth but tell it slant” (1696), “I’m ‘wife’—I’ve finished that—“ (1667)</p>
<p>April 11</p> <p>Dickinson, “I’m Nobody! Who are you?” (1669), “Publication—is the Auction” (1692), “I dwell in Possibility—“ (1682)</p>	<p>April 13</p> <p>Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener” (1483-1508)</p>	<p>April 15</p> <p>Workshop: Paper #3</p>
<p>April 18</p> <p>Paper #3 Due Review for Final Exam</p>	<p>April 20</p> <p>In lieu of class, attend Dr. Laurie Green’s Talk at 5:00 pm on Thursday</p>	<p>April 22</p> <p>Study Day</p>

Final Exam: Monday, April 25th (11:00 – 1:00 pm)