**American Romantic Period**

**English 6320; CRN 29432**

**6:00-9:00**

**Irby 303**

**Instructor:** Conrad Shumaker  **Office:** Irby 317H

**Office Phone:** 450-5126 **Email Address:** shumaker@mail.uca.edu

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

**Texts (in tentative order of use):**

Ralph W. Emerson, *Emerson’s Prose and Poetry* (Norton)

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Selected Tales and Sketches* (Penguin); *The Scarlet Letter* (Bedford/St. Martin’s)

Edgar Allan Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings* (Penguin)

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden and “Resistance to Civil Government”* (Norton)

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (Norton)

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Norton)

**Course Description and Objectives:** This seminar will focus on the major authors of the period and on their most important works. We will look closely at relationships between the works as well as at the tensions and themes within each work. Since Emerson is the most influential writer in this era, we will begin with him and make sure that we have a clear understanding of the issues that concern him and of his views on those issues; this will serve as a foundation for our examination of the other writers.

This course should leave you with a better sense of the developments in the period and with an enhanced ability to read the works of the period within their cultural and historical context. In addition, you should enhance your writing and research skills as you develop a substantial seminar paper, and you will learn something about the critical theories that underlie different approaches to literature. In our discussions and your presentations, you should become more comfortable and skillful in expressing yourself orally. Most importantly, I hope you will be better equipped to think about some important issues that these writers wrestled with and that still concern us, issues such as our relationship to nature, society, and each other, the implications of our materialistic approach to life, and the search for truth in a confusing world.

**Assignments:** There will be a take-home midterm and in-class final exam (both essay), which will ask you to trace major issues through the works of the writers, and you will write an extended (15-page) paper that involves substantial research. You will also be asked to begin one day’s discussion by identifying the two or three major questions raised by our reading for that day.

**Grading:** Grades will be determined on the basis of the following percentages:

Midterm exam 20%

Final exam 30%

Paper 30%

Oral presentation 10%

Daily participation and attendance 10%

**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.

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 three 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 miss four times, with or without legitimate excuses, I will drop you from the class, since it isn’t likely that you can do well having missed more than a quarter of the class, and a W or WP is better than an unacceptable grade.** 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 205-9868.

**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 14 and May 4 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.*

Please familiarize yourself with the Student Handbook sections on sexual harassment (p. 102,) and academic polices (pp. 32 ff.)

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–the first part**

1/13 Introduction (selected poems to be read in class)

1/20 Emerson, *Nature*, “The American Scholar,” “The Divinity School Address”

1/27 Emerson, “The Over-Soul,” “Experience”

2/3 Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” “Young Goodman Brown,” “The Minister’s Black Veil,” “The Man of Adamant”

2/10 Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 21-130 (Preface-“The Minister’s Vigil”)

2/17 Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 130-202