

Fall 8-15-2002

## ENG 4300-001: The Self-Made Individual

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**ENGLISH 4300-001: The Self-Made Individual****SYLLABUS**

**Instructor: John Allison**  
**Coleman Hall 3552 (316F)**  
**581-6978/348-0269**

**Office Hours: MWF 10-11:00, 1-2:00, and by appointment**

**Purpose and Sope**

We will focus on a central motif in American life and literature -- the self-made individual. Given the vast reach of our topic, we will discuss works from the Colonial period through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The works include autobiographies written about actual lives, as well as novels written about fictional characters. As we study the works, we will consider such questions as the following, while by no means restricting ourselves to them.

- Is the concept of a self-made identity a viable one?
- To what extent and in what ways does a preoccupation with self-development relate to narrativity and *vice-versa*?
- What relationships exist between identity formation and social milieus, philosophical assumptions, and gender and race classifications?
- What, if anything, do we learn about Americanness from the works?

**Requirements**

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| -Midterm Essay (3-4 pp. with primary support):             | 20% |
| -Critical Essay (8-10 pp. with primary/secondary support): | 45% |
| -Final Essay (4-5 pp. with primary support):               | 25% |
| -Class Presentation:                                       | 10% |

## **Evaluation and Grading**

When I evaluate your writing, I will consider content (depth, logic, evidence), coherence (organization, cohesion), style, grammar, and mechanics. Quality content counts most, but an essay can fail if it is radically deficient in any category or seriously deficient in two or more categories. When I evaluate oral presentations, I will consider degree of preparedness and thoughtfulness/usefulness of contribution. I encourage you to consult with me as you prepare assignments, as well as to ask me questions about your work after I return it.

For each assignment, I will record both a percentage grade and a letter grade based on a ten-point scale. For example, an 85% is a "B," an 88% is a "B+," and a 92% is an "A-."

## **Attendance and Grading**

After three unexcused absences, there will be a 10% deduction from your overall grade. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a 5% deduction. For an excused absence, you must provide verification from Health Service, a doctor, or an appropriate university employee. In accordance with departmental policy, excused absences will not be granted for class observation and student teaching.

## **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course and may also result in additional penalties as determined by the Judicial Board.

## **Students With Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

## Tentative Schedule

### English 4300-001

1. Week of August 26
  - Introduction to Course
  - Franklin, *Autobiography* (27-46)
  - Autobiography* (46-80)
2. Week of September 2
  - Labor Day: No Classes
  - Autobiography* (80-120)
  - Autobiography* (120-57)
3. Week of September 9
  - Douglass, *Narrative* (29-67)
  - Narrative* (67-109)
  - Howells, *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (3-19)
4. Week of September 16
  - Silas Lapham* (20-102)
  - Silas Lapham* (102-171)
  - Silas Lampham* (171-211)
5. Week of September 23
  - Silas Lapham* (211-99)
  - Chopin, *The Awakening* (3-26)
  - The Awakening* (26-54)
6. Week of September 30
  - The Awakening* (54-109)
  - Cather, *My Antonia* ("Introduction" to 43)
  - My Antonia* (43-103)
7. Week of October 7
  - My Antonia* (104-97)
  - My Antonia* (197-253)
  - My Antonia* (257-94)
8. Week of October 14
  - My Antonia* (297-372)
  - Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1-38); **Midterm Essays Due**
  - Fall Break: No Classes

9. Week of October 21
  - Gatsby* (39-97)
  - Gatsby* (98-146)
  - Gatsby* (147-82)
  
10. Week of October 28
  - Warren, *All the King's Men* (1-109)
  - All the King's Men* (110-56)
  - All the King's Men* (157-90)
  
11. Week of November 4
  - All the King's Men* (191-269)
  - All the King's Men* (270-312)
  - All the King's Men* (312-354)
  
12. Week of November 11
  - All the King's Men* (355-438)
  - Ellison, *Invisible Man* (3-33)
  - Invisible Man* (34-97)
  
13. Week of November 18
  - Invisible Man* (98-195)
  - Invisible Man* (196-250)
  - Invisible Man* (251-96)

### **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

14. Week of December 2
  - Invisible Man* (297-382)
  - Invisible Man* (383-444)
  - Invisible Man* (445-512)
  
15. Week of December 9
  - Invisible Man* (513-81)
  - Discussion
  - Critical Essays Due**, Student Evaluations, Take-Home Final