Fall 8-15-2003

ENG 3700-001: American Literature

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English 3700, Fall 2003
American Literature, 1450-1800

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Office hours: TR 10:30-12, W 10-11:30; many other times by appointment
Class web site: http://www.uxl.eiu.edu/~darv/3700.html

Objectives

This course is designed to help you

- understand the history of literary culture in the present-day United States during the period between 1450 and 1800
- develop your ability to interpret texts of many genres both as linguistic structures and in relationship to their historical context
- become familiar with the major literary figures and texts of this era

Texts

Andrews, Journeys in New Worlds
Brown, Wieland or the Transformation
Mather, Wonders of the Invisible World
Mulford, Winans & Vietto, Early American Writings
Rowson, Charlotte Temple

Course Requirements and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to Discussions (Units 1 &amp; 2)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (3 @ 50 points)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers (3 @ 100 points)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class responses/workshops</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3 Reading/Participation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Grading Scale

900-1000 A
800-899 B
700-799 C
600-699 D
0-599 F

You may retake quizzes to improve your grade. Retake quizzes will cover the same information, but questions and order of questions may change. Quizzes may be retaken as many times as desired, up to the last day of class. Please meet with me briefly before scheduling a retake.

You may revise papers to improve your grade. Papers may be revised as many times as desired. Revisions will be accepted until the last day of class. Please meet with me briefly before revising.

Extra credit is available during Unit 3. Up to 50 points may be earned by completing and discussing extra readings.

Disability Information

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

Reading

Reading is the central activity of a literature course. My primary expectation for students in literature classes is to be committed to developing as professional readers, applying knowledge and skills they have begun to accumulate in English 1002 and other literature classes (especially, for English majors, English 2205). Your ability to contribute to discussion and to perform well on quizzes, papers, and exams depends largely on how well you read, so it’s important to reflect often on your reading habits.

- **Professional readers read closely**—closely enough to be able to discuss intelligently the material they’ve read, and closely enough to be able to remember the major characteristics of a text weeks, months, even years later.
- **Professional readers read diligently**—if they become confused while reading, they back up and re-read to try to sort out the problem; if they encounter an unfamiliar word, they look the word up in the dictionary; if they have serious confusions, they consult their instructor or come to class prepared to ask questions.
- **Professional readers read below the surface**—they assume that there might be more to a text than the literal meaning of the words. They consider that narrators might or might not be reliable; that facts might or might not be accurate; that details might be more significant than they at first seem. They make note of interesting patterns and obvious or less obvious symbolic meanings.
- **Professional readers apply their accumulated knowledge about literature to new materials they read**—they think about similarities or differences between the text at hand and other related texts they’ve read; they think about the relationship between the text and its historical context; they notice and consider the importance of stylistic traits as they read; and they consider how different interpretive methodologies might affect their understanding of the significance of the text.

If this description sounds like you, great. If parts of it sound a bit unfamiliar or even intimidating, you might want some assistance from me over the course of the semester and/or you might want to use the (thoroughly optional) note-taking method worksheet I can provide to you.

Taking Notes

If you plan to teach literature at any level or if you plan to attend graduate school in English, you’ll find it invaluable to keep your notes about everything you’ve ever read (even after the course is over). If, as many students tell me, you don’t normally take notes on your reading unless you’re required to turn in something written for a grade—well, this class is an ideal time to develop the habit of making some basic notes that might be of use to you in the future if you decide to teach what you’ve read, or if you want to refer back to a text you’ve already read for some future class.

9:00

I’m not really a morning person. Many college students aren’t, either. But I believe that together we can overcome this disadvantage and make this a great and memorable class anyway. The truth is, though, if you’ve had little sleep, that’ll be difficult. So if you’re not normally up at this hour, think hard about your time management this semester. And feel free to bring your coffee or other breakfast items (I’ll probably bring breakfast stuff now and again as well).
Attendance

If you wish to earn an A or B in this class, I believe you will find it almost indispensable to attend class whenever humanly possible. Nonetheless, I will not penalize you for absences per se. Of course frequent absences will make it difficult to earn points for contributing to discussion.

Late Work/Make Up Work

If you miss class on the day a paper is due or a quiz is given due to a documented illness or emergency, simply bring your documentation when you talk to me about making up the work. If you miss class for any other reason, you may still make work up, with a 10% per day late penalty to your grade. (On the other hand, I'm always willing to grant extensions to paper deadlines if they are requested BEFORE the deadline.)

Communicating with Me

In addition to my announced office hours, I am often in Coleman Hall from early in the morning into the evening. So I'm available to meet at lots of times, but you should always check in advance to save yourself a wasted trip. Just see me before or after class, or phone me at the office to arrange an appointment. I am also more than happy to meet over coffee, in which case I'll offer one beverage of your choice, on me.

Please do not email me about anything that needs a quick reply. Rather, speak to me face to face or by phone (if you don't reach me at the office, I have voicemail, so please leave a detailed message). Instant messenger is also fine, if you find me at my desk (my userid on AOL IM is Vietto).

Electronic Writing Portfolio

This is a writing-intensive course, so you may submit a paper from this course for the EWP (except for seniors, who are required to make their submission from their senior seminars). A link to the EWP submission form can be found on the class web site. The deadline to obtain my signature on an EWP submission form is the date of our final examination.

The English Department’s Statement on Plagiarism

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

My Statement on Plagiarism

If you do not understand the definition of plagiarism presented above, ask me about it immediately. I assume that you share with me and with the rest of the faculty the respect and love for ideas and language that would lead you to scorn the idea of appropriating someone else's words or thoughts without proper attribution. If you have any questions or concerns about your use of sources in any assignment, however, please consult with me in person before submitting to me the work about which you have a question. If you are tempted to plagiarize because of time constraints, ask for an extension instead. No quarter will be granted to anyone who submits work that is demonstrably plagiarized.
Course Overview

Readings must be completed before the day on which they are scheduled to be discussed.

EAW = Early American Writings

UNIT 1: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

W Aug 27  Recommended reading: EAW 1-2, 23-28, 140-141, 159-164, 358-360, 426-429
F Aug 29  Recommended reading: EAW 479-481, 698-701, 758-760, 942-944, 1109
M Sept 1  Labor Day Observed—No class
W Sept 3  Historical overview continued
F Sept 5  Quiz 1; Introduction to Unit 2

UNIT 2: KEY TEXTS FROM ANGLO-AMERICA

M Sept 8  EAW, all selections by John Smith, pp. 169-188
W Sept 10 EAW, selections from Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation, pp. 222-237
W Sept 17 EAW, Rowlandson, "Narrative," 305-328
F Sept 19 Mather, Wonders of the Invisible World (selections TBA)
M Sept 22 Mather, Wonders of the Invisible World (selections TBA)
W Sept 24 EAW, Edwards, Personal Narrative and "Sinners" pp. 668-684
F Sept 26 Quiz 2; Paper 1 Thesis Workshop
M Sept 29 Paper 1 Draft Workshop
W Oct 1  Paper 1 Due
EAW, Wheatley, poems, pp. 889-894
F Oct 3  EAW, Paine, From Common Sense and The Crisis, pp. 836-848
M Oct 6  EAW, Declaration of Independence, pp. 965-967
W Oct 8  EAW, Crevecoeur, from Letters from an American Farmer, pp. 975-998
M Oct 13 Reading Selections for Unit 3 Due
EAW, Equiano, from The Interesting Narrative, pp. 912-928
F Oct 17 Fall Break—No class
W Oct 22 EAW, Franklin, Autobiography, Part II, pp. 803-813
F Oct 24 Quiz 3; Paper 2 Thesis Workshop
UNIT 3: SELECTED TOPICS IN DEPTH

M Oct 27    Paper 2 Due; Topic group meetings by appointment
W Oct 29    Topic group meetings by appointment
F Oct 31    Topic group meetings by appointment
M Nov 3     Topic group meetings by appointment
W Nov 5     Topic group meetings by appointment
F Nov 7     No class
M Nov 10    Topic group meetings by appointment
W Nov 12    Topic group meetings by appointment
F Nov 14    Topic group meetings by appointment
M Nov 17    Topic group meetings by appointment
W Nov 19    Topic group meetings by appointment
F Nov 21    Topic group meetings by appointment
Nov 24-28   Thanksgiving Break—No Class
M Dec 1     Topic group meetings by appointment
W Dec 3     Topic group meetings by appointment
F Dec 5     Paper 3 Draft Workshop
M Dec 8     Paper 3 Due; In-class conference and response writing
W Dec 10    In-class conference and response writing
F Dec 12    Course conclusion

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.