

ENGL 3005W-001 | Spring 2018 Survey of American Literatures and Cultures I M/W 6:00-7:55, Lind Hall 340 Instructor: Dr. John Pistelli Email: piste004@umn.edu

Course Site: moodle.umn.edu

Office Hours: M/W 4:30-5:30 Lind Hall 254

There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (1837)

This course will survey American literature from the arrival of English settlers to the Civil War. Course topics will include the Puritan theology that cast such a long shadow over the American cultural imagination; the literary construction in the Revolutionary era of a national identity under the influence of such Enlightenment ideals as reason, cosmopolitanism, civility, and sympathy; the rise in the mid-nineteenth century of a radical intellectual and social movement in Transcendentalism; the antebellum ideological struggles over slavery, class conflict, industrialism, women's rights, and Native American rights; and the self-conscious cultivation of a national literary aesthetic in the Romantic fiction and poetry of the period later critics would come (controversially) to call "the American Renaissance."

Required Text

Robert S. Levine et al., eds. The Norton Anthology of American Literature, 9th edition, vols. A-B.



Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire* (1833-36)

EngL 3005W satisfies the Literature Core and General Core requirements. The general objective of EngL 3005W is to increase students' familiarity with literary art and expression through extensive readings in various forms (fiction, poetry, drama, non-fiction prose) and to sharpen students' ability to perform close, critical analysis of important American literature from the 16th to 19th centuries. Another important objective is to foster students' interest and excitement about literature and to give them tools for understanding the imaginative literature they will read for the rest of their lives. Lectures and discussion introduce students to topics such as the creation and publication of written work, literary techniques, and the historical and social contexts of writers and readers (including the students). The course also discusses literary conventions and taste, how these change over time, and how traditions are built upon and undermined through innovation and experiment.

EngL 3005W satisfies the Diversity and Social Justice Theme. EngL 3005W explores issues of power and American identity throughout the semester. The readings for the period up to 1800 include several accounts of contact between European explorers and settlers and Native Americans and a few texts written by African Americans. Between 1800 and the Civil War, writing in America addresses issues of race and gender more directly through increased writing by Native Americans, the publication of slave narratives, and the appearance of more women authors in American letters. The wide range of genres and topics in this survey allows students to envision the United States from different perspectives. The early readings in the course are predominantly didactic or polemic, while later, imaginative literature (poetry and fiction) gives an even wider range for students to consider diversity and social justice.

EngL 3005W fulfills Student Learning Outcomes. This course is designed to make students conversant with the modes and the language of literary studies at the university level and to hone critical reading skills through theory and praxis. As a writing intensive course, a significant amount of energy will be expended on the good work of conceiving, organizing, executing, proofreading, and "workshopping" effective writing. This particular 3000-level writing- intensive course attempts to survey American Literatures and Cultures before the Civil War. The texts collected here are not random but nonetheless idiosyncratic choices and their presence, of course, marks the exclusion of countless other viable options. To "survey" is to "sample," but also to "examine" and "appraise." Perhaps our first step should be to interrogate the terms we are given—to formulate our own definition of "American Literature" and think about how and why these texts meet or defy our expectations of what American Literature might be. To this end, the course fulfills the Student Learning Outcome of teaching students to identify, define, and solve problems.

EngL 3005W is a Writing Intensive course. This course meets the Council on Liberal Education guidelines for a Writing Intensive course. This means that the course integrates writing into course content, through writing assignments that work toward specific course objectives and writing activities that take place throughout the semester; provides explicit instruction in writing; requires a cumulative minimum of 2,500 words of formal writing apart from any informal writing activities and assignments; includes at least one formal assignment that requires students to revise and resubmit drafts after receiving feedback from the course instructor; requires that at least one-third of each student's final course grade must be tied to the written work done in the course and that a student cannot pass the course and fail the writing component

Grading Policy. A (90-100): Outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. B (80-90): Significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. C (70-80): Meets the course requirements in every respect. D (60-70): Worthy of credit, even though it fails to meet course requirements fully. F (0-60): Work was not completed.

Incompletes. A grade of incomplete ("I") is given only in a genuine and documented emergency, and only for work which is due during the last two weeks of the course. You must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

Student Conduct. To avoid disruptions, please observe the following policies: 1. Turn phones off and put them away before coming to class. 2. During class, your attention should be directed toward whomever is speaking or to your assigned task. 3. Any electronic devices used (laptop, tablet, etc.) should be for course material alone. 4. Address the instructor and your classmates respectfully.

Access. Any student with a documented disability condition who needs to arrange accommodations should contact the instructor and Disability Services (612-626-1333) at the beginning of the semester.

Scholastic Dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University.

Student Writing Support. Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall. See http://writing.umn.edu/ for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.

Other Policies. For information about UMN policy regarding the above topics and others—Student Conduct Code; Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Class Room; Scholastic Dishonesty; Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences; Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials; Grading and Transcripts; Sexual Harassment; Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action; Disability Accommodations; Mental Health and Stress Management; and Academic Freedom—I encourage you to visit: http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/SYLLABUSREQUIREMENTS_APPA.html

Offensive Materials. In this course, students may be required to read words or view images that they may consider offensive. The ideas expressed in any given text do not necessarily reflect the views of the instructor, the English Department, or the University of Minnesota. Course materials have been selected for their literary, cultural, and/or historical value, in order to achieve specific learning objectives and course goals. These materials are meant to be examined in the context of intellectual inquiry and critical analysis, as appropriate for a university-level course. If you are easily shocked and/or offended, please contact the instructor to discuss whether this course is suitable for you.

Assignments

Grade breakdown.

Participation 10% Essay 1 20% Essay 2 30% Midterm Exam 20% Final Exam 20%

Participation. It is your responsibility to be here. I do not directly give an attendance grade but I do take attendance. Be advised that there will be in-class exercises, assignments, and activities in this course that you will miss if you are absent. If you miss class for any reason, please ask a classmate rather than the instructor for notes or a summary. If illness or other problems require you to miss more than a normal amount of class (two or three meetings), please let me know. If you miss more than two meetings without a documented reason, your overall course grade may be affected. If you miss more than four meetings, you may be danger of failing the course. Finally, be on time to class—lateness is highly disruptive and it will affect your participation grade. As for participation itself, it includes speaking up in class at least once a week, contributing to in-class activities, and/or attending my office hours or otherwise getting in touch with me.

Essays. You will write two essays for the course. The first will be a 3-4 pp. argumentative essay that will require you to address a text from the first third of the course and devise a thesis about its significance. The second essay will be a 5-6 pp. research paper on a text or texts of your choice from the last two-thirds of the course. You will be required to incorporate not only evidence from the texts you discuss but also from relevant literary criticism as found in scholarly books and journals to support your thesis. For the first essay, you will participate in an in-class peer review. For the final essay, you will submit a prospectus/outline and annotated bibliography before submitting the final draft. I will provide more detail as the due dates approach.

Exams. A midterm and final exam will be held. This exams will treat all course materials from the beginning to the half and from the half to the end of the course. Both exams will be divided into two parts: a fact-based first section in which you will answer fill-in-the-blank, true/false, or multiplechoice questions, and a second section in which you will have to identify passages from your reading by author, title, and date, and write a brief explanation of their significance. I will provide more detail as the date of the midterm approaches. The exams cannot be made up except in the case of a verifiable/documented emergency or conflict, in which case I expect you to contact me as soon as possible before the exam date.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

All readings are in the Norton Anthology and can be located using the table of contents. Recommendations are not required, but may be mentioned in class to add context. Though I have not placed them on the schedule, I will expect you to read the author biographies that introduce each selection in the Norton as well as the introductions to each of the anthology's primary divisions: "Beginnings to 1700," "American Literature 1700-1820," and "American Literature 1820-1865."

Prologue.

January 17

John Smith, from The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles

1. From Puritanism to Enlightenment (1600-1820)

January 22

- John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," from The Journal of John Winthrop
- Recommended: Thomas Morton, from New English Canaan

January 24

- Mary Rowlandson, Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration
- Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess, Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory," "The Flesh and the Spirit," "The Author to Her Book," "Another [Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment]," "In Memory of My Dear Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet...," "Here Follow Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666"

January 29

- Jonathan Edwards, "Personal Narrative," "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
- Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth," Autobiography part II
- Recommended: Thomas Paine, from The Age of Reason

January 31

- Samson Occom, all selections
- J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, from Letters from an American Farmer
- Recommended: Thomas Jefferson, from Notes on the State of Virginia

February 5

- Judith Sargent Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes"
- Phillis Wheatley, all selections
- Recommended: Annis Boudinot Stockton and Philip Freneau, all selections

February 7

- Hannah Webster Foster, The Coquette, letters I-XLII
- Recommended: John Adams and Abigail Adams, The Letters

February 12

Hannah Webster Foster, The Coquette, letters XLIII-LXXVI

February 14

Charles Brockden Brown, Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist

February 19

Essay #1 due in class for peer-review workshop; bring two copies

2. Transcendentalism and the Literature of Social Change (1820-1865)

February 21

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," "Self-Reliance," "The Poet"
- Recommended: Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Circles," "Experience"

February 26

- Henry David Thoreau, Walden chapters 2, 3, 11, 17
- Recommended: Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government"
- Essay #1 due to Moodle by 11:59PM

February 28

- Margaret Fuller, The Great Lawsuit
- Recommended: Fanny Fern, "Male Criticism on Ladies' Books"

March 5

- William Apess, "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man"
- Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, all selections
- John Rollin Ridge, from The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta
- Recommended: Native Americans: Removal and Resistance

March 7

• Midterm exam

March 12, 14

• No class

March 19

- Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life
- Recommended: Martin R. Delany, from Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent

March 21

- Harriet Jacobs, from Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
- Sojourner Truth, "Speech to the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851"
- Lydia Maria Child, "The Quadroons"
- Recommended: Harriet Beecher Stowe, from Uncle Tom's Cabin

3. The Fiction and Poetry of American Romanticism (1820-1865)

March 26

- Washington Irving, "Rip van Winkle," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"
- Recommended: James Fenimore Cooper, from The Last of the Mohicans

March 28

- Edgar Allan Poe, "Ligeia," "The Man of the Crowd," "The Purloined Letter," "The Raven," "The Philosophy of Composition"
- Recommended: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"

April 2

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, chapters I-XII
- Recommended: Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown"

April 4

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, chapters XIII-XXIV
- Recommended: Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter"

April 9

• Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," "Bartleby, the Scrivener"

April 11

- Herman Melville, "Benito Cereno"
- Recommended: Herman Melville, from Moby-Dick

April 16

Rebecca Harding Davis, "Life in the Iron Mills"

April 18

- Walt Whitman, Song of Myself
- Recommended: William Cullen Bryant and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, all selections

April 23

- Walt Whitman, "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," "Beat! Beat! Drums!" "The Wound Dresser," "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," "Live Oak with Moss"
- Emily Dickinson, poems 124, 194, 202, 207, 225, 236, 260, 269, 320, 339, 373, 409
- Recommended: Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney, all selections

April 25

• Emily Dickinson, poems 477, 479, 519, 591, 598, 620, 656, 760, 764, 788, 1096, 1263, 1454, 1577, 1668, 1675, 1773

Epilogue.

April 30

- Conclusion, final review, and course evaluations
- Essay #2 prospectus due to Moodle by 11:59PM

May 2

Final exam

May 4

Essay #2 bibliography due to Moodle by 11:59PM

May 7

Essay #2 due to Moodle by 11:59PM

ENGL 3005-001 Essay #1 (about 1000 words)

Worth 20% of your grade Two paper copies of first draft due in class for peer review on 02/19 Final draft due before 11:59PM to Moodle on 02/26

The best literary criticism tends to work from the assumption that how something is conveyed in literature is as important as what is conveyed. For this reason, literary critics have cultivated an art of close reading—that is, an art of paying very careful attention to how language works in a selected passage from a text.

Your assignment is to select a passage that we did not discuss in class from one of our readings in the Norton Anthology. Choose a short excerpt—no more than 10 lines of type—to explicate in a close reading.

After you select the text, place it at the beginning of your paper in a single-spaced block quotation. Following the block quotation, you do not need a full introductory paragraph, but you should have at least one sentence that summarizes your overall interpretation of the passage. Even though it is the first sentence I will read, it might be the last sentence you write, since you will have to perform the close reading to know your argument about the text.

Your thesis should foreground the form or literary features of the text. In other words, some literary style or technique should be mentioned in it. It should also go beyond the obvious or the summary. For example, an unsuccessful thesis would say, "Mary Rowlandson's Narrative often discusses food." This merely states a fact about the text without offering an interpretation of its broader significance. A more successful thesis: "Mary Rowlandson's Narrative often describes food and eating to characterize Native American culture in a more nuanced and sympathetic way than Christian allegory—which would understand Native Americans as instruments of God's vengeance—would allow." (Please do not use that example!)

Your thesis should be followed by an explication of the passage. "To explicate" means "to make explicit." The text uses imagery, metaphor, allusion, symbolism, tone, irony and other literary devices to suggest or imply a meaning, and it is your job to articulate that implied or suggested meaning by explaining how the literary devices make us understand the world in certain ways. You should conclude your essay by explaining how the passage you selected ties into broader themes—either those of the period as a whole or else of some other large historical, social, political, philosophical, religious, aesthetic, or literary concept.

You have several options for structuring this essay. You can simply follow your chosen excerpt in order, sentence by sentence. This is the simplest option, and there is nothing wrong with it. Another structure would divide the passage into different themes or devices that you would like to explore; so, for instance, you could devote one paragraph to a reading of the passage's imagery, another to the passage's irony, etc. Or you can surprise me with a structure of your own invention. You do not have to address every single feature of your text; choose to focus on those that best express your sense of the piece's overall meaning.

Grading criteria: an interesting and persuasive thesis, an attention to language that goes beyond summary or statements of the obvious, and a general understanding of the text you quote. Be sure to proofread carefully for spelling and grammar—such errors may overwhelm your ability to

communicate with the reader—and also revise for eloquence, wit, verve and all else that makes writing worth reading. The peer review session is ungraded but mandatory; you cannot earn higher than a B+ on the essay overall if you do not participate.

Format: This essay should be at least 1000 words. Use a standard font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Provide a heading with your name, date and the assignment, and include a descriptive, arresting title (e.g., "My Sorrowful Meat': Eating Against Allegory in Mary Rowlandson's Narrative") centered one line above the essay's first line. This assignment does not require a bibliography, but in-text parenthetical citations should follow MLA guidelines. If you write about poetry, please cite it by line number rather than page number. For file submissions, please submit in .doc or .docx format. Please save the file with a name in this format: lastname-assignment. Example: pistelliessay1.doc.

ENGL 3005W Essay #2 (at least 2000 words)

Worth 30% of your grade Prospectus due before 11:59 PM to Moodle on 04/30 Annotated bibliography due before 11:59 PM to Moodle on 05/04 Final essay due before 11:59 PM to Moodle on 05/07

Your final project is an argument-based research paper of around six to eight pages on any of the class texts from Emerson forward. Your first assignment is to choose a text or texts and draft a prospectus, and your second is to create an annotated bibliography; finally, you will submit your essay itself.

Prospectus

Please submit a one-page document (double-spaced) in which you tell me your choice of text, what you expect you might argue about it, and what areas of literary criticism you would like to focus on. In other words, I want you to explain your interest in this text, and tell me what kind of critical argument you want to make about it. What aspect of it would you most like to investigate further its portrayal of a specific character, its depiction of a historical or imagined setting, its unique use of language, its examination of a specific topic, its place within the American cultural context, etc.? Any of these topics is appropriate for the research paper. Your answer to these questions will provide you with a research topic that can begin to guide you through the next part of the process: producing an annotated bibliography.

The prospectus can be written informally, as if it were a letter; another option is to structure it as an outline of your paper, with thesis and sub-theses and evidence. I would like you to title it with the name of the work you've chosen and a one-word or one-phrase summary of the aspect of it you would like to discuss (samples: "The Scarlet Letter and the Mystery of Chillingworth," "Douglass and Gender," "Sexuality in Song of Myself," "Dickinson's Politics," etc.).

I will return this to you very quickly with my suggestions. Depending on what you give me, I may advise you to adjust or reframe the topic, I may suggest a different avenue of inquiry, or I may begin to make research suggestions. Since this is an ungraded assignment, it can be very rough if you want it to be, but please be advised that I will be able to give better and more comprehensive advice if your prospectus is detailed and thoughtful. Submit it to Moodle as a file in .doc or .docx format on the due date with a filename of the form lastname-prospectus.

The prospectus is ungraded but *mandatory*: if you do not turn it in, you cannot get a grade higher than a B+ on the final paper.

Annotated Bibliography

Now that you have your topic, you can begin to search for critical books and articles using the UMN library catalogue, the MLA international bibliography, and databases such as Academic Search Premier or Jstor. These are linked on the course website (accessible through moodle.umn.edu). Use their search functions to narrow your search—for instance, by entering the name of your work or author plus a keyword such as "race" or "nature" or "style."

Please do not neglect physical research; visit the book stacks at Wilson Library and look through the books on the shelf that pertain to the work you have chosen. Writers such as Hawthorne or Dickinson or Emerson will have multiple shelves devoted to criticism on them, and some of your best finds may come from fortuitous browsing in these sources rather than through Internet searches for keywords, which can be imprecise.

Finally, use the bibliographies of your sources themselves. A recent article will most likely begin by citing prior arguments on that topic; you can shorten your own research process by following such chains of citations. For this reason, I recommend starting with recent work on your topic and using it to work backward to past criticism.

As for a bibliography, it is a list of sources (books, book chapters, journal articles, etc.). This list should be in alphabetical order by author and information about the sources (author, title, editor [if any], publisher, place and date of publication, etc.) should be given in MLA style. A link to MLA guidelines can be found on the course website.

To annotate a bibliography, add to each source cited a paragraph (3-5 sentences) describing the source's overall thesis, its critical approach (formalist, feminist, historicist, cultural studies, etc.) if relevant, and its critical method (close reading, historical contextualization, philosophical argumentation, etc.). Finally, discuss how you plan to use it to support or challenge your own provisional thesis.

Guidelines for the annotated bibliography: Please provide a minimum of five sources. At least two of these must be peer-reviewed journal articles rather than books or book chapters. At least one source must be from this decade. At least one should be at least thirty years old. You may include one book that takes a more general overview of your subject (a biography of Douglass, for instance, or a literary history of American poetry or of fiction by American women). You may also include one book or article that is more generally theoretical if it will help your project (a book about poetic theory or an essay on theories of sexuality, etc.). Please give your annotated bibliography a centered title with the following format: Your Chosen Text: Your Chosen Topic (e.g., The Scarlet Letter. Gender). Submit it as a .doc or .docx file to Moodle on the due date, with a filename of the form lastname-annotatedbibliography.

The annotated bibliography is worth 5% of your overall grade.

Final Essay

Now that you have chosen a text and topic and have created a bibliography, you must develop a thesis around which to organize an argumentative research paper.

An argumentative essay is organized around a debatable position. This thesis should go beyond the obvious or summary; instead, it should aim for the complex or counter-intuitive. Your evidence to support the thesis will take the form of citations of events and quotations of passages from the text. Each of your paragraphs should argue for a different, discrete component of your thesis. You can make sure your essay is well-structured by outlining it. Another way is to state the sub-topics at the beginning of the essay.

Close reading is the core of literary analysis. You will want to closely explicate certain events in the text, in which case you will not quote them but refer to them, and then explore their implications. You should also provide close reading of smaller passages, which will involve paying careful attention to the specific language being used in the text. Do not cite and run, and do not cite and then simply summarize. Instead, analyze: how does this event or piece of language work, what literary techniques does it use, how does it express your thesis? The author's words do not speak for themselves; you want them to speak for you.

Your essay should have an introductory paragraph that introduces your argument; it should also give the reader some relevant, specific and attention-grabbing context for the paper—a quotation or an anecdote, for instance. Do not over-generalize in your introduction—first sentences such as, "From the dawn of time, humanity has thought about happiness," are too broad.

Every essay also contains a conclusion that re-states the argument and its components, but it should also do more than that: it should suggest a further avenue for investigation. What part of the analysis is left for others to discover? Exit the conversation by inviting others to take it up.

This assignment also has a research component. You are required to cite five outside sources. Your use of sources should follow MLA guidelines for parenthetical citation. In general, you should use your research to support your argument (i.e., your source agrees with you), to introduce a counterargument you will go on to refute (i.e., the source disagrees with you, and you explain why it is wrong), or to provide context (i.e., the source explains theoretical, philosophical, historical, etc. issues that help you make your argument). You should follow the rules for literary quotation with your research sources: make sure you explain how the quote works for you. It may not be necessary to examine the quotation for literary or rhetorical features, as you would do if quoting a literary text, but it is necessary to explain how it fits into your paper.

In academic writing, you are supposed to obey informal rules of "collegiality," which means that you must treat your scholarly interlocutors respectfully, even if you disagree with them. For this reason, you will want to avoid any kind of invective or derogatory remarks; if you strongly differ from another critic's argument, you might say it is "mistaken in one respect" or "has missed an important nuance," rather than that it is foolish or pernicious.

You must include a bibliography at the end of this paper, beginning on a page of its own. The bibliography should be titled "Bibliography," centered above the first line. Every text you have quoted, including your main literary text, should be included. It should be formatted following MLA rules, with hanging indents. This bibliography should not be annotated, though I expect that it will be based on the annotated bibliography.

Format: This essay should be at least 2000 words. Use a standard font, such as 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Have a heading in the upper left—not in the document header—with your name, date and the assignment and a descriptive, arresting title centered one line above the essay's first line. Essays should be submitted to the Moodle as a file in .doc or .docx format on the due date with a filename of the form lastname-finalessay.

The essay is worth 25% of your overall grade.