English 229.090
American Literature to 1865—Fall 2019

Instructor: Steve Marsden
Prereqs: Six hours of Freshman English (or equivalent)
Class Hours: T, R, 12:30-1:45
Classroom: Ferguson 183
Phone: 468-6609
Office: Liberal Arts North 209
Department: English
Email: marsdensj@sfasu.edu   ENG229 in subject line. Please try not to mail from within D2L—it makes following up more complicated, and may not reach me as quickly
Office Hours: M 1:15-3:15, TR 2-3:30, and by appointment (can also meet via Zoom)
Webpage: D2L—http://d2l.sfasu.edu (very important—check it daily)

Course Description / Objectives
According to our course catalogue:

This course is a survey of major authors and literary movements / paradigms in American literature from its beginnings to 1865.

The goal of this course is to familiarize you with great works of American literature from the Colonial period to the Civil War, and the contexts you will need to read them well. It will enable you to recognize a variety of authors and be familiar with their times, their concerns, and the categories into which their works are customarily divided. You will read journals, poems, novellas, romances, sermons, political and religious essays.

We’ll work our way through how our authors strive to answer some basic questions about nation, spirit, race, gender, and identity. We’ll examine biographical and historical information to help frame the personal, regional, and national conflicts that inform and frame the works we read.

Through careful attention to context, form, and language and through careful discussion and argument, you should become better readers, better writers, and better thinkers.

Credit Hour Justification
ENGL 2328 “American Literature from 1865” (3 Credits) typically meets three times each week in 50-minute segments or twice each week in 75-minute segments for 15 weeks, and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Students are expected to complete a generous amount of weekly reading of mainly primary source material. The weekly reading may be accompanied by such assignments as reading quizzes and in-class and out-of-class writings. The amount of writing will average between 8-12 pages over the semester and may require research. The required outside of class workload will average 6 hours per week.

English Program Learning Outcomes
English majors and minors are required to take two courses of sophomore-level literature in which the student will

- demonstrate the ability to read complex texts, closely and accurately (this correlates to the Core objective of Critical Thinking).
- demonstrate the ability to comprehend both traditional and contemporary schools/methods of critical theory and apply them to literary texts to generate relevant interpretations. (Demonstration includes the student’s ability to add to
meaningful discourse, in oral communication and written communication; this correlates to the Core’s Communication objective).

- demonstrate knowledge of literary history in regard to particular periods of world literature; the student will further understand how human interactions, decisions, and actions carry with them consequences. (Knowledge of literary history entails competence in cultural considerations as well as understanding of how social and civic responsibilities impact diverse communications; this correlates to the Core objectives of Social and Personal Responsibilities).
- demonstrate the ability to effectively conduct literary research. (This objective correlates to the Core objectives of Communication and Critical Thinking).
- demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes in regards to literary analysis. (This objective correlates to the Core objective of Communication).

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 229:
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for key works in American literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. This outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication.
- Demonstrate an understanding of periodization in American literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. Periodization is not merely an historical consideration, as defined by events, persons, or dates; students will demonstrate an understanding that historical, cultural, spiritual, and ethical issues, among others, shape human experiences and impact motivations. This outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication as well as Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility.
- Read literature with increased critical acumen, as evidenced in daily discussions of readings and in responsive essays. This outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication.
- Respond to literature with facility, addressing important thematic considerations having to do with literary and historical milieu, culture, human responsibility, morality, ethics, and the manner and causes by which humans interact with one another. This outcome aligns to the Core objective of Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility.

Course Outcomes
By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Recognize and understand some of the major works in American literature during the period covered, and demonstrate your recognition and understanding.
- Show your understanding of some of the major literary movements and genres of the period and your appreciation of their aesthetic and stylistic qualities.
- Place major works in the context of American literary, historical, social and intellectual discourse.
- Conduct literary research and write clear correct responses to literary material using standard format and documentation.

Textbooks
Baym, Nina et al., editors. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. 9th ed., Vols. A, B., Norton, 2017. Please get this edition if possible—the former edition will have different page numbering, and some readings may be unavailable or slightly different. Volume A will be needed immediately.

Some works may also be assigned through online copies or through electronic course reserves. It would be wise to print these out. Background information will frequently be provided in the form of web links or handouts: you’re responsible for reading and keeping up with these.

Course Policies

Phones
If you have a cell phone, please silence it and keep it put out of your line of sight during our course, unless you are conducting research on a point of current discussion or answering a question. If you must receive calls due to some developing emergency, please set the phone to a silent setting. If you must talk on your phone due to some earth-shattering emergency, please leave our classroom to do so.
Eating, Drinking, Sleeping and So On
Feel free to drink coffee or eat anything that’s not loud, messy, and/or smelly. Please clean up after yourself, however. If you sleep in class, you will be woken up. At least feigning attention and interest is very important to the functioning of the class: don’t listen to headphones or text in class.

Reading, Participation, and Note Taking
This course is reading intensive, and some of the works we will be studying will be quite difficult. Budget your time and read ahead when necessary. Take notes as you read and write out questions about your reading for use in class. Mark up your books. Reread when necessary. Talk about your reading outside of class. Ask questions in class. If you find anything particularly impenetrable and need help, feel free to drop by my office hours to chat about it. My job is to help you understand this stuff.

This course is taught largely as a dialogue-I ask and answer questions. The students who get the most out of the class are those who participate well in class discussion. If you can answer, do.

Contact by Email
Correspondence relating to this course must use your sfasu email account. The subject line must be ENG 229. I am not certain to respond to emails with any other subject line, especially if they resemble spam. I never accept homework or unsolicited assignments by email. Do not use D2L mail: it will result in a delay in my reading and your response.

Original Work
All work turned in for credit in this course must be original work this semester for this class. You may not “recycle” work turned in previously in other courses. Recycled work will not be accepted for credit if found to be recycled (and the ordinary late penalties will accrue while you write another paper).

Plagiarism
I take plagiarism very seriously. According to SFASU Policies and Procedures:

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp
If a student’s paper contains plagiarized material, the student will meet with me, and I will determine the outcome, which typically involve penalties from an un-revisable zero on the paper to an F for the course. In addition, an Academic Dishonesty Form may be filed. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or fear you may not have properly cited something, please talk to me immediately.

**Attendance and Absences**
Regular attendance is required for success in this course. Lectures and discussions will highlight what sorts of things will be on the tests, there will be frequent short writing assignments and frequent reading quizzes will be given at the beginning or the end of classes. Please arrive on time. No homework or in-class assignments may be made up unless your absence is excused or has been pre-arranged with me at least a full day in advance. If you miss a class for a university-excused reason, you must (by the second day you return to class) present me with a **typed memo explaining the reason for your absence**, and you should attach any documentation (such as a note from your doctor) to this memo.

Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for all information and work covered in class. If you missed homework or in-class assignments during an excused absence, it is your responsibility to find out what you’ve missed and arrange with me to make it up.

After four unexcused absences, every additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 5 percentage points from your total grade. Usually, that total will already be quite low due to missed quizzes and poor test preparation.

In accordance with university policy, after six absences (the equivalent of three weeks of missed class) for any reason whatsoever, you may be unable to earn a passing grade in the course. Please keep an eye on your absences.

**Late Major Papers and Free Homework Late**
Each student has one (1) free late homework assignment: to use it, write “Oops” clearly at the top of the completed assignment and turn it in within one week of the assigned due date (and before the last day of class). Other than this “oops” assignment, no late homework will be accepted without a university-approved absence or a very compelling excuse (my judgment) in writing, detailing your reasons and providing evidence as necessary.

**Major papers** turned in after the beginning of the class period on which they are due will be considered late, and will have one full letter grade (10 percentage points) deducted from their final grade. Another full letter grade will be deducted for each weekday that passes. The easiest way to receive a very poor grade in this course is to turn things in late. Do not turn in papers under my office door or with office staff without arranging it with me in advance via email. I am not responsible for the loss of papers turned in that way, or your subsequently lower grade.

Major papers require an online submission via drop box on d2l. In that case, both the d2l submission and paper turn in must be accomplished by the beginning of class.

**Turnitin Submission**
In addition to the paper copy turned in during class, all major papers must be turned in to turnitin (through D2l) in electronic copies by the time of class. I may choose to grade either the electronic or paper copies of major assignments, depending on the time, so you must make them both available. Turnitin submissions are due at the same time the paper is due in class. Students are responsible for making sure the turnitin copy and the paper copy are identical, and that the
paper is successfully posted. No major paper will be awarded a score other than 0 without a turnitin submission.

**Midterm Grades**
All 100 and 200 level classes now report midterm grades. Please take these scores in the context of the percentage of the course projects complete at that time. A passing score at midterm is no guarantee of a passing final grade. Neither is a failing score necessarily impossible to recover from. See the grade breakdown and do the math.

**Extra Credit**
Several times during the semester, I will announce extra credit assignments. Extra credit will only be assigned in class (it will not be posted on the website). Please do not ask me for individual extra credit. Any extra credit assignments I given will be applied to the homework / quiz score, and will be offered to everyone. With extra credit, the daily work score will top at 100%.

**Withheld Grades**
I do not give Withheld grades lightly. A grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Assignments and Grade Determination**
We will have three exams, one during the scheduled final exam period, a brief personal response paper, and a terminal paper project. The remainder of the course grade will be determined by very short reading quizzes (one or two objective questions), short response papers, drafts or in-class assignments.

**Grade Breakdown**
- Quizzes, responses, daily work: 15%
- First exam: 15%
- Personal response paper: 15%
- Second exam: 15%
- Final exam: 20%
- Final project proposal: 5%
- Final project: 15%

**Percentage Grade**
90-100 A
Tests
In order to do well on the tests in this course, you will have to have read and done your best to understand the material. Our discussions in class will also be sources for exam questions, so it is best to come to class, participate, and take good notes.

Tests may include multiple choice, short-answer, identification and essay components. Tests are generally not comprehensive. Each test covers what we've read and discussed since the last test.

Multiple choice and short answer questions: These will speak to the plot, form, and characters of the works discussed. They may also include questions about memorable facts of the authors' lives. Please remember to take notes over these sometimes lecture-only facts: they are often the most difficult portion of the exam to prepare for without adequate notes.

Quote identification and contextualization: We will use the quotations I've put on the board throughout the semester, (and/or discussed at length in class) for this section of the exam. There will be a list of them online for studying purposes. You will identify in a few sentences the author of the quotation, the work it appeared in, the context in the work (who spoke the quote, when, who or what it refers to) and you'll speak to its meaning or its relation to a major theme in the work. I will give you many options for the quote identifications (approximately 2x to 3x the number I expect you to answer), but it is important to have noted down and understood all the quotations in class.

You should plan to bring a pencil and a blue book for each exam. Please arrive on time.
We will review for all exams the class period before the exam, and go over the format in more detail at that time.

Short Responses
Often, I'll have you write some relatively informal response to the readings for a day. These, should be typed, should generally attempt MLA format as accurately as you can unless otherwise specified, and will have other requirements as posted. The intention is to get you thinking and recording what you think about the works, and to prepare you for class.

5 = Excellent, flawless: Very insightful, and otherwise dazzlingly good. I think "wow! I wonder if I can get a copy to teach with next semester!" This is a rare score.
4.5 = Very good: Accomplishes everything needed with style and economy, reflects a strong understanding of the subject matter, and has no very significant errors. I think "good!"
4 = Good: Does the work expected, and contains only errors that might be expected of the average careful student at this point in the semester. I think "okay."
3.5 = Needs some work: Ideas may be incomplete or unfocused, organization may be sloppy. May be "off" in tone or style. I think "well, okay, I guess."
3 = Needs a lot of work: May be unclear in spots, or have numerous, embarrassing, or unprofessional errors. I think "well, maybe next time."
2 = Unacceptable: Fails to accomplish some aspect of the assignment, or has a variety of unprofessional errors. I think "maybe he or she had a high fever or something."
1 = Token effort: Wrong assignment or shows very little work. Accomplishes little of what the assignment asks. Reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the assignment or a deficit of effort
or skill. I think "why did I ever get into this line of work?" A paper with a name on it and a sentence, turned in on time.
0 = Didn't turn paper in: I think "hmm, I wonder if he or she has dropped the course?"

**Reading Quizzes**
Occasionally at the beginning or end of the class period, I will ask one question, answerable by one well-constructed sentence, about something we've read. They will be graded on a three point scale, as follows:

0 You weren't there to take the quiz or didn't put your name on it.
1 You have your name on the paper, and what you have written is indeed a sentence.
2 Your answer represents a good attempt, and shows that you've read the work with some care, but isn't entirely correct.
3 The sentence answers the question and indicates that you've read well and attentively.

The head-notes and author notes are fair game for these questions. I don't intend these to be hard or trick questions, but they will require that you read and remember what you have read. If you have an excused absence on a day when we have a reading quiz, you must bring a memo to me within two class periods explaining your absence and providing what documentation is possible. Then I will ask you another question about that day's reading. If you come in late and don't turn in a signed paper, or you have an unexcused absence and miss a quiz, you will receive a 0.

**Personal Response Paper**
A 3-4 page critical essay that engages with a work we’ve read this semester, articulating an interpretation, as well as a personal ethical, moral, or philosophical response to the work.

**Proposal for Final Project**
A page or two describing in detail your plans for the final project (the rewriting assignment or filling in the blanks assignment). A prompt and example will be coming soon.

**Final project: You will have the choice of one of two final project options.**

**Adaptation assignment**
Take a work that we’ve read this semester, read it closely until you’re sure you understand it, research and read criticism on the work, then rewrite it or adapt it. You might retell it from a different point of view, modernize the language, change the audience, change the medium (make it a play or a poem or a song or a movie). Then, you will write an analytical and justificatory paper, explaining what in the original work you found central, proving it with primary evidence and at least three secondary sources (peer-reviewed criticism by qualified literary critics, historians, or biographers), then stating why and how you made the adaptations you made. Finally, you’ll compare how the original worked with how your adaptation works for the audience you conceive for it.

Or

**Term paper and annotated bibliography**
You’ll write a 5 entry annotated bibliography and a brief 5-8 page argumentative research paper. You may go over length if you feel it absolutely necessary, but five full pages (MLA 8 format, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12, 1 inch margins, not including the required Works Cited page) are absolutely required. In this rather brief paper, you will engage one small, manageable aspect of a work or two on the syllabus, coming up with a thesis and proving it through careful reference to the specifics of the text. You must use at least four good, relevant, scholarly (no web-only or study-guide) outside sources to bolster your argument or to argue against. You will be graded on your analysis, your writing skills, your ability to incorporate quotation and outside evidence, and your conformity to standards of grammar, punctuation, and format.

Longer prompts and grading rubrics for all the major written assignments will be handed out in class well in advance of their due dates.

**Important Dates**

Exam 1—Tuesday, October 1  
Personal Response Paper—Thursday, October 17  
Exam 2—Tuesday, November 5  
Proposal (1 page) due for Final Project – Tuesday, November 12  
Project RD: Tuesday, December 3  
Project FD: Thursday, December 5  
Final exam as scheduled: Tuesday, December 10 10:45-1:15

**Reading Schedule**

An extremely tentative reading schedule follows below. Expect the readings to be tuned for reading speed and student interest throughout the semester. The daily posts on D2L will be the authoritative reading list: check them often. The exam dates, however, are firm.

**Week 1**  
Intro lecture  
Early readings TBA –check D2L.

**Week 2**

Anne Bradstreet, “Prologue,” “To Her Father with Some Verses,” “The Author to Her Book,” “To My Dear and Loving Husband,” “Another,” “Here Follows Some Verses Upon the Burning of Our House,” etc.

Mary Rowlandson, A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

**Week 3**  
Finish Rowlandson. Excerpts from Mather.

Benjamin Franklin, “Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America,” other readings TBA

**Week 4**

J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, “From Letters from an American Farmer”  
Thomas Paine, “Common Sense,” “The Crisis,” selections from The Age of Reason
Oulaudah Equiano, selections from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Oulaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself*


**Week 5**

**Week 6**

Exam 1—Tuesday, October 1

Irving, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”
William Cullen Bryant, “To a Waterfowl,” “The Prairies”

**Week 7**

Emerson, “The American Scholar,” “The Divinity School Address,” portions of “Nature,” poems

**Week 8**

Hawthorne, “The May-Pole of Merry Mount,” “The Birth-Mark,”
(possible substitutions)

Edgar Allan Poe, “To Helen,” “Alone,” “The Raven,” “The Philosophy of Composition,”

Response Paper Due—Thursday, October 17

**Week 9**


Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government,” selections from *Walden* (to be announced)

**Week 10**

Finish Thoreau

Frederick Douglass, Selections from *Narrative of the Life* (possible substitution)

**Week 11**

Exam 2—Tuesday, November 5

Harriet Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

**Week 12**

Walt Whitman, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,”

Proposal (1 page) due for Final Project – Tuesday, Nov 12

Walt Whitman, sections from *Leaves of Grass, Drum Taps*

**Week 13**

Herman Melville: “Bartleby the Scrivener”

Emily Dickinson – poems to be announced.
Finish Dickinson

**Week 14**
Thanksgiving Holidays

**Week 15**
Finish up, review, work on projects
**Project RD: Tuesday, December 3**
**Project FD: Thursday December 5**
Final exam as scheduled. Tuesday, December 10 10:45-1:15