

Framingham State University
Syllabus
ENGL 262 American Writers II

GENERAL INFORMATION

Semester: Summer 2018 (May 28th, 2018-June 29th, 2018)

Credit: 4

Teaching Hours: 50 Hours

Time: 2 hours/day, Mon-Fri

Professor Name: Claire McCarthy

Home Institution: Framingham State University

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Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered in the course and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right to modify, supplement and make changes as needs arise.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In her poem "England," Marianne Moore describes America as a "grassless, linksless, languageless country in / which letters are written / not in Spanish, not in Greek, not in Latin, not in shorthand / but in plain American which cats and dogs can read!" In this course we will survey the wide variety of American literature and letters from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day, exploring texts written in this "plain American" (and sometimes not so plain American). Focusing on the "writers" part of our course title, we will closely read stories, novels, poems, and plays from a wide variety of authors, with particular attention to genre and form. We will also be attentive to the "American" part of our title as we consider how these authors reflected and contributed to the recent development of the United States as it confronted the legacy of slavery, the rise of feminism, the expansion of the city and rising tide of immigration, the increased visibility of gender and race relations, and the emergence of such cultural movements as modernism and postmodernism.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students in this course will be able to:

- Demonstrate through formal and informal writing, exams, and class discussions knowledge of the diverse American literature written from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day.
- Demonstrate analytical reading skills in class discussions and in writing through the interpretation of a variety of literary and cultural texts with particular attention to genre and form.

- Demonstrate the understanding of connections between texts and various cultural, political, bibliographical, historical, biographical, and literary contexts, including race, gender, class, and sexual identity.
- Participate in critical conversations with peers and other scholars on important issues, controversies, and critical approaches relevant to the study of American literature.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Nina Baym, Robert S. Levine, Wayne Franklin, and Philip F. Gura, eds, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (Eighth Edition) (Vols. C, D, E)
Additional texts available online (O)

You should also have a good dictionary, a thesaurus, and bookmarks to The Writing Guide at CASA, <http://www.fscmedia.com/web-external/writing-guide/>, and the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL), <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>. Both websites will give you help with composition, grammar, punctuation, and documentation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Assignments and exams are designed to facilitate different kinds of thinking and to emphasize different aspects of the course, giving you several opportunities to demonstrate your learning. Over the course of the semester, you will be responsible for submitting two short papers and will have a chance to show off your accumulated knowledge and critical reading skills in a midterm and a final exam. All assignments should be double-spaced, with numbered pages and 1" margins. *You must submit all of the assignments and take both exams to pass this course.*

The point breakdown will be as follows:

Paper #1: <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	20%
Paper #2: Diversity in American Literature	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Quizzes	10%
Class Participation	10%

Paper #1: Following our class discussion of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and related criticism, you will have an opportunity to construct an argument about the novel, substantiating your argument with ample textual evidence taken from throughout the text. This paper should be 750–1000 words long.

Paper #2: In this assignment, you will have a chance to explore the importance of diversity in American literature, comparing two different genres of texts by two

different authors through a common identity marker, such as race or gender. This paper should be about 1000 words long.

Midterm and Final Exam: The midterm and the final exam both will be cumulative. In these exams, you will be asked to identify critical concepts and passages discussed in class and provide essay responses. We will review extensively for the midterm and final exam during class.

Quizzes: To continually assess your learning through reading and class discussion, I will be administering weekly quizzes. These quizzes cannot be made up.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student's oral and written, technical, and artistic work; observing the policies regarding the use of technical facilities.

Infractions of the Policy on Academic Honesty include, but are not limited to:

1. Plagiarism: claiming as one's own work the published or unpublished literal or paraphrased work of another. It should be recognized that plagiarism is not only academically dishonest but also illegal.
2. Cheating on exams, tests, quizzes, assignments, and papers, including the giving or acceptance of these materials and other sources of information without the permission of the instructor(S).
3. Unauthorized collaboration with other individuals in the preparation of course assignments.
4. Submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course.

I expect you to obey the rules and regulations established by Framingham State University concerning academic honesty. Visit http://www.framingham.edu/catalogs/0607/catalog_aregs.htm if you are not sure what the policy is or you want a refresher.

Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities are required to notify me within the first two weeks of the course, in private, if accommodation is needed. I will provide students with disabilities with all reasonable accommodations, but students are not exempted from fulfilling the normal requirements of the course. Work completed before notification of his/her disability may be counted toward the final grade.

Week One (5/28-6/1): Course Overview and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Volume C “Introduction” (C 3–16) and “Timeline” (C 17–19)

Mark Twain: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 1–16 (C 130–188)

Kennedy: “Reading a Story,” “Reading Short Stories and Novels,” “Point of View,” “Setting” (O)

Mark Twain: *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 17–Chapter the Last (C 188–309) Kennedy: “Character,” “Tone and Style,” “Theme,” “Symbol,” (O)

Week Two (6/4-6/8): Nineteenth-Century Changes in American Identity

Jane Addams: from *Twenty Years at Hull-House*: chapters V and XI (C 1156–1161) Theodore Roosevelt: from *American Ideals* (C 1138–1140)

Frederick Jackson Turner: from *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (C 1133–1137)

Zitkala Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin): from *Impressions of an Indian Childhood* and *The School Days of an Indian Girl* (C 1087–1100)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman: “The Yellow Wall-paper” (C 792–803), “Why I Wrote ‘The Yellow Wall-paper’?” (C 804)

Susan Glaspell: *Trifles* (D 253–262)

Paper #1 Due

Week Three (6/11-6/15): Modern Poetry

Introduction to Volume D, “American Literature, 1914–1945” (D 3–20), and Timeline (D 21–22) Emily Dickinson: [I felt a Funeral, in my Brain] (C 99), [After great pain, a formal feeling comes—

] (C 101), [I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—] (C 103–104), [My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—] (C 107)

Robert Frost: “Mending Wall” (D 232–233), “Out, out—” (D 244), “Design” (D 246), “The Figure a Poem Makes” (D 250–252)

Langston Hughes: from *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain* (D 348–350), “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (D 871), “The Weary Blues” (D 872–873), “Mother to Son” (D 871–872), “Madam and Her Madam” (D 877–878), “Madam’s Calling Cards” (878–879)

Kalaidjian: “Poetic Language,” “Symbolism,” “Myth,” Prosody,” “Poetic Forms” (O) Kennedy: “Figurative Language” (O)

Midterm Exam

Week Four (6/18-6/22): Modern American Fiction and Drama

F. Scott Fitzgerald: "Babylon Revisited" (D 675–689)
Ernest Hemingway: "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (D 826–842) William Faulkner: "A Rose for Emily" (D 794–800)
Arthur Miller: *Death of a Salesman* (E 238–303)

Week Five(6/25-6/29): Postmodern and Contemporary American Literature

Raymond Carver: "Cathedral" (E 737–747) Art Spiegelman: from *Maus* (E 1058–1074)
Yusef Komunyakaa: "Facing It" (E 1044), "Slam, Dunk, & Hook" (E 1045–1046) Li-Young Lee: "Persimmons" (E 1167–1169), "Eating Alone" (E 1169), "Eating Together" (E 1170)
Louise Erdrich: "Dear John Wayne" (E 1140–1141)
Sherman Alexie: "At Navajo Monument Valley Tribal School" (E 1208–1209), "Pawn Shop" (1209), "Marilyn Monroe" (1210–1211)

Paper #2 Due
Final Exam