

English 3311—American Literature to 1865

Dr. Brian Yothers

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(Email is my preferred form of communication outside class)

Office Hours: MW 2:00-4:00; F 2:00-3:00

Course Description

This course is a survey of American literature through 1865. Because of the tremendous diversity of early American literature, we will be dealing with a dizzying array of genres: fiction and poetry, of course, but also autobiographies, travel narratives, captivity narratives, letters, manifestoes, sermons, speeches, and essays. Be prepared for a vigorous and intellectually exciting journey through the literatures of early America, and be prepared to do a lot of reading, especially in genres that you may not have encountered often in your other English classes. I am looking forward to sharing this encounter with a rich and fascinating body of literature with you this semester. By the end of the term, you will be able to write and speak with clarity and authority about the following literary periods: the era of contact and exploration, Puritanism, the American Enlightenment, Romanticism, and the era of abolition and reform.

Required Texts

The Norton Anthology of American Literature. 8th ed. Volumes A and B.

Herman Melville—*Moby-Dick: A Norton Critical Edition* Ed. Hershel Parker

Because careful reading is one of the goals of this course, I strongly recommend that you have a good college dictionary at your side while reading in order to look up unfamiliar terms and references. I would particularly recommend that you make use of the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, which is available through the UTEP library web page.

For information on MLA format, grammar, punctuation, clarity, organization, and editing, I recommend the following site: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Course Requirements

Reading Responses: For each day of class, you will bring a typed, double-spaced response of at least 150 words to the readings for the upcoming session. The response is due at the start of the session. Late responses will not be accepted and cannot be made up. Hand-written responses and those sent over email will likewise not be accepted. Each response should have a clear, specific title that indicates the nature of what you have to say. Please post the word count at the bottom of your response. These responses will constitute **20%** of your grade.

Exams: There will be three exams, consisting of short answer, identification, and definition questions, each of which will account for **20%** of your grade.

Paper: There will be one paper for this class, 6-8 pages (1800-2400 words), exclusive of works cited, which you will be working on throughout the semester. This paper will constitute **20%** of your grade. A more detailed description of this assignment will be provided early in the semester.

Grades

A=90-100%

B=80-89%

C=70-79%

D=60-69%

F=0-59%

Course Policies

Originality of Work: The work you do for this course must be your own. No credit will be given for any un-cited material from an outside source. If you appear to have deliberately committed plagiarism, your case will be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Late Work: Late work will not be accepted for any reason. You are responsible for making all arrangements necessary to ensure that your work is always completed, printed, and turned in on time.

Attendance and Participation: Prompt and full daily attendance and engaged participation are required for this class. If you are absent or late (even by a minute) or if you leave early on a particular day, you have not met the requirement for that day. Because there are a variety of reasons why you may be prevented from arriving on time on a particular day, I give some latitude: I allow up to six absences or instances of tardiness. Upon a seventh instance of either lateness or absence, you will lose five points off your final grade for each instance of absence or tardiness. The only further latitude is for absences for official university business or documented health crisis.

Email Etiquette

Email is a useful tool if you have questions for me, and emailing me is generally the easiest and most efficient way to make contact outside class. Given that this is a university setting, you should recognize that your emails are documents that represent you professionally, and therefore should rise to certain standards of professional decorum. There are some basic guidelines that you should follow, both in my class and in your other classes.

1. All emails should have a clear subject heading.
2. All emails should have a clear, courteous salutation. "Dear Dr. Yothers:" or "Dear Professor Yothers:" would be appropriate in the case of this class.
3. All emails written for professional purposes should adhere to standard grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.
4. All emails should be signed with your name (otherwise, your reader may not know who you are!)
5. Emails should be sent from your UTEP account. If you do use another account, be sure that the name on the account is appropriate for professional interactions.
6. If there are any attachments, you should explain your reason for sending them and indicate the program in which they were written.
7. You should consider your rhetorical context when emailing. What is the purpose of your email, and how can you most effectively accomplish that purpose? Three particularly important matters to keep in mind are brevity, clarity, and courtesy. If your email is not clear, specific, and to the point, you may not elicit the response you desire. If your email is discourteous, you diminish the professionalism of the persona you present to others. To cite just one example, some professors find emails that include calls for action "ASAP" to be discourteous or even presumptuous.

Emails that do not meet the standards of professionalism, clarity, and courtesy outlined above may well be disregarded.

December 1	M	<i>Moby-Dick</i>
December 3	W	Exam 3
December 5	F	Dead Day
December 10 1:00-3:45	W	Final Paper Due