

## **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 2:00-3:00 p.m.

### **Course Description and Objectives**

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 and movements: 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*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Volumes A and B.

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 complete 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. The response should discuss some aspect of one of the works assigned for the day about which you'd like to raise a question or work out an hypothesis. Late responses will not be accepted and cannot be made up. All responses will be submitted over Blackboard, but you should be sure to have your response available either on a device or a printout to refer to during the class session. 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 and essay questions, each of which will account for **20%** of your grade. Exams will be submitted via Blackboard

**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 and will be submitted via Blackboard. 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. You are responsible for making all arrangements necessary to ensure that your work is completed and turned in on time.

**Attendance and Participation:** If you are ill or have symptoms of COVID-19, it is important that you stay home, and nothing in the below should cause you to attend class when you are at risk for spreading a virus. Aside from documented health crises and absences for official university business, the following applies. 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.

### **COVID-19 Precaution Statement**

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu), so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org).

### **Accommodations Policy**

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, or email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the [CASS portal](#).

### **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.

### Schedule

If specific readings from a particular author are not listed, this means that you will be reading all the selections in the anthology from that author unless informed otherwise in class.

Date  
**Date**

Readings/Assignments  
**Reading Assignments**

August 23	M	Intro to Class
August 25	W	Iroquois Creation Story (31-5), Navajo Creation Story (36-43), Christopher Columbus, Letters (58-66), Las Casas, The Destruction of the Indies (66-71)
August 30	M	Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, Relation (71-79), Hernan Cortes, Second Letter (82-87), Thomas Harriot, A Brief and True Report (87-93), Samuel de Champlain, The Voyages (93-98), John Heckewelder, History Manners, and Customs (103-106)
September 1	W	John Smith, all (110-128), Powhatan's Discourse (52-3), William Bradford, Of Plymouth Plantation (132-67), Thomas Morton, New English Canaan (167-76)
September 6	M	<b>Labor Day—no class</b>
September 8	W	John Winthrop, A Model of Christian Charity and Journal (176-98), Ann Bradstreet, The Prologue (219-220) Before the Birth of One of Her Children (236-7), Edward Taylor, Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children (306-7), Huswifery (308), Michael Wigglesworth, from <i>Day of Doom</i> , 249-266
September 13	M	Mary Rowlandson, A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration (267-301), Jesuit Relations (405-415), John Marrant, A Narrative (428-33), John Woolman, Journal (423-28), King Philip's Speech (54)

September 15	W	Cotton Mather, <i>Wonders of the Invisible World</i> (321-327), Jonathan Edwards, <i>Personal Narrative</i> (358-69), <i>Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God</i> (390-402)
September 20	M	Samson Occom, <i>A Short Narrative</i> , 585-595, Hymns 606-608, Crèvecoeur, <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> (634-56), Philip Freneau, <i>The Indian Burying Ground and To Sir Toby</i> (782-5), Phillis Wheatley, all (787-99)
September 22	W	Benjamin Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i> , Part 1 (467-514), Olaudah Equiano, <i>Narrative</i> (731-69)
September 27	M	Thomas Jefferson, all (702-21), John and Abigail Adams (664-680)
September 29	W	<b>Exam 1</b>
October 4	M	Thomas Paine, all (681-702), Judith Sargent Murray, <i>On the Equality of the Sexes</i> (770-9)
October 6	W	Royall Tyler, <i>The Contrast</i> (799-841)
October 11	M	Washington Irving (25-61)
October 13	W	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (571-582), Lydia Huntley Sigourney (106-115), John Greenleaf Whittier, "The Hunters of Men," and "Ichabod" (583-7)
October 18	M	Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (210-222), "Each and All," (300-1) "The Snow-Storm," (301) "Brahma" (306-7)
October 20	W	Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (953-69), <i>Walden</i> ch. 1 "Economy" (970-1012)
October 25	M	Margaret Fuller "The Great Lawsuit" (725-59), Fanny Fern, all except <i>Ruth Hall</i> (892-904)
October 27	W	Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life</i> (1163-1228), "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" (1236-9), William Apess "The Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (135-39)
November 1	M	Harriet Jacobs (909-30)
November 3	W	<b>Exam 2</b>
November 8	M	Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" (612-4) "Annabel Lee" (618-9), "The Philosophy of Composition" (701-9) "Ligeia" (619-28), "The Black Cat" (670-6)
November 10	W	Nathaniel Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" (332-45), "Young Goodman Brown" (345-54), "Rappaccini's Daughter" (405-25)
November 15	M	Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener"
November 17	W	Herman Melville, "Benito Cereno"
November 22	M	Louisa May Alcott, "My Contraband" <b>Paper Due</b>
November 24	W	Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" (1312-56)
November 29	M	Walt Whitman, "Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand" (1362-3), "The Wound-Dresser" (1379-81), "When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloom'd" (1382-8)
December 1	W	Emily Dickinson, all (1658-1696)
December 10	F	<b>Exam 3—Due at 5:00 p.m.</b>