

Syllabus for English 2130 Section 2 America Literature I, Fall 2009

Instructor: Professor Batson
Office: J 346
Class Meeting Days: M,W
Class Location: J132

Email: rexbatson@bellsouth.net
Office Hours: M,W 11:30-12:30;3:15-4:30
Class Time: 2-3:15

Course Description

This course will introduce you to four hundred years of American literature. Through the genres of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction prose, you will sample texts that will challenge you in a way that can offer insight into other people, other times, contemporary society, and yourself.

To a large extent, the value of this course lies in your openness to ideas and literature outside your experience. In addition, your understanding and enjoyment will be affected by your preparation, commitment to reading closely, taking notes, and participating in class discussion.

In order to take this course, you must have earned a "C" or better in English 1101/1102 or their equivalent.

Course Goals

- Understand and discuss issues and ideas pertinent to American literature.
- Understand that importance of social and cultural influences upon affects literary style, content, and purpose.
- Develop a variety of strategies for understanding and experiencing literature.
- Use printed and electronic sources to augment your understanding of literature.

It is my sincere hope that after you finish this course, you will feel compelled to continue reading. People read and write for many reasons. But for most, reading enriches their lives. I hope that it will present the same possibilities for you. This is no cliché.

Texts and Other Needs

Required

- Lauter, Paula. *Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Volumes A and B
- Roberts, Edgar, V. *Writing About Literature*. 10th edition. Recommended, not required. Available used online.
- SPSU email account.

Contact Information

The best way to contact me is during office hours, email, or my mailbox in the Department of English, Technical Communication, and

**Methods of
Evaluation**

Media Arts, J333.

I will do my best to respond to email within 48 hours. However, I tend to avoid all email on the weekend.

Never leave notes or papers in my office. I share it with other faculty, and it may be misplaced. Also, do not attempt to relay information to me through the Program Assistant, student workers, or other faculty.

I will evaluate your understanding of the curriculum in the following ways.

Quizzes. 10% These will be unannounced. Their purposes are both to evaluate your understanding of the texts and as a tool to prime the pump for class discussion.

The formats are of two general types. The first type can be answered in short sentences and is largely concerned with surface-level reading. The second type is more involved and will require you to respond to more open-ended questions that will require you to argue specific positions and provide evidence to support your position. **Quizzes cannot be made up.**

Collaborative Journal. 10% Once a week, you will discuss current readings with other students using WEB CT/Vista in a threaded discussion format. These smaller discussion groups encourages discussion among students who might otherwise not feel comfortable in the class. It is also a relatively safer environment for trying out ideas that need to be refined. It also engages you outside of class and requires that you read thoughtfully and critically.

You will be divided into groups of 5. You will write to each other anonymously. You should be attempting to write approximately 250 words. The writing is informal, but you must do the following.

- Respond to one of the texts we are currently reading.
- Respond to another member of your group's comments.
- Discuss one of the texts in the context of contemporary life (yours or others).

I will respond to journal entries both individually and collectively. Sometimes, I will guide discussion through writing prompts and my observations on writing. Grades are credit or no credit. Do not write your comments at the last moment. Use this as a tool for understanding.

American Literature Notebook. 10% You will keep a structured notebook in which you will consider general issues in literary studies. These assignments should help you prepare for papers and examinations. I will provide you with a template for the various genres you will read this semester. You must bring them to each class I will collect them at various times in the semester. These cannot be made up. Grades are assigned credit or no credit.

Midterm and Final Examination. 35% The format for these tests will include identification and explication of quotes, characters, ideas, genres, literary movements, literary figures, and other influences upon the texts. You will also write one to two essays.

These two exams will be averaged.

Short Papers. 35%. You will write two short papers (750-1000 words) in which you will demonstrate your understanding of the texts we have read. These two papers will be averaged.

**Attendance
Policy**

Attendance is mandatory in order to ensure your success in this class. You may miss up to one week of classes without penalty. All other absences will result in a decreased letter grade for each subsequent absence. Furthermore, absences do not excuse you from paper deadlines, lecture content, changes in policy, etc.

Consequently, stay in touch with other class members. Asking me what you missed is problematic. Other than the syllabus, which states the current text, repeating lecture and discussion is impossible.

Tardiness is also not acceptable. If you had trouble arriving today on time, you will probably have trouble the rest of the semester. At my discretion tardiness will be treated as an absence. If you are late, you should remain after class because I have probably marked you absent.

Quizzes are distributed immediately when class begins. These cannot be made up. You may not use notebooks nor the text unless instructed otherwise.

This policy does not apply to acceptable absences outlined by the university in *The Undergraduate Catalogue*.

Deadlines	Late work will be accepted, but one letter grade will be deducted for each day. Papers and other submitted work are due at the beginning of class.
Classroom Etiquette	The Golden Rule. Be reasonable with food and beverage. Turn off cell phones. Be courteous in conversation. Listen with the same attention as you would like others to do when you speak.
Grading Rubric	<p>A Exemplary writing that provides the appropriate type and amount of information. The writing piece uses the appropriate tone and forms of argument for its audience and purpose. Document is clear, focused, uses arguments that are well developed, and provides evidence that is relevant to the paper's purpose. This document contains only minor flaws. It is superior to most others</p> <p>B Provides the right information and rhetorical approach. It has a clear purpose. This document may contain a few flaws.</p> <p>C This document is marginally rated. The writing doesn't fulfill one or two of the following elements: audience, purpose, relevant information, organization, clarity, support, explanation, and development. This document contains numerous lower-level errors.</p> <p>D This document would require major revisions to meet minimum academic standards. It lacks adequate considerations of audience and purpose. It may be unfocused, uneven or inadequate development, and lack adequate support and organization. Contains many major and minor flaws.</p> <p>F This paper lacks adequate knowledge of audience purpose, development, etc. A paper of this quality will require remediation.</p>

Class Schedule

This schedule is tentative, and it may be altered. Contact me before reading more than two class periods ahead.

Jan. 9 Introduction, Diagnostic Writing, Syllabus and general discussion of reading and writing. Periodization and isms.	Jan. 11 Introduction cont. "Exploration and the Colonies." (1-9). John Winthrop intro and "A Model of Christian Charity." (35-42)
Jan. 16 John Winthrop cont. Anne Bradstreet poems (43-54)	Jan. 18 "Puritanism" (5-57) Samuel Sewall <i>Diary</i> (58-68)
Jan. 23 Benjamin Franklin (154-193) From <i>Autobiography</i> and <i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i> .	Jan. 25 Catch Up Day "The Romantic Temper. (251-258)
Jan. 30 Trancedentalism (329-30) From Thoreau's <i>Walden</i> 424-505)	Feb. 1 Thoreau cont.
Feb. 6 Romanticism 505-507 Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener."	Feb. 8 Melville cont.
Feb. 13 "Age of Expansion" (857-864) Walt Whitman's <i>Leaves of Grass</i> . Poems TBA	Feb. 15 Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" cont.
Feb. 20 Midterm Exam First Paper Due	Feb. 22 Emily Dickinson – Poems TBA
Feb. 27 Emily Dickinson Poems TBA.	Mar. 1 "The Turn of the Century" (1145-1150). Charlotte Gilman's "The Yellow Paper." 1277-1288
Mar. 3 Spring Break	Mar. 8 Spring Break
Mar. 17 Theodore Dreiser's "The Second Choice." (1323-1336)	Mar. 15 Willa Cather's "Neighbour Rosicky" (1365-1385)
Mar. 20 Literary Renaissance (1349-1355) T.S. Eliot's "Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock. (1454-1457).	Mar. 22 William Carlos Williams. Poems TBA (1507).
Mar. 27 Marianne Moore (1520-1526)	Mar. 29 E.E. Cummings (1592). Poems TBA
Apr. 3 Allen Ginsberg's "Howl" and "America."	Apr. 5 Catch Up
Apr. 10 Flannery O'Connor's "Good Country People."	Apr. 12 Raymond Carver's "A Small Good Thing." (2038-2054)
Apr. 17 Joyce Carol Oates's "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been." (2054-2065)	Apr. 19 Tennessee Williams—j"The Glass Menagerie."
Apr. 24 Tennessee Williams—j"The Glass Menagerie."	Apr. 26 Final Paper Due Closing Comments.
Final Exam?	