

**ENGL 2250**  
**Survey of American**  
**Literature to 1865**

**Fall Semester 2016**

12:00 pm - 12:50 pm MW Haley 1203

**Dr. Hilary E. Wyss**

Office: 8088 Haley Center

Office Hours: MW 1-2:00 or by apt.

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**GTA SECTIONS:**

The class is divided into eight twelve-person sections, which will meet Friday at 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, or 1:00 pm. Check your schedule to see which section you are in and what room to go to on Friday.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*American Literature*, volume one, Cain, McDermott, Newman and Wyss, eds.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

In this course we will look at the evolving nature of American identity from the colonial period up to the Civil War, focusing on some of the most important texts of American literature of this period. You can expect to read broadly and write analytic essays through which you will develop your own interpretations of the literature we will read.

By the end of this course you will be familiar with some of the major works of American literature as well as the range of authorship defining America up to the Civil War. You will have developed your close analytical reading skills and refined your own interpretations of the works we will look at together. You will also have developed your writing skills as appropriate for an introductory literature class.

**E-MAIL POLICY:**

I check my e-mail regularly during the week, and it is generally the best way to get in touch with me outside of class or office hours. Please allow about 24 hours for me to respond during the week—if you haven't heard from me by then resend your message. I do not typically check e-mail over the weekend.

**WITHDRAWAL:**

Please note that you may withdraw from the course without any grade assignment until

September 6 and you may withdraw with no grade penalty until November 4 (“W” assigned).

### **EARLY ALERT GRADE INFORMATION:**

You will receive an Early Alert Grade one week prior to mid semester (31st class day, which is September 28). The Early Alert Grade represents your current performance on class work graded at that point in the semester. Check the grading scale for this course so that you are aware of what percentage of the total points is represented by your Early Alert Grade. If your Early Alert Grade is a "D", "F", or "FA" you will receive an email from the Retention Coordinator.

Early Alert Grades can be viewed by logging into AU Access and opening the *tiger i* tab. Select "Student Records" and open the "Midterm Grades" window from the drop down box. If the grade seems inaccurate, please contact the instructor.

### **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Attendance is vital in this class. **Attendance will be taken every class day through in-class writing or sign-in sheets. It is your responsibility to make sure you are getting credit for every class you attend, so if you have any questions make sure to confirm with your GTA. You may have one unexcused absence with no penalty. Two or more unexcused absences will affect your participation grade and more than five absences may make you subject to the grade of FA.** For an absence to be excused, you must provide university-sanctioned documentation either ahead of time or on the first day you return to class.

Examples of university-sanctioned documentation include: a doctor’s note in the event of illness, a death notice in the event of the death of an immediate family member, or University documentation for school or athletic trips.

**If your absence is excused**, please bring appropriate documentation to your GTA when you return to class. If any work (such as essays or exams) is due during the missed class, you must contact your GTA **within 24 hours of the due date** to let us know that you will not be able to turn in work; failure to do so will result in a 0 for that assignment unless I or your GTA approve an extension under extraordinary circumstances.

Finally, remember to arrive on time for class – late arrivals not only distract your classmates, but they may cause you to miss quizzes or important information that is discussed at the beginning of class

If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation (such as an H1N1 flu outbreak), the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

It is crucial that you come to every class prepared and ready to participate. Be ready and able to ask questions or share comments on the materials being discussed. If you have

not completed the assignment or do not have your books, your presence in the classroom may become a distraction to others. Please do not allow this to happen. **Bring your books to class every day and be sure you have completed the reading assignment before class. Your participation, especially in the Friday discussion sessions, will be evaluated for a grade, worth 10% of your semester average.**

**Please refrain from working on assignments for another class, using your phone or other electronic devices, or using your laptop for activities unrelated to class.**

The AU Classroom Behavior Policy is strictly followed in the course; please refer to the Student Policy eHandbook at [http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/student\\_policies/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/) for details of this policy.

### **WRITING:**

This class is based on the idea that reading and writing about literature are mutually reinforcing activities. That is, as you read you will begin to formulate your own interpretations of the various literary works we will examine, and through writing you can develop those ideas further. In this class you will write frequently and in a variety of formats, from ungraded in-class work to several short analytic essays.

For each essay assignment we expect you to implement the writing strategies you developed in your composition classes including drafting and revision, and the class is organized to give you opportunities to revise your work in a structured way. Each of your papers will be due on Monday through our Canvas class site; on the Friday before the paper is due you will have a draft workshop in your discussion section so that you have the opportunity to fully develop your ideas. It is essential that you bring a COMPLETE draft of your paper to class on Friday; if you do not come with a draft your grade for the paper will drop by a full letter grade. Please see me or your GTA if you have any questions or concerns about the writing expectation for this class.

Should you want additional help with your writing the Miller Writing Center offers face-to-face as well as online tutoring services to students. I encourage you to take advantage of this university-wide service at any stage of composing an essay. It is not an editing or proofreading service; tutors will not “fix” your writing. They will, however, help you understand why you make certain errors and allow you to learn how to correct them. Most importantly, the tutors will help you see ways to shape and improve the content of your writing. Make an appointment online at <https://fp.auburn.edu/writing/writingCenter.aspx> or call 334-844-7475.

### **GRADING:**

- You will have **two exams** in this class: a midterm and a final.
- You will complete **3 short papers** relating to our reading. To get full credit for

each essay you must bring a complete draft to the draft workshop the Friday before the paper is due.

- You should expect to write regularly in class on the assigned readings, and you should come prepared to discuss these readings in every class.
- **You must complete and hand in all assignments to pass the course.** If there is a reason you cannot turn in an assignment on the due date **you must contact your GTA within 24 hours** of the assignment's due date to make alternate arrangements. Failure to do so may result in a "0" for the assignment.
- All portions of the Auburn University Student Academic Honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook at [http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/student\\_policies/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/) will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

#### Grade Breakdown:

- Class participation (includes all ungraded writing assignments and attendance.....10%
- paper #1.....10%
- paper #2.....15%
- paper #3.....15%
- Midterm.....20%
- Final Exam.....30%

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS:**

Please feel free to stop by my office or to talk with your GTA about any learning disabilities, physical disabilities, or special circumstances of which you feel we should be aware. Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to make an individual appointment with the instructor during the first week of classes – or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT). If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail.

#### **SYLLABUS:**

(All readings are from the American Literature Anthology; come to class prepared to discuss the reading listed for that day)

## AUGUST

### Week 1 (8/16)

- W Class introductions, origin stories
- F Small group activities

### Week 2 (8/22)

- M Introduction, pp. 1-9; Christopher Columbus, *Letter of Columbus to Luis de Santangel* and *Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage*, pp. 26-34
- W Spanish narratives, pp. 35-55
- F Small group activities

### Week 3 (8/29)

- M John Smith, from *The Generall Historie of Virginia...*, pp. 56-68
- W Pocahontas materials, pp. 69-76
- F Small group activities

## SEPTEMBER

### Week 4 (9/5)

- M Labor Day (no class)
- W William Bradford, from *Of Plimouth Plantation*, pp. 77-91
- F Draft workshop

### Week 5 (9/12)

- M John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity" and journal entries, pp. 102-124  
**\*paper #1 due on Canvas**
- W Anne Bradstreet, selected writing, pp. 134-150
- F Small group activities

### Week 6 (9/19)

- M Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, pp. 179-201
- W Rowlandson (cont.) and ransom letters, pp. 201-224
- F MIDTERM EXAM

### Week 7 (9/26)

- M Witchcraft trials, pp. 225-34; Samuel Sewell's Diary, 164-66
- W "Enlightenment and Revolution," pp. 235-39; Vernacular writing, 153-178
- F Small group activities

## OCTOBER

### Week 8 (10/3)

- M Samson Occom, pp. 376-91
- W Phillis Wheatley selected poems and "Letter to Samson Occom," pp. 449-461
- F Draft workshop

Week 9 (10/10)

- M Declarations of Independence, pp. 418-433 **\*paper #2 due on Canvas;**
- W Declarations of Independence, pp. 433-442
- F FALL BREAK (no class)

Week 10 (10/17)

- M Indian Removal and Resistance, introduction, 541-44; Cherokee Tribal Council, Andrew Jackson, and William Apess, 553-68
- W Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" pp. 590-92; 626-41
- F Small group activities

Week 11 (10/24)

- M Frederick Douglass, *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 945-986
- W Frederick Douglass, *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 987-1023
- F Small group activities

Week 12 (10/31)

- M Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, pp. 844-876
- W Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher," selected poetry, pp. 736-757
- F Small group activities

## NOVEMBER

Week 13 (11/7)

- M Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Birthmark" pp. 667-680, 690-703
- W Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener," pp. 1062-1093
- F Draft workshop

Week 14 (11/14)

- M Emily Dickinson, selected poems and letters, pp. 1186-1203 **\*paper #3 due on Canvas**
- W Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," pp. 1097-1150
- F Small group activities

## THANKSGIVING BREAK, NOVEMBER 21-25

Week 15 (11/28)

- M Whitman and the Civil War, pp. 1156-1168
- W Review
- F Classes end

**FINAL EXAM Thursday, December 8, 12 noon-2:30 PM**