American Literature
ENGL 2110.504

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TR 8:00-9:30 a.m., TR 1:30-3:00 p.m.,
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Course Purpose. ENGL 2110, the sophomore-level survey of American literature from the beginning through the Civil War, serves two purposes; it acquaints students with works by some of the more influential writers and early ideas of a developing American literary tradition, and it helps students develop reading and critical skills that will be useful in most phases of their education, their careers, and their public and private lives.

Instructor Availability. For this class, I will be carefully monitoring both my email and the discussion boards. Students do not need to attend an on-campus class session, but they are welcome to visit or call me during my office hours. I do not expect to see many of you face to face, but should such a need arise, I am usually in my office during the times listed above, sometimes stepping out for infrequent, brief errands. If you have class during posted office hours, I will gladly set up a mutually convenient appointment to meet with you. At least half of my student meetings for conventional classes take place at times other than my office hours, so do not feel reluctant to set up an appointment. You may leave a voice mail message for me at (423) 439-6678, but I generally prefer that we correspond through email.

Technology Requirements. Students must have access to the Internet; a Pentium-based PC, CD ROM, Netscape 4 or Internet Explorer 4 (or above); and the means to submit documents readable by Microsoft Word 2000 via the Blackboard digital dropbox or by attaching documents to an email file. I have received reports that students who attempt to access this course through AOL may face problems that a more direct link to the Internet will avoid. Finally, it is absolutely imperative that students keep their personal information files up to date, particularly when it comes to current e-mail addresses.

Texts. For this class you will need The Norton Anthology of American Literature, sixth edition, volumes A & B (also known as "Package 1"; ISBN 0-393-97793-5). Volume A covers American literature from the beginning to 1820, Volume B from 1820 to 1865. Be certain to get a serviceable desk dictionary to help you with your studies. Although I do not require the purchase of a handbook, I recommend that students access either the Hodges Harbrace Handbook (Thomson Heinle Pub; ISBN: 083840345-X) or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, sixth edition (Modern Language Association of America; ISBN: 0-87352-986-3) to guide them in their preparing essays for submission. Essays should follow the MLA format featured in both of these works.
Academic Requirements, Grading, and the Final Exam. ENGL 2110 students will write three essays, contribute to weekly discussion boards, and take weekly objective tests. Grade percentages are as follows:

15% Participation in Weekly Discussion Boards
40% Average of Objective Tests
10% Essay One
15% Essay Two
20% Essay Three (also known as "the final")

Each set of weekly readings will have its own discussion area where students will post questions and share comments and advice with each other. I will monitor those discussion sessions and participate fully. Each student is required to contribute a minimum of two relative and thoughtful comments and/or questions to each week's discussion board. In order for these comments to receive full credit, they must be submitted to the discussion board during the week the readings commented upon are assigned. For example, a comment on the Mary Rowlandson reading (Week Three) made during the week when the assignment is Thomas Jefferson (Week Five) will not receive full credit. My evaluation of these comments/questions will make up 15% of your semester grade. (Note: Students with personal issues should email me directly instead of putting information or posting questions in the discussion board.)

Each set of weekly readings will feature an open-book examination to be taken within an hour time limit. Students who exceed the time limit will suffer a penalty of twenty-five percent for that objective examination. Students may take the objective test for each section up to two times; the grade for the second attempt, however, will stand as the permanent grade for that section’s objective examination. (Students must contact me via email and request permission to make the second attempt on an objective examination.)

Students will also submit three essays during the course. Should students complete the reading assignments and assessments well before due dates, they may email me and request essay topics. Otherwise, I will post the assignments and e-mail them via distribution lists to all students. Students may submit the completed essay through the Blackboard digital dropbox or attached to an e-mail message to me. Submitted essay files must be accessible by Microsoft Word 2000. If I cannot open your file, then you have not completed the assignment. Students will receive an e-mail message from me to confirm my having received--and successfully opened--their essay submissions.

Late essays? Submitting essays late disrupts your schedule and mine. Avoid procrastination. Students are not under any circumstances to submit any of their original writing that has been submitted in another class, posted on the Internet, or published in any form. Students will receive a grade of “zero” for such submissions.

Plagiarism?!? Plagiarism takes a number of forms: excessive collaboration, where students allow others to revise written work until the submitted material does not represent the credited author’s original plans, ideas, or writing abilities; insufficient
documentation, where students do not acknowledge work by others that they have integrated into their writing assignments; and inadequate paraphrase (sometimes called “patchwork plagiarism” or “plagiaphrase”), where students substantially copy someone else’s work but change some of the words around or replace some phrases with words of their own. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be an F for the course; weightier penalties such as those outlined in the “Academic and Classroom Misconduct” section of the ETSU student handbook may be pursued as well, including expulsion from ETSU for repeat offenders. Our Blackboard site contains a document addressing how to avoid plagiarism, and I consider your submitting an essay a tacit declaration that you have read, understood, and agreed to comply with this course’s plagiarism policy.

For the semester grade, I follow this standard scale:

A = 92.6-100%; A- = 90-92.5%; B+ = 87.5-89%; B = 82.6-87.4%; B- = 80-82.5%; C+ = 77.5-79%; C = 72.6-77.4%; C- = 70-72.5%; D+ = 67.5-69%; D = 60-67.4%; and all others = F. I will grade individual essays from A to F, with varying degrees of - and +.

There will be no "incomplete" grades for this course, and I will assign no "extra credit" work.

A Note to Potential Graduates: If you plan to graduate at the end of this session and you must pass this course in order to do so, please remember that you are every bit as responsible for fulfilling class requirements as any other student in the class. Being scheduled to graduate does not assure your passing this course. Please do not put yourself in the hopeless position of asking for or expecting special consideration merely because you have scheduled your graduation at session’s end.

On a related topic, should you be receiving a Tennessee lottery scholarship, know what the GPA requirements are for maintaining eligibility, and work to earn that grade or better in the class. You will not receive special consideration because you find yourself in danger of losing your scholarship.

**Deadlines.** Students are encouraged to work at their own rates, but they must meet these specific deadlines:

by Friday, September 17, students must have completed the work for weeks one and two, taken the objective tests for those sections, and requested the assignment options for essay #1;

by Friday, September 24, students must submit essay #1;

by Friday, October 22, students must have completed the work for weeks three through seven, taken the objective tests for those sections, and requested the assignment options for essay #2;

by Friday, October 29, students must submit essay #2;
by Friday, December 10, students must have completed the work for weeks eight through fifteen, taken the objective tests for those sections, and requested the assignment options for essay #3;

by noon Thursday, December 16, students must submit essay #3 (also known as "the final")

REMEMBER: All essays must be submitted in a form readable by Microsoft Word 2000.

Offensive Content and Language. I expect students to understand that some of our readings dealing with religious, racial, and sexual themes may offend them. I advise students that this course contains various interpretations of sacred texts; in order to be fair to all, our role as scholars requires that we examine each with the same evaluative vigor. I expect students to distinguish ideas promoted by characters from ideas promoted by authors, instruction provided by me, and discussion posted in our class discussion boards. I expect participation in the discussion boards to demonstrate civility, maturity, and courtesy. Your reliance on inflammatory speech, profanity, disrespect, and/or ill-considered postings will create a lingering impression among your classmates you may never overcome. If you have any problems or questions in this area, please contact me so we can avoid misunderstanding.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do to perform your best in this class—outside of working hard—is to stay in touch with me. I can't help you if I don't know what problems you're having with meeting course requirements. Remember, I'm available to you through e-mail, telephone, and personal conference.

Schedule of Readings

**Week One (August 30-September 3):** Christopher Columbus 34-37; Bartolomé de las Casas 38-42; Samuel de Champlain 86-103; John Smith 103-120


**Labor Day Holiday: September 6**

Week Four (September 20-24): Sarah Kemble Knight 436-46; William Byrd 447-53; Benjamin Franklin 538-99

Week Five (September 27-October 1): J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur 657-67; Annis Boudinot Stockton 699-704; Thomas Paine 704-712; Thomas Jefferson 728-38; Judith Sargent Murray 782-91; Phillis Wheatley 808-25

Week Six (October 4-8): Sarah Wentworth Morton 867-73; Charles Brockden Brown "Somnambulism" (find this in Course Documents or on my web page); Washington Irving 978-92

Week Seven (October 11-15): Iroquois Creation Story 19-23; Winnebago materials: 122-31; Benjamin Franklin 534-37; Samson Occom 645-52; Philip Freneau "The Indian Burying Ground" 801-02; Cherokee Memorials 1029-39; William Apess 1078-84

Week Eight (October 18-22): Catherine Maria Sedgwick 1039-50; William Cullen Bryant 1071-78; Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1476-86

Fall Break: October 18-19

Week Nine (October 25-29): Ralph Waldo Emerson 1103-14, 1160-76; Henry David Thoreau 1788-1807

Week Ten (November 1-5): Nathaniel Hawthorne 1247-50, 1263-1300

Election Day: November 2—Get out and vote!

Week Eleven (November 8-12): Edgar Allan Poe 1507-34, 1575-88, 1592-97

Week Twelve (November 15-19): Harriet Jacobs 1757-79; Frederick Douglass 2029-97

Week Thirteen (November 22-26): Herman Melville 2371-2431

Thanksgiving Day: November 25


Week Fifteen (December 6-10): Rebecca Harding Davis 2545-73