



**ENG 442.001—A Survey of American Literature II
“The Expansion of American Literature”**

**Spring 2014
MWF—1:00 pm-1:50 pm
Room: HL 304**

Instructor: (Christopher Gonzalez, PhD – Assistant Professor)
Office Location: Hall of Languages (HL) 225
Office Hours: MWF 2:00 pm-3:30 pm and by appointment
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NOTE: I reserve the right to revise the contents of this syllabus as I deem necessary.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Shorter Eighth Edition, Vol. 2, Nina Baym,
General Editor. ISBN-13: 978-0393918878

The Dog Stars, by Peter Heller. ISBN-13: 978-0307950475

Native Son, by Richard Wright. ISBN-13: 978-0060929800

(ENG 442 catalogue description): The development of American literature from the Civil War to the present. Prerequisite Eng 1302.

Course Description

ENG 442, the second of two courses surveying American literature, is designed to take students through an overview of literary production in the United States from roughly around 1865 to the present. We will examine a range of literary texts, diverse in both content and form, in order that we might better conceive of the formation and evolution of an American literature (or whether such a monolithic understanding of the nation’s literature is even possible or productive). Thus, while we will study the various reading selections with an aim to recognize the development of American literature, we will always keep an eye on questioning our conception of what American literature has been, is now, and will be in the future.

The selected readings are representatives of the idea of an American canon of literature, though they do not represent American literature in any definitive way. That is to say, in order to survey nearly 150 years of literary production in such a diverse nation as the United States, choices were made that undoubtedly left out important texts from our reading selections. **Our reading selections are by no means definitive in terms of conceiving of American literature.** At best, our readings form a kind of incomplete jigsaw puzzle. Necessarily, there will be gaps. But we will use the selections as well as the gaps in order to better understand American literature. In order to do this sort of evaluation effectively, we must attend to the formal elements, thematic contents, historical meaningfulness, philosophical contributions, and cultural identities. Students should plan to engage regularly and productively in discussions; demonstrate knowledge and mastery of materials via class participation, three short papers; an annotated bibliography, and two exams (midterm and final).

Course Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with the development and major trends of American literature from the immediate post-Civil War era to the present.
- Students will demonstrate the skill of critical analysis of literature.
- Students will demonstrate the skill of bibliographic research.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate their mastery of the development and major trends of American literature from the immediate post-Civil War era to the present as measured by two exams.
- Students will demonstrate the skill of bibliographic research as measured by the creation of an annotated bibliography.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes and objectives of this course and instructional units/modules. By the end of this course the class will read and discuss two novels, one novella, one play, and multiple short stories and poems. It is your responsibility to read closely and carefully the selections, and to prepare to engage with the material in the form of class discussion for every class meeting.

During the semester you will complete several major assignments designed to complement each other intellectually and conceptually. These assignments are:

Participation 10%

You are expected to participate in class on a regular basis. This portion of your grade is holistic, meaning that you must appear to be an engaged member of class throughout the semester. You can demonstrate engagement to the professor by asking relevant questions and productively commenting on any given day's topics/readings. Absences, distracting behavior, and other forms of disengagement will lead to a reduction in this aspect of your course grade.

Two Critical Response Essays 30%

You will draft and compose two short essays (4-5 pages) in which you will produce a critical response to *one* short reading selection. For example, you may respond to one short story, one chapter from a novel,

one act from a play, or a poem. The goal here is **analysis** rather than summary. Moreover, you will not use any outside sources for the assignment, with the possible exception of a dictionary. Completion of the assignment involves the selected text, a dictionary, and you. The objective is to hone your skills of literary analysis and interpretation.

Annotated Bibliography

20%

Unlike the Critical Response Papers where you directly engage with the selected texts (primary sources), the Annotated Bibliography challenges you to research and discover what *others* have said about a given text. The goal here is to locate and annotate ten peer-reviewed, critical essays on a selected text. The primary activity of this assignment, beyond locating the ten sources, is to read and evaluate each source, producing an “annotation” of each source. Since this assignment can take some time to complete, you are encouraged to begin sooner rather than later.

Midterm Exam

20%

The midterm exam will contain definition questions, identification of key terms and concepts, and short response questions designed to test your ability to bring together theoretical concepts and class readings. The exam consists of multiple-choice questions and is worth 100 points.

Final Exam

20%

The final exam will **not** be comprehensive and will consist of the material covered since the midterm exam. It will follow the same format as the Midterm Exam

Grading

Students’ assignment and course grades will be determined by the following:

Participation	10%
Critical Response Papers x 2	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total:	100%

Scale used to compute final letter grades:

Percentage

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59-0

Technology

This course meets face to face (f2f). However, certain aspects of the course (e.g., grades, dropbox, doc sharing) are accessed via eCollege, the Learning Management System used by TAMUC. The majority of your assignments will be submitted through eCollege, so it is essential to your success that you be able to access eCollege in a relatively convenient manner. Because the university provides students access to computers and other technologies, please make use of these items if you do not have a computer of your own. If you have technical questions, please contact Technology Services at 902-468-6000 or at

helpdesk@tamuc.edu. Do not allow a technological problem or question keep you from a successful outcome in this course. Technology is designed to *facilitate* your learning experience in this class, not to hinder it.

*There **may** be the opportunity for extra credit. As a rule, I do not accept late work.*

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of **academic dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally-accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another person and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension and expulsion (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1, 2, 3]). Cheating, including plagiarizing papers in whole or part, will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment for the first offense and failure of the course for any subsequent offenses.

Attendance Policy

Attendance in this class equates to participation in the discussions and is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you notify me of potential conflicts with course expectations. The expectation is that you will do more than simply show up for class. Your active participation, in the form of discussion questions and comments, is vital for success in this course. Deadline extensions and other allowances can often be accommodated before they are required, but this requires advance notice. Related to this, SEE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignment Policy

Student work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. Students who know they will miss class when an assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment.

All papers should conform to the MLA style guidelines.

Late Work

I will not accept any assignment after its due date. Assignments submitted after the due date may receive a score of zero (0).

Drop a Course

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled “Drop a class” from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the Web page.

Incompletes

Incompletes (grade of “X”) are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Administrative Withdrawal

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of student conduct codes.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. It is next to impossible to explore ideas in a classroom setting if students and instructors do not feel safe or otherwise supported. I will not tolerate discrimination in all its forms. Likewise, rudeness has no place in any classroom, and I will ensure that my classroom remains a rudeness-free environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Responsibility

You are responsible for understanding all of the material contained in this syllabus, as well as any announced changes to this syllabus. You are also responsible for understanding instructions and directives related to assignments, exams, and grades. This means visiting your professor during office hours if instructions and/or directives remain unclear. Unless you state otherwise, I will assume that you have understood what is expected of you in this class.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The following course schedule is subject to revisions and other modifications as the instructor deems necessary for the course. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced on the course website in advance of the week in which the change will occur.

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N.B. Whenever a new author is introduced in class, it is the students' obligation to read the biographical headnote for that author in the *Norton Anthology*.

Date	Agenda
Week 1	<p>1/13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and syllabus overview <p>1/15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “American Literature 1865-1914” • Twain, “The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” <p>1/17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howells, “Editha”
Week 2	<p>1/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class meeting (MLK Holiday) <p>1/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” • Harte, “The Luck of Roaring Camp” <p>1/24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London, “To Build a Fire”
Week 3	<p>1/27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crane, “The Open Boat” <p>1/29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chopin, “Désirée’s Baby” • Gilman, “The Yellow Wall-paper” <p>1/31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far, “In the Land of the Free”
Week 4	<p>2/3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dreiser, “Sister Carrie” <p>2/5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chesnutt, “The Wife of His Youth” • Ša, “Impressions of an Indian Childhood” <p>2/7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington, “Up from Slavery” • Paper One Due
Week 5	<p>2/10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk” <p>2/12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunbar, “An Ante-Bellum Sermon”; “Sympathy”; “We Wear the Mask”; “Frederick Douglass”; “Harriet Beecher Stowe” <p>2/14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robinson, “Richard Cory”; “Miniver Cheevy”; “Mr. Flood’s Party”
Week 6	<p>2/17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowell, “The Captured Goddess”; “Venus Transiens”; “Madonna of the Evening Flowers”; “St. Louis” <p>2/19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frost, “The Pasture”; “Mowing”; “Mending Wall”; “After Apple-Picking”; “The Road Not Taken”; “Birches”; “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” <p>2/21</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stevens, "The Snow Man"; "The Emperor of Ice-Cream"; "Sunday Morning"; "Anecdote of the Jar"; "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird"
Week 7	2/24	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIDTERM EXAM
	2/26	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anderson, "Winesburg, Ohio"
	2/28	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandburg, "Chicago"; "Fog"; "Grass"
Week 8	3/3	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Williams, "The Young Housewife"; "The Widow's Lament in Springtime"; "Spring and All"; "To Elsie"; "The Red Wheelbarrow"; "This is Just to Say"; "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus"
	3/5	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HD, "Mid-day"; "Oread"; "Leda"; "Fragment"; "Helen"
	3/7	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pound, "To Whistler, American"; "A Pact"; "In the Station of the Metro"; "The Cantos"
Week 9	3/17	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moore, "Poetry"; "To a Snail"; "The Mind Is an Enchanting Thing"; "In Distrust of Merits"
	3/19	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"; "Gerontion"; "The Hollow Men"
	3/21	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McKay, "The Harlem Dancer"; "Harlem Shadows"; "The Lynching"; "If We Must Die"; "Africa"; "America"
Week 10	3/24	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i>
	3/26	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i>
	3/28	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i>
Week 11	3/31	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i>
	4/2	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i>
	4/4	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright, <i>Native Son</i> Paper Two Due
Week 12	4/7	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ellison, "Invisible Man"
	4/9	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baldwin, "Going to Meet the Man"
	4/11	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ginsberg, "Howl," "Footnote to Howl," "A Supermarket in California"
Week 13	4/14	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morrison, "Recitatif"
	4/16	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carver, "Cathedral"
	4/18	

Week 14	4/21	• Spiegelman, “from <i>Maus</i> ”
	4/23	• Díaz, “Drown”
	4/25	• Heller, <i>The Dog Stars</i>
Week 15	4/28	• Heller, <i>The Dog Stars</i>
	4/30	• Heller, <i>The Dog Stars</i>
	5/2	• Heller, <i>The Dog Stars</i>
		• Annotated Bibliography Due

Final Exam: Friday, May 9, 10:30 am-12:30 pm