

Cedar Crest College

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SURVEY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE
ENG 220 (3 credits) Fall 2009

*Every literary movement has its roots
in a past which it at once perpetuates,
repudiates, and transforms.*

Alicia Suskin Ostriker

Texts:

The Heath Anthology of American Literature, Concise Edition

Chopin, *The Awakening and Selected Stories*, Pocket Books ISBN-10 0-7434-8767-2

A style manual: if you do not have an up-to-date one, you may purchase a copy of
Hacker's *Pocket Style Manual*, 5th ed., with 2009 MLA update, at the bookstore,

Course Description: A survey of American literature from the exploratory and colonial periods to the present, or five-hundred-plus years of—in Ezra Pound's phrase—"making it new." This course is required for the English major; it fulfills the categories of Illuminating the Human Experience, American Studies, and Self-Design (old curriculum) and Humanities (new curriculum). Format: Lecture/Discussion.

Course Objectives (These are in accordance with the objectives of the Humanities Dept.):

--At the completion of the course, students will have an overview of the development of American literature.

--Students will have knowledge of works of American literature and their historical and cultural contexts.

--Students will be able to apply critical standards in analyzing a work of literature.

--Students will be able to write effective literary essays.

--Students will be able to devise approaches for their own teaching of a similar course on the high school level.

--Students will have gained an appreciation of literature; students will also have gained an appreciation of the connections among literary works and among disciplines.

Course Outcomes:

--Students will demonstrate their knowledge of American literary periods and works.

--Students will demonstrate how individual works fit into larger literary, historical, and cultural contexts.

- Students will demonstrate reading and analytical /critical thinking skills with oral practice in the seminar portion of the class and with writing.
- Students will demonstrate competency in basic writing skills.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of basic literary terms.

Course Requirements:

Your presence and your participation will determine the success of this class.

1) Attendance is required. You are allowed two (2) absences (these include medical and sports excuses, so plan your cuts carefully). More than two absences will affect your final grade; seven (7) absences will result in a grade of **F**. Excessive lateness and early departures will count as absences.

2) All class members are expected to participate in discussions.

3) All reading assignments must be completed by the dates specified. Be prepared for occasional quizzes and in-class discovery writing exercises. You will be responsible for covering headnotes on authors and introductions to periods.

4) An oral report on a poet from the contemporary period (1945-present).

5) Three exams (Each will include multiple choice questions, quotations, essays)

--I strongly recommend that you use one section of your notebook as a reading journal for this class; while I will not collect it or grade it, you will find it to be a helpful source for reviewing for discussions, tests, and student teaching. You will also find it helpful to keep a chronological listing of the works we cover.

Assessment/Grading:

Relationship of assignments and requirements to outcomes:

--Students will demonstrate their knowledge of course content by their completion of exams, quizzes, and an oral report and by their meaningful participation in class discussions.

--Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in critical analysis through class discussions and written essay answers.

--Students will demonstrate the ability to write clearly and effectively in essay exams

Final Grade: Average of three exams and class grade (attendance, meaningful participation in class discussions, scores on any quizzes, oral report on a poet)

Criteria for Essay Portions of Exams:

While this extensive survey is primarily a reading course, you will also be expected to demonstrate proficiency in writing: An essay answer must consist of a series of clear, well-developed paragraphs, not a single paragraph. The thesis (main point) should be clearly stated in the introductory paragraph, and your essay should build clearly from one topic to the next. Support your assertions with examples and specific details. You may find it helpful to include brief direct quotations. If you quote from or paraphrase sources (primary texts or commentary in the anthology), you must acknowledge those sources with parenthetical citations.

Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling all contribute to clarity. If an essay-answer displays serious weaknesses in these areas, 10-15 points will be deducted. See the attached "Rubric for Writing."

Additional Student Responsibilities:

--**Make-up Policies:** If you miss a class, you are still responsible for the material covered. Quizzes will be made-up by the following class. The only excuse honored for missing an exam will be a note signed by medical personnel; you will have a maximum of six days to make up the exam #'s 1 and 2, and 2 days to make up exam #3.

--The Cedar Crest **Honor Code** and the **Classroom Protocol Code**, as stated in the Customs book, will be in effect at all times.

--**Plagiarism**, which is the appropriation of and uncredited use of another's work, in whole or in part, is a serious offense.

A reminder of the statement on plagiarism distributed to all students in WRI 100: It is dishonest to present oral or written work that is not entirely the student's own. Students must follow the requirements of the instructor regarding when and how much collaboration with other students is permitted. Any language taken from another source, whether individual words or entire paragraphs, must be placed in quotation marks and attributed to the source, following the citation format specified. Paraphrased material from an outside source must also be attributed. In addition, if the student is indebted to another source for a specific perspective or line of argument--regardless of whether the student has directly quoted the source or not--that debt must be acknowledged.

It does not matter if the work is by an established author, a term-paper writer who sold his work to a plagiarism site for \$5.00, your best friend, or a blogger whose writing you find appealing.

Plagiarism is theft; it is unethical. It is a waste of your time, integrity, and money and a waste of your classmates' and my time and energy. An act of intentional plagiarism or cheating will result in a grade of **F** for the course.

--**College Policy Regarding Learning Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with their professors during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Learning Center.

--**Cell Phone Etiquette:** Because of the emergency notification system, phones should be put on vibrate. They should also be put out of sight. If a cell phone rings during class, please hand it to me to answer: I will explain that you are in class and unavailable. Please refrain from checking your phone/texting during class. It's distracting for the people sitting near you, and you may miss information that you will need for one of the tests.

--Before you leave class on the first day, make sure that you have the phone numbers/e-mail addresses of two of your classmates.

Survey of American Literature: Origins and Explorations

Syllabus

O brave new world

Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

Do I contradict myself?

Very well then I contradict myself

(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself"

All assignments must be completed by the dates specified. Note: If changes seem to be appropriate, we'll revise the syllabus accordingly, with the consent of the majority of the class. Unless otherwise indicated, readings are in *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, Concise Edition. Remember to read the introduction to each writer. Bring your books to class and be prepared to participate in discussions.

Tues., Aug. 25

Introduction to the course

Colonialism

For Thurs., Aug. 27

Discovery: the discovery of this "new" land (but was it?) and the text:

"Colonial Period to 1700," 1-11: Find the definition of "ethnocentrism"; trace the development of slavery; how does the introduction define "new world cultures"; what was the first bestseller in America; what does the introduction suggest is the "most 'American' of genres"?

"Native American Oral Literatures" and "Native . . . Narrative," 12-16

"The Origin of Stories," 30-32

"Narrative of Handsome Lake," 363-65

"Native American Oral Poetry," 41

Handout: Excerpt from "Sayatasha's Night chant" (Zuni poetry)

"New Spain," 46-47 and Columbus, from *Journal of the First Voyage*, 48-57

For Tues., Sept. 1

Choices for oral reports on poets due by this date

Settlement

"Chesapeake," 117-18

Smith, from *The General Historie of Virginia*, 125-32, and from *A Description of New England*, 132-35

"New England," 136-39

Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 164-79

For Thurs., Sept. 3

Two Early American Women Poets

Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "The Author to Her Book," "Before the Birth of One of Her Children," "To My Dear and Loving Husband" "Upon the Burning of Our House," 187-

Wheatley, "On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield," "On Being Brought from Africa to America," "To the University of Cambridge," 569-

For Tues., Sept. 8

The Captivity Narrative

Rowlandson, from *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of . . .*, 206-32
Poetry presentations begin

For Thurs., Sept. 10

The Enlightenment

"Voices of Revolution and Nationalism," 361-63

Franklin, "The Way to Wealth," "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America" (365-73, 374-78) and from *The Autobiography*, 381-96 [end of first paragraph] and 416- ["Before I enter . . ."]-433

The 19th Century and The American Renaissance

(Romanticism/Transcendentalism/Abolition/Realism/Regionalism)

For Tues., Sept. 15

The Early Nineteenth Century

Skim "Early Nineteenth Century, 1800-1865," 605-35

Two Pre-Romantics

Bryant, "Thanatopsis" and "To a Waterfowl," 1200-03

Irving, "Rip Van Winkle," 940-53

For Thurs., Sept. 17 Exam #1

For Tues., Sept. 22

Romanticism/Transcendentalism

"Revisioning New England," 685-86

Sigourney, "Indian Names," 686-89

Emerson, from "The American Scholar," 694-702; "The Rhodora," 583-84; and lines from "The Poet" (handout)

Thoreau, Chapter 2 of *Walden*: "Where I Lived and What I Lived For," 749-51, 765-75

For Thurs., Sept. 24

The Growth of Fiction

"The Development of Narrative," 937-40

Poe, 988-90; "The Fall of the House of Usher," 1001-1014; "The Purloined Letter," 1014-27; and "The Raven," and "Annabel Lee," 1028-33

For Tues., Sept. 29

Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," "Young Goodman Brown," and "The Birth-mark," 953-90

For Thurs., Oct. 1

Abolition/The Slave Narrative

"Issues and Conflicts in Antebellum America," 801

Douglass, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, Chapters I, VI, VII, IX, X, Appendix, 867-

Stowe, from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Chap. VII, "The Mother's Struggle," 1033-35, 1042-47

For Tues., Oct. 6

A Second Slave Narrative

Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, 841-60.

For Thurs., Oct. 8

Continuing Indications of Realism

Child, from *Letters from New York*, 826-31

Melville, "Bartleby," 1055-83

Tues., Oct. 13 No class meeting—Fall Break

For Thurs., Oct. 15

Film: *Citizen Kane* (1941). Dir. by Orson Welles; screenplay by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Welles. This film, which is #1 on the American Film Industry's list of the 100 greatest US movies, is an example of the American art of filmmaking and a treatment of the American dream. *Citizen Kane* traces—in flashbacks—the life of newspaper tycoon Charles Foster Kane (the character is based on William Randolph Hearst and played by Welles). The question is—what is "Rosebud"?

For Tues., Oct. 20

Poetry in the Nineteenth Century

"The Emergence of American Poetic Voices," 1186-88

Whitman, 1209-1211; "Song of Myself," Sections 1-5, Section 15, and Sections 51-52, 1225- [Section numbers appear in brackets in left margins], "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer," 1284, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," 1286-93

For Thurs., Oct. 22 Film continued

For Tues., Oct. 27

Dickinson, "I never lost but twice as much," "success is counted sweetest," "Wild nights--Wild nights," "There's a certain Slant of light," "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" "The Soul Selects her own Society--," "Some keep the Sabbath going to Church," "After great pain, a formal feeling comes--," "Much madness is divinest Sense," "This is my letter to the World," "I Heard a Fly buzz--when I died--," "I reckon--when I count at all--," "The Brain--is wider than the Sky--," "I dwell in Possibility--," "Because I could not stop for

Death,” “My Life had stood--a Loaded Gun--,” “Tell all the Truth but tell it slant--,”
“Volcanoes be in Sicily,” “Rearrange a ‘Wife’s affection,” 1295-

For Thurs., Oct. 29 Test #2 (Multiple choice, true/false, quotation, essay)

The Late Nineteenth Century

For Tues., Nov. 3

Realism and Regionalism

Skim “Late Nineteenth Century: 1865-1910,” 1323-47, and

“Nations, Regions, Borders,” 1348-49

Twain, “Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog,” 1359-65

“Developments in Women’s Writing,” 1619

Freeman, “The Revolt of Mother,” 1642-55

Thurs., Nov. 5

Regionalism/The New Woman continued

Chopin, *The Awakening*, Chapters I-XIX

For Tues., Nov. 10

The Awakening, Chapters XX-XXIX

Modernism

For Thurs., Nov. 12

Modernist Poetry

Skim “Modern Period: 1910-1945,” 1713-1735, and “Toward the Modern Age,” 1735-36

Frost, “The Road Not Taken,” “Stopping by Woods,” and “Design,” 1799-

“Alienation and Literary Experimentation,” 1830-31

Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” 1900-

Millay, “Spring” and “The Spring and the Fall,” 1824-

Williams, “The Red Wheelbarrow,” 1850-

For Tues., Nov. 17

The Harlem Renaissance

“The New Negro Renaissance,” 1984-87

Hughes, “The Weary Blues,” “Johannesburg Mines,” “I, Too,” and “Harlem,” 2006-

For Thurs., Nov. 19

Modernist Fiction

Wharton, “Roman Fever,” 1771-72, 1773-83

Fitzgerald, “Babylon Revisited,” 1920-1936

Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants,” 1949-54

For Tues., Nov. 24

Southern Literature

Faulkner, "Barn Burning," 1960-74

Skim "Contemporary Period: 1945 to the Present"/"The Earlier Generations," 2169-73

O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"

Thurs., Nov. 25 No class meeting—Thanksgiving Break

The Contemporary Period/Postmodernism

For Tues., Dec. 1

Skim "Contemporary Period: New Generations," 2378-86

Updike, "Trust Me," 2408-15

Alexie, "Because My Father always Said he Was the Only Indian Who Saw Jimi Hendrix . . .," 2552-59

For Thurs., Dec. 3

Final exam, final words

Oral Reports--Contemporary Poets

To extend the coverage of this survey class and to expand our understanding of American literature in general and contemporary poetry in particular, each one of you will give a brief oral report on a contemporary poet.

You must sign up no later than next Tues., Sept. 1. Reports will begin on Tues., Sept. 8.

Your presentation should be clear, concise, and informative. It should take no more than 10 minutes (these will be timed: do not go over 10 minutes):

Provide a brief summary of pertinent information (basic bio, outstanding stylistic characteristics and literary connections) and direct our attention to one or more of the author's works in the text.

Your commentary on the work—an analysis of style and content—will be the most important part of your report.

If you use secondary sources, you must acknowledge those sources in your presentation --incorporate them directly and explicitly into your comments ("As _____ explains in her essay titled '_____,' . . .")—and hand in—on the day of your presentation—your list of Works Cited. Follow MLA format, 7th ed.

On Secondary Sources:

Dictionaries and encyclopedias are not appropriate for college-level research. You may start with an encyclopedic entry for basic information, but then you must build from there. Wikipedia and term-paper-sale sites are not acceptable sources. Use discretion in treating blogs as sources. Always double-check web-based information. An effective critical study uses a combination of online and print sources. One excellent index to start with: MLA First Search.

Select your poet from the following sections of the table of contents of *The Heath Anthology*:

The Earlier Generation: Poetry, xxvi-xxviii

The Beat Movement, xxviii

Vietnam Conflict, xxix-xxx

New Generations: Poetry, xxx-xxxii

	Student Name	Poet	Starting Page
Tues., Sept. 8	_____	_____	_____
Thurs. Sept. 10	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Sept. 10	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Sept. 15	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Sept. 22	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Sept. 24	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Sept. 29	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Oct. 1	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Oct. 6	_____	_____	_____
Thurs. Oct. 8	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Oct. 8	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Oct. 20	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Oct. 27	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Nov. 3	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Nov. 5	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Nov. 5	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Nov. 10	_____	_____	_____
Thurs., Nov. 12	_____	_____	_____
Tues., Nov. 17	_____	_____	_____

Tues., Nov. 19 _____

Tues., Nov. 24 _____

Writing Rubric:

A Superior/Outstanding

Work that uses an assignment as the occasion for a piece of writing compelling enough to engage readers on its own terms. It presents an insight or viewpoint with enough fullness and support to command readers' respect, if not their assent. The treatment of content is fresh, not hackneyed; the organization is coherent and effective; and the language is clear and vivid, not clichéd. Superior work uses sophisticated sentence structure, and needs little or no additional editing in terms of basic details of grammar, punctuation, and format. An "A" essay should avoid relying on plot summary and should use literary and film terms correctly; it should also demonstrate the proper handling of secondary sources.

B Good

Work that meets all of an assignment's expectations with competence. The work may lack the fresh thought or compelling development of "A" work*, but it demonstrates, nevertheless, its author's ability to respond intelligently to an assignment's demands, to structure and focus writing clearly, and to choose words accurately and effectively.

*In contrast to "A" work, a "B" paper may--despite its original thought--require a final editing that takes care of weaknesses in basics that detract from the content.

C Fair

"C" work shows evidence of attempting to meet the assignment's bare specifications, but lacks sharp focus, the full and purposeful development, or the stylistic awareness necessary for a higher grade. "C" work is clearly inadequate in at least one way. Although "C" work may demonstrate competence in one or more facets, one or two pervasive weaknesses will outweigh its strengths. Weaknesses may include failure to engage meaningfully an important aspect of the writing task or to maintain a focus; skimpy or illogical development; and/or repeated significant errors in grammar or idiom.

D Poor

Work which does not respond acceptably to an assignment, "D" work may misunderstand or disregard the assignment's intent, lack any pattern or organization, or make enough errors in Standard English to make it difficult for a reader to follow the author's thought.

F Failure

The following will merit a grade of "F": failure to submit an assignment, incomplete work, work that disregards the assignment's intent, work that displays pervasive weaknesses in both form and content, and, of course, plagiarism.

