

Course Syllabus



ENG 3338: The American Novel

Instructor

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Scope and Nature of the Course

English 3338—the American Novel—includes novels by ten authors and covers the development of American fiction from 1850 to the present. In content, it will show you the nation and its people from Puritan times, with their strict moral codes and resultant hypocrisy, through the glitter of New York high society, to the darkness and despair of the early slums, through the turbulent effects of World War I, and into the Great Depression and on to the consequences of the social upheavals of the past four decades.

The objective of a literature course is to have the student achieve a broader and deeper understanding of a period in history, of the social and economic forces that prevailed, of the aspirations, achievements, and even the failures people faced, and of the particular human qualities revealed to us by the characters themselves.

Course Materials

You will read novels by famous authors, three of whom won the Nobel Prize for Literature and all of whom show us what it means to be human beings. In the order of the assignments, the selections are:

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, 1850
- Herman Melville, *Billy Budd*, 1891
- Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1884
- Stephen Crane, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, 1893
- Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence*, 1920
- Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 1929
- William Faulkner, *Light in August*, 1932
- John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 1939

- John Updike, *Rabbit, Run*, 1960
- Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1982

No particular versions are required. Copies are in almost every library or available in several paperback editions. If you want to learn about a particular author's life or other facts, you will find the *Dictionary of American Biography* to be helpful, as will be biographical material in any college anthology.

Course Assignments

Written Assignments

For each of the four lessons in Modules, you will write an essay of approximately 500 words. Please note the following:

- Because each of the written assignments covers two or three novels and there are only four lessons in this course, you must wait to receive a graded lesson back from me before submitting the next lesson.
- You may not resubmit an assignment after it has been graded.

For each of the essays in this course, you will be given the opportunity to choose from several prompt questions that will guide your response. In order to do well on the essays, your essay should respond as directly as possible to the question that you choose.

Your essay will be an academic piece of writing that contains your ideas, your own critical thinking, your evaluation of what you've read, and your judgment about the broader ideas the respective novels address. There is no single way to approach, or to write about, a novel. Two students can hold disparate views and each can be correct, because a good novel has such depth and so many themes that a wide range of opinions and conclusions is quite viable.

You can structure your essay in whatever ways you've learned from previous English courses. No matter your structure, the essay will be graded with two main criteria in mind:

- Do you clearly state your own opinion in response to your chosen prompt?
- Do you provide textual evidence that supports your opinion?

These two components comprise your Analysis and Evidence. Be sure that you do not merely summarize the novel; a summary of the novel's action does not equal analysis. While you may need to recount some of the novel's action, the bulk of your response should be your own thoughts, ideas, and judgments *about* the novel's plot, characters, setting, etc.

Exams

Your final exam is comprehensive and will consist of two 500-word essays in which you will broadly reflect on the larger ideas the various novels have explored. After receiving your graded Lesson 4

assignment, you will receive instructions about how to take the final exam. For information about taking the final exam, see Prepare for the Final Exam in Modules.

Course Grades

Each of the four written assignments will count for 15 percent of your course grade, for a total of 60%. The final exam will count 40% of your course grade. You must, however, pass the final exam with a 60 percent or higher to pass this course.

Students Requiring Accommodation

The Office of Distance and Extended Learning is committed to helping students with disabilities achieve their educational goals.

A disability is not a barrier to correspondence study, and we provide reasonable accommodations to individuals in coursework and test taking.

Students who require special accommodations need to provide verification of their disability to the [Office of Disability Services \(http://www.ods.txstate.edu/\)](http://www.ods.txstate.edu/), Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, 512.245.3451 (voice/TTY).

Students should then notify the [Office of Distance and Extended Learning \(http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/\)](http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/) at [corrstudy@txstate.edu \(mailto:corrstudy@txstate.edu\)](mailto:corrstudy@txstate.edu) of any disability-related accommodation needs as soon as possible to avoid a delay in accommodations.

Academic Integrity

The [Texas State Academic Honor Code \(https://www.txstate.edu/honorcodecouncil/\)](https://www.txstate.edu/honorcodecouncil/) applies to all Texas State students, including correspondence students. The [Honor Code \(https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/07-10-01.html\)](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/07-10-01.html) serves as an affirmation that the University demands the highest standard of integrity in all actions related to the academic community. As stated in the [Texas State Student Handbook \(https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/\)](https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/), [Violation of the Honor Code \(https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html\)](https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html) includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

If you are found guilty of academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work to be submitted, plagiarism, or collusion, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Academic work signifies outcomes and products such as essays, theses, reports, exams, tests, quizzes, problems, assignments, or other projects submitted for purposes of achieving learning outcomes.

Cheating in general means, but is not limited to, engaging or attempting to engage in any of the following activities:

- Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, computer files, data listing, programs, or from any electronic device or equipment;
- Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work;
- Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the content of an unadministered test;
- Substituting for another student—or permitting another person to substitute for oneself—in taking an exam or preparing academic work;
- Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test;
- Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work, any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of the rough or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist;
- Submitting the same essay, thesis, report, or another project, without substantial revision or expansion of the work, in an attempt to obtain credit for work submitted in a previous course;
- Falsifying data.

[Plagiarism \(https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html\)](https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html) in general means, but is not limited to, the appropriation of another's work and the inadequately or inappropriately acknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written, oral, visual or the performance of an original act or routine that is offered for credit.

[Collusion \(https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html\)](https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html) in general means, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing any work offered for credit.

[Abuse of resource materials \(https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html\)](https://studenthandbook.txstate.edu/rules-and-policies/academic-honor-code.html) in general means, but is not limited to, the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course content.

Please cite all unoriginal material through the use of **[standard bibliographical practice \(http://guides.library.txstate.edu/friendly.php?s=writing-citation-style-guide\)](http://guides.library.txstate.edu/friendly.php?s=writing-citation-style-guide)** as explained on the **[Alkek Library site \(https://www.library.txstate.edu/\)](https://www.library.txstate.edu/)**.

FREE TUTORING RESOURCES

A variety of free tutoring resources are available for students enrolled in correspondence courses. You may access tutoring through Tutor.com by clicking on Tutor.com: 24/7 Online Tutoring in the left menu of

this course. Then just respond to the questions to start tutoring. If you need help with writing specifically, then choose Writing as your topic.

Free online tutoring for writing-related assignments is also available from the University Writing Center. For information on accessing these resources, please visit the Office of Distance and Extended Learning's [Free Tutoring \(http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/students/tutoring.html\)](http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/students/tutoring.html) page. Currently-enrolled, degree-seeking students able to visit the Texas State campus are eligible for free in-person tutoring from the [Student Learning Assistance Center \(SLAC\) \(http://www.txstate.edu/slac/\)](http://www.txstate.edu/slac/) on the fourth floor of Alkek Library

PDF Version of the Syllabus

Here is a [PDF version of the syllabus](#)

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