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ENG 2359: American Literature Before 1865



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Welcome to ENG 2359: American Literature Before 1865

Course Overview/Description

English 2359 is a survey of North American literature written between the mid-16th century and the mid-18th century. During that span of approximately 200 years, a loose band of colonies evolved into a formidable union of states. This course examines how the literature written during those 200 years reflected and influenced the emergence of a single national identity that has its roots in a religious heritage of divine calling as well as in individual expressions of self-hood. Specifically, this self-paced 6-month correspondence course will explore how different

eras of American writers employed essays, letters, speeches, poetry, short stories, and other types of writing to define and redefine a single narrative of American identity distinct from the many voices that converged at the formation of the rapidly developing country.

Course Instructor

Chris Margrave

✉ Email: cm85@txstate.edu

I encourage you to contact me if you have any concerns, questions, or problems. You are welcome to e-mail me by using the Canvas Inbox in the global navigation. (It is important to keep all mail related to this course contained within this Canvas site.) My policy is that during non-holiday breaks or announced away times, any email I receive between Monday morning and Friday at noon will receive a reply within 48 hours. Emails received between Friday at noon and Sunday night will receive a reply on the next business day

Ready to begin?

Click [Start Here](#) in the navigation bar above to begin your course.

Returning to this course?

Click [Modules](#) in the navigation bar above or in the left-hand course navigation and resume where you left off.

Questions about the course?

You are encouraged to contact your instructor, if you have any concerns, questions, or problems.

To ensure timely delivery of all e-mails related to this course, you must use your official Texas State Bobcat Mail email address.

You may contact Online and Extended Programs using the email address provided.

✉ Email: corrstudy@txstate.edu



Start Here

Meet Your Instructor

About Me

My name is Chris Margrave, and I am the instructor for this correspondence course in American Literature from its beginnings up to 1865. I am a lecturer in the Department of English at Texas State University, where I earned my Master of Fine Arts in Fiction. I also have a Master of Arts in Literature from Wake Forest University, where I studied Irish literature and Jewish American fiction. I'm neither Irish nor Jewish, but both cultures intrigued me so much that I decided to immerse myself in their respective literature. I've gone to school long enough to be a medical doctor, yet I earn a fraction of a doctor's salary. And you know what? I love my job. I get to help people experience revelations about themselves and the world through literature and writing. Wearing scrubs every day would be nice though.



What courses do I teach, other than American Literature by correspondence? Well, if you're ever on campus in San Marcos, you might find me teaching College Writing I and II, Technical Writing, or Introduction to Creative Writing. I'm passionate about whatever subject I teach, including this course's era of American Literature, which offers a profound glimpse into what has made the United States the country it is today.

Do I engage in any kind of scholarly or creative work? Sure. My writing has appeared in the *Rio Grande Review*, *Front Porch Journal*, *Precipitate Journal*, *Southwestern American Literature*, *Texas Books in Review*, and on ESPN's Longhorn Network, where I co-produce the "Longhorn Film Showcase," a television show featuring short films made by students at The University of Texas at Austin. And I'm currently working on a screenplay and a novella. The screenplay comedically re-interprets the Old Testament story of David and Bathsheeba as played out in present-day suburbia. The novella is a work of experimental historical fiction about the brief life of Italian cyclist Ottavio Bottecchia, who may or may not have been murdered in 1927 by Mussolini's Fascist regime.

On the home front, I live in Austin with my wife and two daughters. I'm an avid runner with an eccentric desire for competing in ultra-marathons (any race over 31 miles). "Compete" of course is short-hand for "just finish." As a family, we like to rock climb, ice skate, roller skate, ride bikes, and camp. We also each like to read, because we believe stories are the imaginative food that humans require to survive and thrive.

Which brings me full-circle. I hope you enjoy reading the authors in this course. They each offer different imaginative perspectives on what it once meant to be an American, and they each reveal how those definitions of American identity still influence us today. If you ever have questions about the course, I'm always just an email away.

Contact Me

✉ **Email:** cm85@txstate.edu



Start Here

Overview



Introduction

Welcome to the Start Here module for English 2359! This module is designed to provide you with essential information and resources to help you navigate successfully through this correspondence course. From accessing course materials to understanding the grading system, this module will equip you with the tools and knowledge you need to succeed. Read through this module carefully and let's dive in and get started on your path to learning and achievement!



Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

1. Access course materials to support their academic success.
2. Identify key points of information about this correspondence course.



Assignments

- Course Pacing Guide (Due within 2 weeks of your course start date)
- Start Here Module Quiz

Correspondence Course Information

As a correspondence studies student, it is your responsibility to be familiar with correspondence-related policies and services. To this end, I encourage you to review the [Correspondence Course Information page](#) as well as the [Correspondence Studies website](#).

Orientation Video

Please view [this orientation video](#) to help you get started in this correspondence course. This video addresses many topics such as Bobcat Mail, navigating this course site, test requests, and more.

Online Student Resources

[This webpage](#) contains multiple resources for online students at Texas State University. Note: Some resources are only available to students who pay a student service fee.

Technical Requirements and Support

This online course requires technical skills and access to certain technology and software that face-to-face courses may not require.

- Learn about [skills and technology](#) you need to be successful in this course.
Also review these [tips](#) and [interaction guidelines](#) to be a successful online learner.

Many users encounter fewer problems when they **use Chrome** to access **Canvas courses**.

Here's how to **get help with Canvas**:

- 24/7 [Live chat](#)
- 24/7 Phone support: 245.ITAC (4822)
- [Tool-specific help](#)
- Click Help in the left navigation of any Canvas course

Free Tutoring Resources

A variety of [free tutoring resources](#) are available for students enrolled in Texas State correspondence courses.



The Office of Distance and Extended Learning

FREE TUTORING



University Writing Center

The Texas State University Writing Center's online tutoring service allows Texas State correspondence, self-paced study students, to work with a writing tutor in real time in an online environment. During the online tutorial, both the student and the tutor are

Academic Integrity

Texas State Academic Honor Code

The [Texas State Academic Honor Code](#) applies to all Texas State students, including correspondence students. The [Honor Code](#) 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](#), [Violation of the Honor Code](#) includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

Definitions

As stated per [Texas State Honor Code, UPPS No. 07.10.01, Issue no. 8](#).

*Please note that not all activities that constitute academic misconduct are listed in specific detail in [UPPS No. 07.10.10, Honor Code](#). It is expected that students will honor the *spirit* of academic integrity and will not place themselves in the position of being charged with academic misconduct.

Please cite all unoriginal material through the use of [standard bibliographical practice](#) explained through the [Alkek library site](#).

Incidents of [academic dishonesty as outlined by the University](#) will be reported to the administration for disciplinary action. In addition, students will receive a 0 for the assignment or assignments without the opportunity to redo the work.

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

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

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

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](#) as explained on the [Alkek Library site](#).

Incidents of academic dishonesty as outlined by the University will be reported to the administration for disciplinary action. In addition, students will receive a 0 for the assignment or assignments without the opportunity to redo the work.

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materials provided, thereby creating derivative works from my lectures and other materials. However, this authorization extends only to making one set of notes or answers for your own personal use and no other use. You are not authorized to provide copies, notes or examination questions to anyone else, or to make any commercial use of them without prior written consent.

As stated per [Texas State Honor Code, UPPS No. 07.10.01, Issue no. 8.](#)

Students Requiring Accommodation Through the Office of Disability Services

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](#), Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, 512.245.3451 (voice/TTY).

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

SYLLABUS:

English 2359: American Literature Before 1865

Instructor

Chris Margrave
Office: Flowers 221
Office Hours: By email and appointment
Email: cm85@txstate.edu

Course Outcomes

General Education Core Curriculum (Code 090)

Component Area Option for Language, Philosophy and Culture

Component Outcomes

Students will explore behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

Core Objectives/Competencies Outcomes

- **Critical Thinking**
 - Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- **Communication**
 - Students will effectively develop, interpret and express ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- **Social Responsibility**
 - Students will demonstrate intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- **Personal Responsibility**
 - Students will relate choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

This syllabus supplements the Sophomore Literature Program Syllabus, available online at www.english.txstate.edu.

Learning Outcomes

The Department of English has adopted student-learning outcomes for general education courses in writing and literature and for degree programs in English. These outcomes are available for your review at www.english.txstate.edu. Pull down the *Student Resources* menu and go to "Learning Outcomes."

If you are a student with a disability who will require accommodation to participate in the course, please contact me as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. Failure to contact me in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

Required Text

Baym et al., *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Shorter 8th Edition, Volume 1: Beginnings to 1865, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-393-91886-1

Course Description

English 2359 is a survey of North American literature written between the mid-16th century and the mid-18th century. During that span of approximately 200 years, a loose band of colonies evolved into a formidable union of states. This course examines how the literature written during those 200 years reflected and influenced the emergence of a single national identity that has its roots in a religious heritage of divine calling as well as in individual expressions of self-hood. Specifically, this course will explore how different eras of American writers employed essays, letters, speeches, poetry, short stories, and other types of writing to define and redefine a single narrative of American identity distinct from the many voices that converged at the formation of the rapidly developing country.

Assignment Requirements

- Five (5) quizzes based on assigned selections from *Norton Anthology of American Literature*
 - Two (2) short answer exams (midcourse and final)
 - Two (2) essays 500 words minimum in length
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Grade Breakdown

- Quizzes (1-5): 10%
 - Midcourse Short Answer Exam: 15%
 - Final Short Answer Exam: 15%
 - Essay #1: 30%
 - Essay #2: 30%
-

Assignment Details

The required assignments are given to assess students' retained knowledge of the text as well as initiate critical reflection upon the themes presented by the various authors. Students may use the course textbook to complete each of the course's assignments, including the short answer tests and essays.

The **five quizzes** are timed multiple choice assessments (30 minutes permitted per quiz) that cover the material from each of the five main lessons. Students who read the assigned texts should perform well on the quizzes.

The **two short answer tests** invite students to critically engage with the course material. While the quizzes are objective in their scope, the short answer tests are subjective in that there are no absolutely right or wrong responses. The short answers (which should range in length between 3-5 sentences) are intended to challenge students to make connections between the texts and the larger themes surrounding the respective historical periods. Students must complete each of the short answer tests (in the 2.5 hour time limit) before proceeding to write the respective essays.

The **two essays** (each 500 words minimum in length) require students to craft a formal, extended interpretation of one or two of the assigned texts. In some cases, students may choose to expand one of their short answer responses into the longer essay form. Each of the essays should be written in the tone of and with the same academic rigor of the standard college essay.

Notes:

- You must wait until a completed short answer exam or essay is graded and returned to you before submitting a new written assignment.
-

Course Progression

Students will complete each of the five main lessons one at a time, following the below progression of assigned readings and required assignments:

Lesson 1 - The Roots of Freedom & Oppression

- *Reading:* Christopher Columbus, Cotton Matther, Roger Williams, Anne Bradstreet
- *Assignments:* Lesson 1 Quiz

Lesson 2 - Founding Fathers and Farmers

- *Reading:* Thomas Jefferson, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Native American Resistance, Phillis Wheatley
- *Assignments:* Lesson 2 Quiz

Lesson 3 - Slavery & Oppression

- *Reading:* Thomas Jefferson, Native American Conflict, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass
- *Assignments:* Lesson 3 Quiz

Lessons 1-3 Writing Assignments:

- Midcourse Short Answer Test
- Essay #1

Lesson 4 - Humanity and Nature

- *Reading:* Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Emily Dickinson
- *Assignments:* Lesson 5 Quiz

Lesson 5 - The American Short Story and Poetry

- *Reading:* Edgar Allan Poe, Francis Ellen Watkins Harper, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson
- *Assignments:* Lesson 5 Quiz

Lessons 4-5 Writing Assignments:

- Final Short Answer Test
- Essay #2

Supplemental Instructional Materials

I've included an introductory video (in which I casually introduce each lesson's content) and a screencast (that lays out the lesson's central themes and points to consider) at

the beginning of each lesson. Students who watch the introductory videos and view the screencasts will have a clear understanding of what to expect in the short answer tests and essay prompts.

Students also should read the three introductory essays in the Norton Anthology that provide commentary on the literature of this period. They are “Beginnings to 1700,” “American Literature 1700–1820,” and “American Literature 1820–1865.” I strongly suggest you read them before you undertake Lesson 1 and that you refer to them again as you go along through the course.

Finally, I included essay-writing resources that provide a clear understanding of my expectations for the essay assignments.

Faculty-Student Contact

According to “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education,” faculty-student contact is very important. Even though this is a correspondence course, I encourage you to contact me if you have any concerns, questions, or problems. You are welcome to e-mail me by using the Canvas Inbox in the global navigation. (It is important to keep all mail related to this course contained within this Canvas site.) My policy is that during non-holiday breaks or announced away times, any email I receive between Monday morning and Friday at noon will receive a reply within 48 hours. Emails received between Friday at noon and Sunday night will receive a reply on the next business day.

Lesson 2

Lesson 2 Introduction

In this lesson, we will explore The Declaration of Independence, a cornerstone of American history, asserted the colonies' separation from British rule in 1776, emphasizing principles of individual rights and self-governance. We will also read "Letters from an American Farmer" by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur who provided insights into the diversity of American society in the late 18th century, highlighting the promise of social and economic opportunities. Additionally, we will see indigenous leaders such as Pontiac, Samson Occom, Chief Logan, Red Jacket, and Tecumseh played crucial roles in resisting colonial expansion, advocating for Native American rights, and expressing the impact of settler-colonial dynamics on indigenous communities.

Here are some introductory thoughts as you begin this lesson: (CC 2 min):



Lesson 2

Lesson 2 Screencast

Before you begin reading, watch the screencast below. In it, I cover major themes and points to consider about each of the texts you will read for this lesson.

Lesson 2 Screencast (CC 13 min)

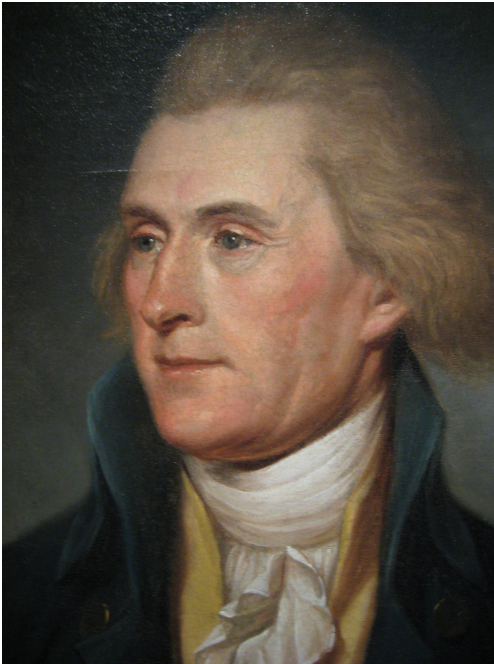


[Presentation Slides](#)

Thomas Jefferson, from the Declaration of Independence (pp. 339–344)



Read



Thomas Jefferson, from the Declaration of Independence (pp. 339–344)

In this reading, we will reflect on the ideals presented in The Declaration of Independence document while attempting to navigate the historical complexities surrounding the legacy of Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson's role in articulating the ideals of freedom and individual liberty has left an indelible mark on the nation's identity. However, it also prompts readers to critically examine the contradiction within Jefferson's legacy, particularly concerning the institution of slavery. As you read, form your own opinion and come to your own conclusion.

As you work through the assigned readings, reviewing and re-watching the Lesson 2 Screencast is recommended. The screencast highlights key points and helps deepen your understanding of the selected texts. Remember to take notes while reading. Doing so will help ensure you do well on the short quiz (which covers only the assigned texts listed below) you must complete before proceeding to the next lesson.