Get Started

Syllabus

Welcome to ENG 3338:
The American Novel

New to the course?

- Be sure to familiarize yourself with the **Syllabus** and *review the information carefully*.

- To succeed in this course, please fill out your **Course Pacing Schedule** and take no more than **7 days** from when you enroll to submit it via Modules.

- Click **Get Started**

Returning to the course? Click **Modules** and resume where you left off.

Important reminders:

- This is a **6-month, online, correspondence self-paced course**.
- **All submissions, including exams, must be completed by the course expiration date.** When you registered for the course, you were sent an email to your Texas State account indicating registration and expiration dates.
- You must wait to receive a graded essay before submitting the next written assignment.
- You may take the final exam after all preceding written assignments have been graded and returned to you.

At the end of the course, you will be asked
to complete a brief course evaluation.
Your input will help improve the course.

Meet Your Instructor

Course Instructor

My name is Chris Margrave, and I am the instructor for this correspondence course on the American novel. I am a senior 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 this one? Well, if you're ever on campus in San Marcos, you might find me teaching Technical Writing, American and World Literature, Mythology, and 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.

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.

Course Syllabus

ENG 3338: The American Novel

Instructor

Chris Margrave
Department of English
cm85@txstate.edu (mailto:cm85@txstate.edu)

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

Online and Extended Programs 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/) , Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, 512.245.3451 (voice/TTY).

Students should then notify the **Online and Extended Programs** (http://www.correspondence.txstate.edu/) at **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/) applies to all Texas State students, including correspondence students. The **Honor Code** (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) , **Violation of the Honor Code** (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 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**.

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 Online and Extended Program's **Free Tutoring** 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)** on the fourth floor of Alkek Library

PDF Version of the Syllabus

Here is a **PDF version of the syllabus** that you can print as desired.

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**.

OrientationtiVideo

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.

Click Next to proceed to Technical Requirements and Support.

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** 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

If you are new to Canvas, click Student Guide in the left navigation of any course site to learn the basics.

Click Next to proceed to Free Tutoring Resources.

Academic Integrity

Texas State Academic Honor Code

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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:

- 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.

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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.

Notice of Intellectual Property Rights

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**.

Click Next to proceed to Students Requiring Accommodation Through the Office of Disability Services.

Students Requiring Accommodation Through the Office of Disability Services

Online and Extended Programs 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 **OXP** at **corrstudy@txstate.edu (mailto:corrstudy@txstate.edu)** of any disability-related accommodation needs as soon as possible to avoid a delay in accommodations.

Click Next to proceed to Tips for Success.

Tips for Success

1. Pace yourself in the course, giving yourself plenty of time to CAREFULLY READ each chapter and complete each assignment.
2. Highlight or underline key terms, important facts, results of relevant studies, and repeated names as you read. You should expect to recognize or use these in an assessment.
3. Be sure you are focused on the material when you are reading. If you are worried or thinking about something else, you aren't concentrating and reading won't help you learn.
4. Carefully read the information related to your mid-course and final exams (if you have them).
5. Ask for help! Contact your instructor if you have any questions or concerns. Remember, you can also use the free tutoring resources that have been provided to you through Texas State University.

More tips are available on the **Tips for Online Success** page.

Click Next to proceed to Syllabus.

Submission 1: Course Pacing Schedule

- Due No Due Date
- Points 0
- Submitting a file upload

Download and add target dates to this **Course Pacing Schedule**.

Then click Submit Assignment and attach and submit your completed document.

After you upload your document, click Next to proceed with the course.

Lesson 1 Objectives

Upon completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- recognize the shift from the formal syntax and prose of Hawthorne to the informal sentence structure and use of dialogue in Twain;
- explain the growth in importance of how the environment shapes people's lives;
- discuss how slavery demeaned even those who upheld it;
- define the concept of the law as it is applied to the upper- level of society and to the lower-level;
- discuss how authors changed in how they portrayed young people;
- explain how humor is used to enforce serious ideas;
- recognize that female characters were types, not individuals;
- assess the parallels between Christ and Billy Budd and other religious aspects/symbols in Melville's novel.

Click Next to proceed to Lesson 1 Assigned Reading.

Lesson 1 Assigned Reading

Nathaniel Hawthorne—*The Scarlet Letter*
Herman Melville—*Billy Budd*
Mark Twain—*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Click Next to proceed to Lesson 1 Discussion.