

ENGLISH 6302.501
American Romanticism

Spring 2021. Wednesday 5:40PM-8:20PM

Instructor: Dr. Todd Richardson
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Office Hours: M 1:30-4:30, W 4:30-5:30, TH 2-3, and by appointment.

The course is conducted in Teams with a Canvas shell. All discussions for this class will be conducted in Teams. The due dates and times for the activities will adhere to the Central Time Zone.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Ralph Waldo Emerson "*Self-Reliance*" and *Other Essays*
- Nathaniel Hawthorne *Blithedale Romance*
- Harriet Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
- Herman Melville *Moby Dick*
- Edgar Allan Poe "*The Gold Bug*" and *Other Tales*
- Fanny Fern *Ruth Hall*
- William Gilmore Simms *A Golden Christmas*
- Barbara Packer *The Transcendentalists*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Romanticism, with its roots in Europe, takes a unique form when considered in American texts and contexts. In the first part of the nineteenth century, America went through extraordinary and irrevocable changes in terms of its technology, gender ideologies, sexual morality, conceptions of human nature and the natural world, religion, race relations, cultural identity, and the profession of authorship. We will discuss the ways in which cultural contexts (and contests) gave rise to specific Romantic texts and determined their meanings. The canonical and emerging texts we will study, then, will serve as windows into uniquely American sites of contention and transformation. We will also discuss how our texts have helped define (or revise) the character of major movements and genres within American Romanticism, including Transcendentalism, the Gothic, the sentimental novel, the slave narrative, and the American epic.

COURSE CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:

The American and European roots, and philosophical, literary, and social tenets, of American Romanticism as reflected in the works of recognized romantics (Poe, the Transcendentalists, Melville) as well as of non-canonical figures.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Analyze major areas of American Romanticism, including Transcendentalism, Dark Romanticism, the slave narrative, and southern Romanticism

- Analyze relevant cultural and political history including the advent of women's rights, the movement for the abolition of slavery, the beginnings of the American environmental movement, and American history of religion.
- Practice the conventions of literary scholarship, including the conference paper proposal and the scholarly essay.
- Select and evaluate current scholarship in the field.

COURSE THEMES:

True to an adult learning environment, this course will present many sensitive topics, including race, class, sexuality, gender, religion, profanity, politics, and violence. I encourage you not to shy away from these topics in class, but you must be aware that others have different backgrounds and hold different opinions on any given subject than you, so please think before you speak. At the same time, it is of utmost importance that we all be willing to be open to and considerate of the thoughts and comments of others. Please respect each individual's right to have and share her/his ideas and opinions. Listening to others' perspectives should help create greater understanding of the diversity of experience in contemporary America. As chief facilitator, I will do my best to make our differences of background and opinion enhance the course.

ATTENDANCE:

Absences are costly in terms of missed learning opportunities. If you must miss a class, you should contact me so I can tell you how to make up missed work. Upon your third absence, you automatically fail the course. Do not come to class late or leave early. You will miss important announcements which I give at the beginning and end of each class. Active participation is expected at all times. This means you will treat our time together in Teams meetings the way you would a face-to-face class. Your camera will be turned on, you will actively pay attention to speakers, and you will not "multi-task" – that includes texting, emailing, walking around, and having conversations with others even with your microphone off. Be advised that recording this (and any) class at UTPB, without the consent of the instructor, is a violation of university policy. Violation of this attendance policy could lead to your being removed from the class.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:

All classroom behavior should enhance the instructor's ability to conduct the class and the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (*Code of Student Life*). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be muted, have video turned off, or removed from the Teams class. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or referral to the University's Behavioral Intervention Team. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, discussion groups, etc.

PAPER POLICIES:

Use MLA formatting and citation methods. If you don't already have one, you should purchase a copy of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed., by Joseph Gibaldi. Paper grades will drop 1/3 letter grade for each day your paper is late.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses. Those who plagiarize will fail the class and will be referred to the Vice President for Student Affairs. Additional punishments could include expulsion from the university. For complete information on UTPB student conduct and discipline procedures consult the [University's Handbook:Scholastic Dishonesty](#).

COURSE INCOMPLETE/WITHDRAWAL/GRADE APPEAL:

Students are required to complete the course within the semester they are signed up. Incomplete grades for the course are given only in unusual circumstances. Students must contact me prior to the scheduled last class to request an incomplete. Find information and dates regarding drops and withdrawals consult the University Handbook: [Drops and Withdrawals](#) and [Appeal Process](#).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

This class, in compliance with the American Disabilities Act, provides “reasonable accommodations” for students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who is requesting an accommodation must provide me with official documentation from Mr. Paul Leverington, ADA Officer for Students, Mesa Building 4242/4901 East University, Odessa, TX 79762. Ph: 432-552-4696, email ada@utpb.edu. For the accessibility and privacy statements of external tools used within courses, go to [Accessibility and Privacy Statements](#).

ONLINE STUDENT AUTHENTICATION:

UTPB requires that each student who registers for an online course is the same student who participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course. UTPB’s Distance Education Policy requires faculty members to employ at least two methods of verification to ensure student identities. To access online courses students must login to the UTPB learning management system using their unique personal identifying username and secure password. UTPB’s Distance Education Policy requires at least one additional student identification method within the course that has been determined and approved by the faculty or academic program. This course satisfies the second method of student authentication by submitting to the Authentication Assignment in Canvas. Approved up to date photo identifications are: passports, government issued identification, driver’s licenses, military ID from DoD. Dual credit and early college high school students use school district identifications.

COMPUTER SKILLS, TECHNICAL AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:

Students will need free access to a computer with a microphone and camera and must be familiar with the Microsoft Teams platform. You will also need to create word processing files, save files, submit files, and be familiar with how to use the UTPB Library Inter-library Loan service. Students can use cloud version of Word, PowerPoint and other Microsoft products through use of their UTPB Outlook 365 and UTPB email address. For more information refer to [UTPB Office 365 Page](#). For computer technical requirements, please see [Technical Requirements](#).

GRADES:

- Short paper, 20%. 5-7 pages. You will explore a literary text or figure in context of an early 19th century periodical. More details provided in the short paper assignment.
- Bibliography and presentation, 10%. Each student will also be asked to compose and present one short annotated bibliography. More details provided in the bibliography and presentation assignment.
- Discussion papers (two page), 20% total. More details provided in the discussion paper assignments. Please note that I might add critical essays to the scheduled class readings to help with this assignment. There will be 10 of these submitted through the semester.
- Seminar paper, 40%. 15-20 pages, due at the end of the term. A 300-500 word prospectus and bibliography will be due in advance. You are expected to produce a well-researched and critically savvy contribution to the field of American Romanticism. Your paper should be a rough draft of a conference presentation. I will give detailed instructions for this paper about midway through the semester during a Teams meeting. You should be prepared to take notes.
- Class Participation, 10%. Since our class is a seminar, energetic and collegial participation is assumed for each class period. I will distribute midterm evaluations of your participation.

COMMUNICATION, GRADING, AND FEEDBACK:

As a general practice, I will return graded work to you with feedback within a week after you submit it to me. Should you need to reach me for any reason, feel free to phone me any time. If I am not able to answer, leave a message and I will get back to you within one working day. I will also return all emails within one working day.

TIME MANAGEMENT:

As you know, a graduate English class requires a good deal of work outside of scheduled class time. Please allow yourself plenty of time to complete required reading and writing before each class meeting.

PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCIES:

- Computer Crash: Not having a working computer or a crashed computer during the semester will NOT be considered as an acceptable reason for not completing course activities at a scheduled time. Please identify a second computer before the semester begins, that you can use when/if your personal computer crashes.
- Complete Loss of Contact: If you lose contact with course connectivity completely (i.e. you cannot contact me via Canvas or email), please call me and leave message regarding connectivity loss and contact information.
- Lost/Corrupt/Missing Files: You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external drive, UTPB Outlook 365 OneDrive, or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g. virus infection, computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) you may be required to resubmit the files.

COURSE EVALUATION:

During the last two weeks of class, there will be an announcement in Canvas, an email, and a button in your course navigation that will take you to a course evaluation. The evaluation is anonymous and your responses are confidential. I sincerely appreciate your feedback!

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:

SERVICE	CONTACT
ADA Accommodation/Support	Services for Students with Disabilities (432) 552-4696
Testing Services	Testing Services & Academic Accommodations Department (432) 552-2630
Graduate Advising	(432) 552-2530 Graduate Studies
Bookstore	UTPB Campus Bookstore (432) 552-0220
Email, Office 365, my.utpb.edu	Information Technology
Financial Aid and Scholarship	UTPB Financial Aid (432) 552-2620
Library	The J. Conrad Dunagan Library Online at (432) 552-2370
Registrar	UTPB Registrar (432) 552-2635
Student Services	Student Services (432) 552-2600
Technical Support	Canvas 1-866-437-0867
Tutoring & Learning Resources	If you are taking courses through UTPB the following links provide services: Smarthinking Online Tutoring (provides tutoring services), SmarterMeasure (measures learner readiness for online course).

IMPORTANT ACADEMIC DATES:

UTPB [Academic Calendar](#)

If you have any questions about course policies or requirements, please feel free to ask me.

Class Schedule (Subject to Change)

Many of our course readings are available through hyperlinks, below.

1/13 Course Introduction

1/20 Edgar Allan Poe "[The Raven](#)"

Poe "[The Philosophy of Composition](#)"

Margaret Fuller "[A Short Essay on Critics](#)"

Walt Whitman "[Preface](#)" to *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

Herman Melville from "Hawthorne and his Mosses" (*Moby Dick* 525-529).

1/27 Packer *The Transcendentalists* 1-128

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Divinity School Address" (Dover), "Self-Reliance" (Dover). "[The American Scholar](#)"

[Last day to drop a class without creating an academic record]

2/3 Packer *The Transcendentalists* 129-274

Emerson "[Fugitive Slave Law](#)"

Thoreau "[Resistance to Civil Government](#)"

Margaret Fuller "[The Great Lawsuit](#)"

2/10 Thoreau "[Walking](#)"

2/17 Walt Whitman "[Song of Myself](#)"

2/24 Nathaniel Hawthorne *Blithedale Romance*. **Short Paper due.**

[Brook Farm Association for Industry and Education](#)

3/3 Hawthorne cont., Edgar Allan Poe "Ligeia," "Black Cat," "Cask of Amontillado" (Dover).

3/10 Poe cont., Herman Melville *Moby Dick*. [3/19: last day to drop a course]

3/17 *Moby-Dick* cont. **Seminar Prospectus due**

3/24 Fanny Fern *Ruth Hall*.

3/31 Fern cont. Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

4/7 Jacobs cont.

4/14 William Gilmore Simms, *A Golden Christmas*

4/21 Wrap up.

4/28 at midnight **Seminar paper due.**

Sample Syllabus