

American Literature from 1865 to Present: 2328.501  
 Room 3247  
 Tues. / Thurs. 9:00-10:15 A.M.



**Name:** Eileen Peters

**Email:** [peters\\_e@utpb.edu](mailto:peters_e@utpb.edu) for class questions and information use the class Inbox.

**Telephone:**

**Office** 432-552-2300

**Cell** 432-288-7769 This is the best number! I do answer texts.

**Office Location:** MB 4162

**Office Hours:**

**Education:** BA, MA: University of Texas of the Permian Basin

**Research Interests:** 19th Century Fiction, Poetry, and Art; Pointillism; Humanism in Education; Composition Theory

The students can set up appointments with me during any of these times but if this conflicts with someone's schedule, they can message me through the Inbox in Canvas and we'll work something out. Thank you!

Welcome to American Literature from 1865: 2328.001. I am looking forward to our class. I believe in student-centered classes where the exchange of information and knowledge is the key to learning. You are expected to read all the assignments and to participate in discussions.

Literature is a subjective art. We will discuss throughout the course the uses of our senses and reasoning as an establishment or *our* reality and its influence in our reading. Go to the sites under assignments Yanny vs Laurel and Blue/Gold Dress. below and begin to explore your reality as with others:

This first assignment above is fun and will help you understand that what you read is subjective. You see the world through your own knowledge and senses. Literature plays with subjectivity. This will be a major part of our exploration of American literary philosophies, viewpoints, and emergence into modern American works.

This course surveys American writers from the mid-Civil War period to today. Topics for discussion include the evolution of spirituality and conceptions of God and material motives for exploration and settlement, Native American responses to colonization and cultural imperialism,

evolving conceptions of human nature and the natural world, the struggle against new-slavery, the quest for a national literature, shifting gender ideologies, and the struggle against conformity and materialism. Numerous texts, both canonical and emerging, will give us ample opportunity to explore these issues in distinctly American contexts. In addition to exposing you to the diversity and range of what we call American literature, this course will challenge you to read closely, think critically, and write clearly.

### Prerequisite

The **prerequisite** for this course is ENGL 1302 (Texas common course numbering system) or an equivalent second-semester college writing class. The reason for this prerequisite is that the readings are not easy, and neither are the papers; you need a solid grasp of how to think about language and how to write a thesis-and-support paper.

### Course Textbooks

Package One (Vols. C, D, & E) of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (9<sup>th</sup> edition).

### Course Objectives/Measurable Learning Outcomes

By the end of this semester of study, each student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. Respond critically to works in arts and humanities.
4. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
5. Develop an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the humanities or arts.

### Course Core Curriculum Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- **Critical Thinking Skills:** Students will draw well-reasoned logically supported conclusions from information.
- **Communication Skills:** Students will demonstrate effective written, oral, and visual communication skills.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students will demonstrate intercultural competence, civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students will be able to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

These Objectives and Learning Outcomes will be assessed using the university's Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility rubrics.

You will frequently engage in class discussions and in peer review of drafts of papers.

Each of the course modules focuses on a specific topic and culminates in a paper.

Participation in the collaborative activities and in the peer review of papers will help you master the concepts associated with each topic. Failing to participate will not only hinder your understanding of the topics but will lower your grade. Peer review will be a requirement. You get 20 points for your rough draft and 10 points for participating in the review.

### Etiquette and Netiquette Guidelines

We will sometimes discuss adult-themed topics that can be controversial or politically charged. I ask that you do not use language that demeans people based on gender, sexual preference, race, ethnicity or age.

Remember also that everything you type on the discussion board or in papers will be public, meaning that everyone in the class will be able to see what you write. Online, this can be tricky, so make sure to 1) Avoid posting anything too personal (like information about grades); 2) Avoid all caps (considered shouting in online conversations); 3) Avoid text-messaging acronyms; 3) Make sure to clearly distinguish between your thoughts and those of other students; 4) Be careful with sarcasm and humor, since tone doesn't always translate online.

### **Text Messaging: 432-288-7769**

The instructor of this course utilizes text messages as another form of communication. It is important that you state upfront who is sending the message. As is the case with all electronic communication to your instructor, be mindful of proper English grammar and tone. Allow 24 – 48 hours for a reply, though in most cases replies will be much quicker. Always include your full name, course number, and section number in each message. Make sure your text messages are questions that can be easily answered by your instructor in 140 characters or less; otherwise, consider writing a message in the Inbox of the class on Canvas or making a telephone call.

### Overview of Sections

The course will focus on the following modules.

1. **American Literature 1865-1914 Book C**
2. **American Literature from 1914-1945 Book D**
3. **American Literature from 1945 to the Present Book E**

Under each section, you'll find instructions for completing each activity, including the time frame within which the activity must be completed. You must pay close attention to this schedule.

**All posting must be done by midnight at the end of the stated day.**

This syllabus is not, as they say, "carved in stone." Any changes will be announced in class so it is important for you to come to class and also make sure you get information from classmates so that if you are not present you can call them and find out what went on in class.

### Computer Skills and Software Requirements

To effectively complete the requirements of the course, you must have the following:

- An e-mail address linked to Canvas Inbox (checked daily).
- Daily access to your UTPB Canvas account.
- A working computer and Internet connection, which will allow you to receive course materials.
- A copy of Microsoft Word (or, some compatible word processing program).
- All papers and work must be submitted in rtf

Students, Faculty and Staff at UTPB can obtain software licensing and media for selected Microsoft titles at very low cost through a software agreement: <http://www.utpb.edu/services/ird/information-for-students/software-distribution/microsoft-select> or the bookstore on campus.

### Papers

All papers are to be written in MLA format with a works cited page. On the first two papers at least 2 sources are needed + posting them on the discussion board. Make sure that you know how to properly quote poetry and indent quotes.

You will write three papers this semester. Papers 1 & 2 will 100 points each and should be 4-5 full pages. While the third paper will be 200 points and will require at least 8 sources needs to be five-seven pages long. All papers and drafts of papers are to be typed. (A draft is a first attempt at a writing assignment that you turn in on days marked DRAFT DUE on the course calendar.

Drafts **are** commented on so that when you turn in your final draft of the paper on days marked PAPER DUE; you will have a chance to do your best.) Late assignments (of any kind) will not be accepted without prior acknowledgement that you need more time for the paper.

**Submitting Papers and other assignments:** You will submit all of your final papers on Canvas. I use Microsoft Word's *Track Changes* program to electronically comment on and grade your papers. You are responsible for reading and taking my comments seriously.

### Journals (MLA formatted)

Journals are due each week on Fridays by midnight. Each journal is to be two full pages long and is to be an analytical inquiry into one or two readings of the week. If I specify the work, you must analyze it and can use another reading for a compare or contrast situational piece.

**Word Journals (One is the midterm and the second is the final.)**

Understanding the words used and in the situation they are placed is important for comprehension. Many times students are told that they can understand the word from context. You cannot. You need to use a dictionary (preferably the OED in our library system). You need to make note of the work the word is used in, the page number it is found on, the definition and then make a sentence. There needs to be at least 50 words in each word journal. This needs to be formatted in MLA format and each definition must be numbered. I will not count the words. Submit it online in Canvas.

### Grading Criteria for Papers

A – an "A" essay is not merely engaging – it is convincing. The "A" essay is also marked by stylistic finesse: the title and opening paragraph are engaging; the transitions are artful; the phrasing is tight, fresh, and highly specific; the sentence structure is varied; the tone enhanced the purpose of the paper. Finally, the "A" essay, because of its careful organization and development, imparts a feeling of wholeness and unusual clarity.

B – a "B" essay delivers substantial information – that is, substantial in both quantity and interest value. Its specific points are logically ordered, well-developed, and unified around a clear organizing principle that is apparent early in the paper. The opening paragraph draws the reader in; the closing paragraph is both conclusive and thematically related to the opening. The transitions between paragraphs are for the most part smooth; the sentence structure is pleasingly varied. The mark of "B" writing is that it engages and entertains its reader.

C – a "C" essay is an average essay. It serves to convey an idea to the reader; it demonstrates knowledge of the subject it treats; mechanical errors are few and do not jeopardize the sense of the essay. However, the reader will be aware of improvements that could have been made. For instance, several paragraphs may not be fully developed; the opening paragraph may not draw the reader in; the concluding paragraph may offer only a perfunctory wrap-up; the organization may not be well suited to the topic; the sentences may follow a few predictable patterns; the diction may not always be precise and effective. Thus, while "C" writing will serve its writer in most academic and life situations there is room for improvement. A "C" in our writing courses is our way of expressing confidence that the writer who earns it is able to function at the college level.

D – A "D" essay is appropriate to the assignment but does not successfully fill one or more to the next level of expectations regarding student writing. It does not communicate an idea, treat a subject or demonstrate mastery of written language and conventions well enough to be considered adequate. It may in some manner be incoherent, so that the reader must guess at the meanings of sentences or whole paragraphs; the reader may be unable to see how the thoughts of the writer are connected from paragraph to paragraph. Language may be used incorrectly; grammar may be so consistently poor that it detracts from a reader's attention to the material the essay covers; the whole idea may be improperly or hastily examined and poorly conveyed. Nevertheless, the reader will find that his/her struggle to understand the essay is in some measure rewarded by the exposition of a subject that the writer has earnestly engaged. No essay shows a lack of mastery over the mechanical rules of written English can earn more than a "D."

F – We require that all work be done by the person asking to receive credit for it, that the work done suits the assignment given, and that the writing be an act of communication. Any failure regarding the first or second requirements, no matter how good in other respects, must be graded "F." An essay that does not manage to communicate the thinking of its author, does not treat a subject adequately, or does not demonstrate command of standard written English will also earn an "F."

## **Project**

You will be required to make a presentation or two on a section and one on your third paper. An attachment here is to help you with making a PowerPoint. [Making a Power Point Un..docx](#)

## **Attendance Policy:**

Attendance will be taken every day 5 minutes after class starts. 90 points is given for perfect attendance. The only excusable absences will be religious holidays and school sponsored events. You are expected to stay for the entire class. No homework will be accepted after the roll is taken.

## **Disability Statement:**

*Students with Disabilities: The University of Texas of the Permian Basin in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who is requesting an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter from the ADA Officer for Students. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. \*\*Adapted from UTSA ADA syllabus statement.\*\**

**ADA Officer for Students: Mr. Paul Leverington**

**Address: Mesa Building 4243**

**Voice Telephone: 432-552-3702**

**Email: [Leverington\\_P@utpb.edu](mailto:Leverington_P@utpb.edu)**

The definition of a disability for purposes of ADA is that she or he (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantively limits a major life activity, (2) has a record of such an impairment or, (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

## **Devices:**

No devices of communication, entertainment, and/ or those that interfere with the class are allowed. All phones are to be turned off and no use is allowed in class of any such devices.

## **Acceptable Student Behavior:**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or 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 instructed to leave the classroom. 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, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

### **Grading Policy:**

This class will be graded on a 1000 points process: 1000-900 (A); 899-800 (B); 799-700 (C); 699-600 (D); and 599 and below (F). **All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class.** If you know you are going to be late to class, please email your work before the start of class the morning it is due (no work will be accepted passed the beginning of class on the due date). Late assignments will not be accepted. I will not accept excuses like "Something went wrong with the email system." Send it twice even three times. The exception is the weekly journal. Send it in every Friday before midnight.

### **Plagiarism and Scholastic Dishonesty:**

I take plagiarism very seriously! Read and understand the rules: Do not steal others work!

UTPB's policy: "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, **the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person**, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student such as, **but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor or the attempt to commit such acts.**"

"Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to the appropriation of, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression and media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit."

If you are caught plagiarizing in any manner you will be reported to the disciplinary officer. The course of action taken will depend on what the disciplinary officer deems necessary. **You will receive a zero on the assignment.**

### **First Week:**

Tues. Aug. 24: **You need to consider starting Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* starting on 119.** You will need to spend time on this book every week. Please begin it now! Intro to class and Laurel and Yanny and the blue/black or white and gold dress (See the first page of syllabus). Intro into the book and class structure.

Thur 26: Laurel and Yanny and blue can black and gold and white paper. Read intro to literature 1865-1914 (1-16).

Fri. 27: Journals are due every Friday. This week on the what you expect and or what to learn in this class. Must be two complete pages.

### **Second Week:**

Tues 31. Have Walt Whitman sections read 19-22 and 23-60 and “from Democratic Vistas” (85-88).

Thurs. Sept. 3: Discussion of Whitman and Emily Dickinson 88-85 and poems 39, 112, 124, 207, 236, 269, 320 (twice), 409, 448, 477, 479, 591, 764.

Fri. 4: Journal # 1 due by midnight. It needs to be over the intro to book C.

### **Third Week:**

Tues. 7: Test Due on Dickinson and discussion of her work.

Thurs. 9: Mark Twain 111-115, “The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” 115-119, and the section on the Critical Controversy: 303-317.

Fri. 10: Journal due on the Critical Controversy section.

### **Fourth Week:**

Tues. Feb. 1: Choose an author from book C and their work to analyze. Make sure you can find enough of their work and analyses of their work to write 3 full pages of analysis of their work’s place in American literature, the need for this form of work, the purpose of the author, and why they are important in the genre and American literature. The rough draft is due. The rough draft is due on Tuesday Sept. 8. **DO NOT TELL ME THE STORIES!**

Wed. 3: Kate Chopin 537-538, “Desiree’s Baby” 538-541 and “Voices from Native America” 660-669 and Nicholas Black Elk and John G. Neihardt 682-687.

Fri. 4: Journal due. Test on Chopin and “Voices from Native America”.

### **Fifth Week:**

\*Tues. 8: Rough Draft due. Bring to class 3 copies of your rough draft. Test due online.

Thurs. 10: Realism and Naturalism (955-976). Stephen Crane 1002-1004, “The Open Boat” 1048-1064 and “From ‘War is Kind’” 1065-1067.

Fri. 14: Journal due. Test on Realism and Naturalism due Monday.

### **Sixth Week:**

Sept. 15: Test due online. Paul Laurence Dunbar (1093-1101) and, “Becoming American in the Gilded Age” (1157-1187).

Thurs. 17: Discussion on Dunbar and the views at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century on America’s social and democratic views.

\*\*Fri. 18: Journal due. Final draft of paper 1 is due online by Saturday 19th by midnight.

### **Seventh Week:**

Tues. 22: Volume D 1914-1945 begins (3-23), Edgar Lee Masters (24-27), Gertrude Stein (184-190).

Thurs. 24: “World War I and Its Aftermath” (201-217). Begin paper 2, same requirements as paper 1.

Fri. 25: Journal due. Robert Frost and recordings (230, 233, and 238-240), Carl Sandburg (266-269). Quiz (100).

### **Eighth Week:**

Sept. Tues. 29: Test due online. William Carlos Williams (281-285), Ezra Pound (293-295, 297-299).

Oct. Thurs. 1: Read the “Modernist Manifestos” (315-335), T.S. Eliot (352—358, 359-362), Zora Neale Hurston (515-536).

Fri. 2: Journal due.

### **Ninth Week:**

\*Tues. Oct. 6. Rough draft due. Copies 2 + put on discussion board.

Turs. 8: Discussion of Langston Hughes (833-644), John Steinbeck (845-853), and Richard Wright (957-966).

Fri. 9 Journal due.

### **Tenth Week:**

Oct. Tues. 13: Volume E American Literature since 1945 (3-23) Theodore Roethke (30-31, 34-35), Elizabeth Bishop (54-56, 65-66, and 72-73).

Thurs. 15: Robert Lowell 286-294 and 298-305; Gwendolyn Brooks 305-316 and Patricia Highsmith 316-327.

\*\*Fri. 16: Journal due for this week’s reading. Paper 2 due.

**Eleventh Week:**

Oct. 20: Kurt Vonnegut (342-355) and Denise Levertov 386-390

Oct. 22: Postmodern Manifestos 369-384

Oct. 23: Journal due.

**Twelfth Week:**

Oct. 27: Flannery O'Connor 426-460, Allen Ginsberg (485-499), and John Ashbery 511-527

Thurs. 22: W.S. Merwin 528-531 and 538-539; James Wright 539-544; and Anne Sexton 549-557.

Fri. 21: Journal due. Need to know your last subject on paper 3 (5-7 pgs.)

**Thirteenth Week:**

Nov. 3: Philip K. Dick 557-569; Ursula K. Le Guin 587-595; Toni Morrison 605-620; and Gloria Anzaldua 831-852.

Thurs. 5: Leslie Marmon Silko (1041-1048), Art Spiegelman (1049-1066), Li-Young Li (1122-1128).

Fri. 6: Journal due.

**Fourteenth Week:**

Tues. 10.: Creative Nonfiction (1129-1151), and Sherman Alexie 1165-1180).

Thurs. 12:

Fri. 13: Journal due.

**Fifteenth Week:**

Nov. 17 -20: Readings will be assigned. James Baldwin "Going to Meet the Man"; Post Modern Manifestos.

20 Friday: Journal due.

**Sixteenth Week: Thanksgiving week. Monday classes Tuesday check with me. First week in Dec. will be working on papers.**

**Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> Finals Week will be discussed.**

You will need all your time to write your final paper worth 150 points.

**Final paper:** Final paper due (5 full pages) Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Sample Syllabus