**American Literature I:**

**New World Contact to the Civil War**

LITT 2104:001  
Spring 2014  
T/TH 2:30-4:20, B002

Dr. Deborah Gussman  
Office: F-137  
Office Hours: T/TH 1:15-2:15 pm and by appointment.  
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**Required Texts**

* Nina Baym, ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. VI, Shorter 8th edition (2013). ISBN 978-0-393-91886
* Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* [1850]. Dover 1994. ISBN978-0-486-28048-6

Please make every effort to purchase the editions of the textbooks listed above. Used versions can be found in the bookstore and online if cost is an issue, but working with the same texts makes class discussions and paper writing much more effective.

**Course Description and Objectives**

This course is an introduction to representative works and authors in American literature from the Colonial period through the Civil War. The course will explore the development of a national literature by examining the writings of both well-known and newly- recovered writers. The objectives of this course include introducing you to the significant ideas, themes, movements, and styles of early American literature and culture. You will be reading, discussing, and interpreting works of literature, with an emphasis on the close reading and analysis of primary sources.

**Course Policies**

Attendance: Regular attendance is essential to your success in this course. Occasionally, circumstances may arise that make it impossible for you to attend class. Accordingly, I permit each student to miss **four** classes without penalty. Please note that there is no distinction between an excused absence and an unexcused absence, so make sure to save your four absences for true emergencies. **Students will be penalized 3 percentage points per each additional absence.** If you are absent from class, you are responsible for obtaining notes and assignments you miss from a classmate.

Lateness disrupts the learning experience of other students, so make every effort to arrive on time. Two instances of lateness (or leaving before the end of class) will count as one absence.

Participation and Classroom Etiquette: The success of this course depends on the engagement and thoughtful participation of each student. You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned reading and writing assignments, and you should be prepared to ask questions, share your insights, and participate in classroom discussions and other activities. Make sure to bring copies of your reading assignments to class with you.

Please be respectful and courteous to your fellow classmates. Refrain from getting up to leave class to buy snacks, smoke, or make phone calls. I do not mind eating or drinking during class, as long as it is not distracting or disruptive to others. I do not allow the use of cell phones during class time.

Late Assignments: One of your responsibilities in this course is to complete your work by the specified deadline. Deadlines for all assignments are listed on the syllabus, and you are expected to manage your time and priorities throughout the semester in order to successfully meet these deadlines. I will not accept essay assignments electronically unless prior arrangements have been made, and late assignments will be subject to a 5-point penalty per day late. Mid-term and final exam dates are fixed and will not be re-arranged to accommodate individual needs. In accordance with the College’s policy, I do not give incomplete grades unless there are extremely serious circumstances, and then, only by prior arrangement.

Academic Honesty: You should make yourself aware of Richard Stockton College’s Academic Honesty Policy, which can be found in the Student Handbook: <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=67&pageID=2#10>

You should also make yourself familiar with the penalties for violations of the policy and your rights as a student.

Please be aware that plagiarism (one form of academic dishonesty) includes, but may not be limited to: using all or part of a source, either directly or in paraphrase, either intentionally or unintentionally, whether that source is published, or online, or taken from a fellow or former student, *without properly acknowledging that source.* If you are found to have represented the work or ideas of others as your own, intentionally, or unintentionally, you will face serious consequences, as follows:

1. If this is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarized, he/she will receive an "F" for that paper or assignment and/or for the course.  
  
2. For second offenses of plagiarism, the student will receive an F for the course.  
  
3. Whenever possible, a student who is found to have plagiarized a paper or assignment, in full or in part, should meet with the professor of the class for which the paper is written in order to review and discuss the suspect work.

Additionally, in accordance with Stockton College policy, I will report all instances of plagiarism to the Provost of Academic Affairs. Students may be subject to discipline by the college, such as being placed on academic probation or expelled. If you have a question specific to a paper you are working on, please bring it to my attention.

Special Needs: Students with disabilities who seek accommodations should contact the Learning Access Program located in J-204, (609) 652-4988. If you require special testing accommodations, be sure to arrange these with me at least two weeks prior to the examination. More information can be found at http://www2.stockton.edu/wellness/lap.html

Office Hours and E-mail: I encourage you to meet with me during my office hours to discuss questions or concerns you have about the course readings, class discussions, and assignments, or to discuss your learning needs, performance on assignments, or broader questions about literature and culture. My office hours are Tuesday and Thursday 1-2 pm and by appointment in F 137. Please use email (deborah.gussman@stockton.edu) to contact me. I check my mail regularly throughout the day, but never late at night, so trying to reach me at 2:00 am the day an assignment is due won’t be effective. Plan ahead.

**Course Requirements**:

1. Five short out of class writing assignments (approx. two pages each), plus occasional in class writing -- 40%

2. Midterm exam (identifications and short essay) – 30%

3. Final Exam (to be held during scheduled exam period). This exam is cumulative and will include short answer questions, identifications, and short essays. 30%

**Grading Scale:**

100-93: A 82.9-80: B- 69.9-67: D+

92.9-90: A- 79.9-77: C+ 66.9-63: D

89.9-87: B+ 76.9-73: C 62.9-60: D-

86.9-83: B 72.9-70: C- 59.9 & below: F

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**CLASS SCHEDULE** (subject to revision; check Blackboard regularly for updates)

**New World Encounters**

 T 1/21 Snow day, class cancelled. Introductions, syllabus, handouts: Caliban's speech from The Tempest

 TH 1/23    Introductions, syllabus, handouts: Caliban's speech from The Tempest

T 1/28 The Iroquois Creation Story (20-23); Samuel de Champlain, from *The Voyages of the Sieur de Champlain* (43-47); Christopher Columbus, from Letter to Luis Santangel, and Letter To Ferdinand and Isabella (24-28); Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, from the *Relation* (28-35).

TH 1/30 John Smith, from *The Generall History of Virginia*, and from *A Description of New England* (57-72)

 T 2/4 William Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Ch. IX, Ch. X, Ch. XI, Ch. XIX (72-89). **Assignment #1 due.**

 TH 2/6 John Winthrop, from "A Modell of Christian Charity" (90-102); Roger Williams, From *The Bloody Tenet of Persecution* (107-108), “A Letter to The Town of Providence” (109). Delete this next time, include Key to Languages excerpt

**A 19th-Century Revision**

 T 2/11 Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter,* “The Custom House” and Chapters 1-6 (1-68).

TH 2/13 Class cancelled, snow again.

T 2/18 Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter,* Chapters 7-13 (Complete character analysis assignment posted on Blackboard by noon, to be discussed in class)

TH 2/20 Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter,* Chapters 13- 24. **In class writing assignment.**

**Forms of Captivity**

 T 2/25 Mary Rowlandson, from *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration* (126-142)

**Poetry in the 17th-century**

TH 2/27 Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue”; “The Author to Her Book”; “Another [Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment,” “Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House.” Edward Taylor, from Prefatory Meditations, “Prologue,” and “Meditation 8; “Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children,” “Huswifery.”

**Saints and Sinners**

T 3/4 Cotton Mather, from the Wonders of the Invisible World (151-155); Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," (209-220).

Th 3/6 **Mid-term examination – In class**

MARCH 8 – 16 Spring Break

**Declarations of Independence**

T 3/ 18 Benjamin Franklin, from *The Autobiography* (248-308).

TH 3/20 Thomas Jefferson, from the Declaration of Independence 339-344; Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (354-387). **Assignment #3 due.**

T 3/25 Preceptorial Advising – no classes

**Poetry in the 18th Century**

TH 3/27 Philip Freneau, "The Wild Honey Suckle,” “The Indian Burying Ground,” “On The Religion of Nature” (399-401); Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” [delete- “To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth,”] “To The University of Cambridge, In New England,” [add: On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield”] “To S.M., a Young African Painter,” “To His Excellency General Washington” (403-411).

**19th-Century Fictions of the Nation**

T 4/1 Washington Irving, “Rip Van Winkle” (467-481); Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown” (621-628)

**Slavery, Race and the Making of American Literature**

TH 4/3    Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (819-839);* Sojourner Truth, Speech to the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851 (775-776).

T 4/8 Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (938-1002) **Assignment #4 due.**

**American Individualism in Prose and Poetry**

TH 4/10 Henry David Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government” (843-858); Margaret Fuller, from”The Great Lawsuit: Man Versus Men. Woman vs. Women” (752-760).

T 4/15 Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar,” “Self-Reliance” (536-566) **Assignment #5 due**

Th 4/17 Herman Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivener” 1102-1128; Edgar Allan Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart” 714-718.

T 4/ 22 Walt Whitman, from Preface to Leaves of Grass (1855) 1009-1023 next time end at 1014; "Song of Myself" 1024-1067.

TH 4/24 Emily Dickinson, 124 [216] [Safe in their Alabaster Chambers - ], 236 [324] [Some keep the Sabbath going to Church - ], 260 [288] [I’m Nobody! Who are you?], 269 [249] [Wild Nights - Wild Nights!], 320 [258] [There’s a certain Slant of light], 340 [280] [I felt a Funeral, in my Brain], 409 [303] [The Soul selects her own Society - ], 598 [632] [The Brain - is wider than the Sky - ], 620 [435] [Much Madness is divinest Sense - ], 788[709] [Publication – Is the Auction], 1263 [1129] [Tell all the Truth But Tell it Slant]

**Friday 4/25 The Really, Really Big LITT/LANG BASH**

T 4/29 Rebecca Harding Davis, “Life in the Iron Mills” (1221-1246) cancel review for final exam

TH 5/1 **Final Exam**