

**ENGL 241 American Literature 1:
From the beginning to 1865**
Section: 002 CRN: 14631

Instructor: Catherine (Wenyu) Kong

Tu/Thu Location: Clark Hall 317, Time: 1:00 pm-2:15 pm

Office: G24 Colson Hall

Email: wk0024@mix.wvu.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30, and by appointment in office or via Zoom ([Here](#)).



*This class supports the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences's commitment to fostering students' effective communication skills. The **SpeakWrite Studio in Colson Hall** offers opportunities to work one-on-one with a trained peer consultant on writing and presentation techniques. Please visit SpeakWrite.wvu.edu for more information.*

Required Texts:

The Norton Anthology American Literature, 10th ed, Volume A and B. ISBN: 978-0-393-88442-5

*Other class materials will be delivered to eCampus.

Class Goals Description:

By the end of the course, you should:

1. Gain strong familiarity with the influential literary texts of the period;
2. Understand how history and literature are intertwined with each other; and analyze literary texts through social, cultural, and historical lenses;
3. Identify, compare, and contrast different genres of literary expressions;
4. Acquire the skills of close reading and writing to interpret literature.

Introduction:

Welcome to American Literature I: From the Beginning to 1865. In this class, we will explore various genres of literature associated with the United States (and the lands that would later become the United States) from prehistory to the end of the American Civil War. We will examine what literary scholars have historically considered to be the most influential literary texts of this designated time period. We will explore how each of these texts fit into the larger "ecosystems" of their historical contexts. We will closely examine the conventions for each of the genres in this class. And of course, we will sharpen our close-reading and critical thinking skills while examining a variety of literary and historical texts.

Some questions to consider in this class include: What texts count as *Literature*? What texts count as *American Literature*? And also, as the classic American author John Green says, "Every story we hear comes from a certain point of view. And we always need to remember *who* is speaking, *why* they are speaking, and especially which voices go *unheard* and *why*." Finally (and most importantly), we will ask ourselves, *why* are these questions *important to ask in the first place*? We will explore these questions and hopefully many more as we progress throughout the semester.

Assignments:

• Participation	10 pts	10%
• Discussion Board Posts (10 posts, 2 points each)	20 pts	20%
• Midterm Exam	15 pts	15%
• Poem Recitation (Recitation + Short Analysis)	10 pts	10%
• Essays (Analysis from the reading materials)	20 pts	20%
• Final Exam	25 pts	25 %
Total	100 pts	100%

Grade Scale

A: 90 -100 Excellent Work. The assignments for this course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments are clearly organized where the authors choose compelling evidence to substantiate analysis, and deeply engage with the subject at hand in a thought-provoking manner. Writing requires no or nearly no substantive or stylistic revisions. Attend most of the classes throughout the semester. Students are well-prepared for each section and exams, and contribute meaningful, engaging conversation to the class discussions.

B: 80 – 89 Good Work. The assignments for the course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments show substantial engagement with the subject at hand, but the literary analysis is either partially incomplete, invoking weak evidence, or manifests some difficulty with organization. Written work requires some substantive revisions, but few or no stylistic ones. Students are well prepared for the class and exams and activities and understand the class conversations and occasionally contribute to the class discussions.

C: 70 – 79 Average Work. The assignments for this course have been completed, but not necessarily in a timely or professional manner. The written assignments show some effort from the students, but the analysis is incomplete; evidence is inappropriate, unrelated or there is a lack of evidence, or there is significant difficulty with organization. Written works require significant substantive or stylistic revisions. Attend classes regularly but have a certain number of absences. Students participate in class discussions, activities, pass exams, and but could perform better if the students read the class materials more thoroughly and engage with the course more.

D: 60 – 69 Less than average work. The assignments for the course have not been completed in a professional or timely manner. The written assignments show a lack of effort on the part of the students, and a lack of engagement with the assignment and the target texts. Written assignments lack analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary. Students don't read materials most of the time, and the assignments and the exam results are far from what was expected in the rubrics.

F: 0 – 59 Inadequate work. The assignments for the course have not been completed. Written assignments, when submitted, show a significant lack of effort on the part of the student, and a lack of engagement with the assignment and the subject matter of the course. Such work is marked by the absence of analysis, evidence, and organization; engagement with the course materials is necessary before extensive revisions are even possible. Students basically never showed up in the classroom, and never prepared for the class or exams. There is no engagement with the course materials and most of the assignments are missing.

Attendance Policy

This is a face-to-face course, so we meet at regularly scheduled times each week. *You may **not** choose to "go online." You must complete this course as a face-to-face class.*

Attendance and grades are highly correlated. We know that sometimes personal situations and required university events make it impossible for you to be in class. We recommend that you attend class every session. Significant absences will negatively impact your understanding of the literary materials and your final grades.

Generally speaking: **If you continuously disengage with the course for over 3 weeks (i.e., 6 class periods) in any form (e.g. no assignment submission, no participation in any class activities) without any reason, you will automatically fail the course.** If a circumstance arises that drastically impacts your attendance (e.g. serious illness, family tragedy, etc.), please let me know as soon as possible.

Assignment Descriptions

1. Discussion Board Posts (DB posts) (2 pts each, 20 pts in total)

The Discussion Board is a place for you to share thoughtful words after you finish the assigned reading. It helps you to engage in our class contents and communicate with your classmates and instructor. I will provide some open-ended questions on the discussion board to help you navigate your thoughts when you compose your post. **All DB posts will be due before Thursday's classes.**

For each DB post, you are expected to:

- 1) State what your opinions might be. In other words, answer the question, "What do you think?"
- 2) State *why* you think what you think. Examine your own experiences, beliefs, or knowledge. Please provide references, textual quotations, and/or links to materials that reinforce your opinion.
- 3) Briefly reply to one of your classmates' posts.
- 4) Draft **at least 100** words for your own post.

Evaluation of DB Posts

- If you turn in all of the posts and they are concise, substantial, and readable and reach the requirements above, you will earn full points for this section. There are no right or wrong answers, as long as you can find original texts to back up your opinion.
- Missing any posts will automatically influence your grade, as well as your participation grade of the course. Unrelated discussions will be counted as invalid for this section.

2. Midterm Exam (15 pts)

We will hold one in-class exam before the midterm. You are expected to perform detailed analysis of the materials we've read in class so far, and the exams will be graded in the following weeks as part of your midterm grades.

3. Poem Recitation (5pts for in-class recitation, 5 pts for short poetry analysis, 10 pts in total)

- In-class recitation: Please pick a poem of 20 lines or less—or a ~20-line excerpt from a longer poem—from volume B of the anthology. Read it aloud to the class at the time you signed up for the assignment (You can choose either of the sections in Week 11.). Practice ahead of time so that you read smoothly and naturally, with appropriate expression but not exaggerating.
- Short Poetry Analysis
Based on the poem/excerpt of the poem you choose for the recitation, please compose a brief interpretation of the material. You are expected to explore **a specific topic** for this assignment. You might want to discuss the themes, rhythm/rhyme, shapes (graphology), points of view, poetic devices, dictation, etc. of the poem. Your analysis should be around **300** words.

4. Essays: Analyzing literary texts (2 essays, 10 pts each, 20 pts in total)

Throughout the semester, you will compose 2 brief essays where you analyze specific literary texts from our reading in class. Each essay is about **600-800 words** with proper format and citation styles (e. g. MLA).

You are expected to perform a close reading to interpret the work. You will need to include a thesis statement and use evidence from both primary texts and at least one peer-reviewed, academic source to support your claims. This paper should demonstrate your ability to read, analyze, organize, and synthesize primary and secondary sources in order to craft a short argumentative essay about the subjects we have been discussing throughout the semester.

The paper length is a suggestion, not a mandate, but you should hit the minimum page requirements for each assignment. Research is required for your paper. Your work should reflect careful reading and thinking about your subject. **Do not simply summarize the plot of a work, or simply repeat your class notes in your paper.**

Rubric for Essays	Poor 0-4	Satisfactory 4-6	Good 6-8	Excellent 8-10
Argumentative Thesis				
Close Reading of Text(s)				
Use of Secondary Source				
Synthesis of Ideas				
Consideration of Audience/Conventions				
TOTAL: _____ / 10				

4. Final Exam

By the end of the semester, we will hold the second in-class exam. You are expected to perform detailed analysis of the materials we've read in class so far, and the exams will be graded in the following weeks as part of your final grades.

Feedback

For DB posts, I will provide summative comments during the class. For other writing assignments and exams, I will provide brief feedback via eCampus and return exam papers. You are also welcome to meet me during office hours or by appointment for additional feedback.

Office Hours and Emails

Office hours are an excellent opportunity to talk one-on-one about your class, ask questions, and get feedback on your work. [You can choose to meet me in my office or via Zoom during my office hours \(Thursdays 2:00-3:00\) or by appointment.](#)

Zoom Meeting ID: 302 087 6019

Passcode: 123abcdef

Join by Skype for Business

<https://wvu.zoom.us/j/3020876019>

You can also use the email address on this syllabus to ask quick questions or notify me of any urgent matters that need attention. I will typically respond within 24 hours. I will not review papers via email beyond the regular feedback cycle. You must schedule an appointment for that.

Class Policies

1. This class includes a certain amount of reading and writing. **Please read the assigned reading before each class period, and turn in any writing assignment on time to earn your participation grade.** Remember, participation is more than sitting through the course at the site without any form of engagement. If you are **absent**, please check updates on eCampus to keep track of your coursework. It is **your responsibility** to review the class materials and prepare for the exams. If you want to discuss what you missed in detail, make an appointment to meet with me.
2. All written assignments must be typed in a standard font, 12-point type, double-spaced, using Word/Pages/Google docs. All WVU students have free access to MS Word for PCs and for Macs. See <https://wvu.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1976/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=12524>. MLA citation methodology is our default method in English, **but you can use what is most common in your major**. Consistency and accuracy are what matter most.
3. **Submit ALL assignments to eCampus.** There will be a submission box for you to turn in your homework. Keep copies of all your work. Remember to save your work often, and keep copies of your work in multiple locations. If you meet any technical difficulties before the due date, please let me know.
4. Hand in work on time. **Late submissions will influence your final grade.** If you run into trouble and need an extension, **contact me before the assignment is due, so we can make special arrangements for your assignments.**
5. The midterm grade includes: your participation points, any assignments due before midterm, and your midterm exam. Please contact me if you have any questions about your midterm grades. Your midterm grades will be replaced by your final grades.
6. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE or otherwise cheat in this class. **You will fail the class.**
7. Be kind to one another, and be respectful of opinions that differ from your own. Hate speech will not be tolerated, and will result in your dismissal from the course.

Writing Sources

MLA format guidance:

All your papers are recommended to be typed in MLA format. (The default writing format for English literature is MLA format. I encourage you to write in the formal style in this class. However, I understand for some of you who don't study humanities, you have your own writing conventions, e.g. Chicago style or APA style; you can use those formats to finish writing assignments in my class, too. Most important, **be consistent** when you follow any particular style.)

The papers should be titled and all quotations should be documented with in-text citations (and, if from a source other than the assigned textbook, should also include "Works Cited" entries at the end). Acceptable fonts are 12 pt. Times, Times New Roman, Courier, and Courier New.

For more about MLA format:

1. MLA format introduction

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_general_format.html

2. MLA sample paper

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_paper.html

3. MLA style center (You can search questions about the format and get answers.)

http://style.mla.org/?gclid=Cj0KCOiA6Or_BRC_ARIsAPzuer9TwjREqcvP4TZxjo6gLEpQyme0R3hhvYiQo45IndtUMPvpSL8OjoMaArjvEALw_wcB

For grammar:

If you have studied English 101/102/103 previously, *Easy Writer* would be a great source for you to review grammar rules. If you don't have *Easy Writer*, this writing blog might be helpful for you too:

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/category/handbook/>.

The Eberly Writing Studio

The Eberly Writing Studio is a resource that can support you in all aspects of the writing process. It is located in G02 Colson Hall. You can reserve an online/face-to-face tutoring session via the official website here:

speakwrite.wvu.edu/writing-studio.

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise your instructors and make appropriate arrangements with the. (<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>) More information is available at the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://diversity.wvu.edu/>) as well. [adopted 2-11-2013]

Academic Integrity Statement

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, instructors will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of their courses. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University [Academic Standards Policy](http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification)

(<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification>). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Adverse Weather Statement

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible. Similarly, if your instructor(s) are unable to reach the class location, they will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible, using agreed upon methods to prevent students from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, instructors will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments. [adopted 9-8-2014]

Sexual Misconduct Statement

West Virginia University does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence [[BOG Rule 1.6](#)]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the [Title IX Coordinator](#). (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/staff>)

If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the [Carruth Center](#), 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the [Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center](#) (RDVIC), 304- 292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline). For more information, please consult [WVU's Title IX Office](#) (<https://titleix.wvu.edu/confidential-resources>).

For links to WVU's full list of policy statements, see <https://tlcommons.wvu.edu/syllabus-policies-and-statements#10>

WVU COVID-19 SYLLABUS STATEMENT

WVU is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff, as necessary. Should campus operations change because of health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible that this course will move to a fully online delivery format. If that occurs, students will be advised of technical and/or equipment requirements, including remote proctoring software.

In a face-to-face environment, our commitment to safety requires students, staff, and instructors to observe the physical distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines set by the University at all times. While in class, students will sit in assigned seats when applicable and wear the required PPE. Should a student forget to bring required PPE, the instructor will provide it if possible. Students who fail to comply will be dismissed from the classroom for the class period and may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for further sanctions.

If a student becomes sick or is required to quarantine during the semester, they should notify the instructor. The student should work with the instructor to develop a plan to receive the necessary course content, activities, and assessments to complete the course learning outcomes.

Class Schedule, subject to change with notice.

Schedule

Class Date	Readings	Assignments Due
Part 1: Native American Oral Literature		
Wk 1, 01/10	Introduction	
Wk 1, 01/12	<p>Orientation, beginnings to 1820: read Introduction and Timeline, Part 1 (A.3-17)</p> <p>Native American Oral Literature "Native American Oral Literature," A.29-30 David Cusick, "The Iroquois Creation Story," A.31-35 Irvin Morris, "The Navajo Creation Story," A.35-43</p>	DB#1
Wk 2, 01/17	<p>Orientation, beginnings to 1820: read Introduction and Timeline, Part 2 (A.17-28)</p> <p>Trickster Tales Paul Radin, <i>Winnebago Trickster Cycle</i>, A.43-46 Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) storyteller, "Koluskap and the Giant Skunk," http://website.nbm-mnb.ca/Koluskap/English/Stories/story4.php K. L. Nichols, <i>Native American Trickster Tales</i>, http://arcadiasystems.org/academia/printtrickster.html (Pick three tricksters you want to discuss in class)</p>	
Wk 2, 01/19	<p>Oratory Powhatan's Discourse of Peace and War (A.47)</p>	DB#2

	Poetry Cherokee War Song Lenape War Song Two Cherokee Songs of Friendship (A.49-52)	
Part 2: First Encounters-Early European Accounts of Native America		
Wk 3, 01/24	Settler-colonial histories William Bradford, from <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> , A.127-32, A.154-58 Thomas Morton, <i>New English Canaan</i> , A.164-71 John Winthrop, from the <i>Journal</i> , A.173-81	
Wk 3, 01/26	Poetry <i>Bay Psalm Book</i> , A.195-96 Anne Bradstreet, poems, A.213-242	DB#3
Wk 4, 01/30	Autobiography Mary Rowlandson, <i>Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration</i> , A.262-293 Oratory "King Philip's Speech," A.54	
Part 3: American Literature and the Varieties of Religious Expression		
Wk 4, 02/02	Sermons John Winthrop, "Model of Christian Charity," A.173-84 Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," A.394-406 Samson Occom, "A Short Narrative of My Life," "Hymns," A.528-30	DB#4
Part 4: Ethnographic Writings & Native American Eloquence		
Wk 5, 02/07	Introduce Midterm Exam Review of the exam Catch up readings for the exams	
Wk 5, 02/09	Ethnography Samson Occom, "Account of the Montauk Indians," A.546-48 Ben Franklin, "Remarks Concerning the Savages," A.452-57 Philip Freneau, "Indian Burying Ground," A.708-09	DB#5
Wk 6, 02/14	Oratory Native American Eloquence, A.883-94 Sagoyewatha, "Reply to Missionary Jacob Cram," A.426-29 Introduce Essay-1	
Wk 6, 02/16	In-Class Exam	Midterm Exam
Wk 7, 02/21	Political tracts Thomas Paine, <i>Common Sense</i> , A.600-07, <i>Crisis</i> , A.607-13 Thomas Jefferson, <i>Declaration of Independence</i> , A.624-28 <i>Federalist</i> , no. 1 and no. 10, A.639-49	
Wk 7, 02/23	Autobiography Olaudah Equiano, <i>Interesting Narrative</i> , A.649-95	Essay-1

Wk 8, 02/28	Orientation, 1820 to 1865: Introduction and Timeline, B.3-24 Poetry William Cullen Bryant, B.115-23 Jane Johnson Schoolcraft, B.134-39	
Part 5: Slavery, Race, and the Making of American Literature		
Wk 8, 03/02 Midterm grade due: 03/03	Introduce Poetry Recitation Assignment Poetry Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, B.525-36 Edgar Allan Poe, B.556-69	DB#6
Wk 9, 03/07	Poetry Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," B.1168-1212, "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," B.1224-29, "Live Oak with Moss," B.1257-61	
Wk 9, 03/09	Poetry Emily Dickinson, poems numbered: 122, 207, 259, 269, 314 (not in the anthology), 320 (both versions on p. 1520), 340, 347, 372, 466, 479, 519, 545, 598, 627, 1096, 1489	DB#7
Wk 10	Spring Break: No Class	
Wk 11, 03/21	Poetry Recitation-1	
Wk 11, 03/23	Poetry Recitation-2	DUE: Short Poetry Analysis
Wk 12, 03/28	Short Story Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Minister's Black Veil," B.338-47 (Read B.304-07 "Intro" first) Edgar Allan Poe, "A Black Cat," B.620-26	
Wk 12, 03/30	Short Story Herman Melville, "Bartleby," B.1322-48 (Read 1263-66 "Intro" first)	DB#8
Wk 13, 04/04	Political Protest Native Americans: Removal and Resistance, B.284-04 Short Story Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Roger Malvin's Burial" https://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Hawthorne_RogerMalvine.pdf	
Wk 13, 04/06	Political protest/oratory Slavery and Race cluster, B.736-59 Oratory Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" B.1144-47 (Read 1064-68 "Intro" first)	DB#9
Wk 14, 04/11	Autobiography Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative</i> , B.1068-1120 (Preface to Chap X)	

	Introduce Essay-2	
Wk 14, 04/13	Political Protest Lydia Maria Child, Letter XXIV [Women's Rights], B.153-58 Fanny Fern, newspaper columns, B.685-93 Margaret Fuller, "Fourth of July," B.733-36 (Read 693-96 " first)	DB#10
Wk 15, 04/18	Essay Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," B.178-210 Non-Fiction Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , Ch1 & 18, B.948-90, 1041-49	
Wk 15, 04/20	Review of the exam	Optional DB#11 DUE: Essay-2
Wk 16, 04/25	Conference (Q&A) Catch up readings	
Wk 16, 04/27	In-Class Exam	Final Exam
Final Grades Due		