EN 254
SURVEY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE: MIDDLE PERIOD

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Office Hours: Tues 12:00 – 1:00, Wed 12:00 – 1:00, Thursday 12:00 – 1:00
Class Info: CRN 36927 NSH207, Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 – 2:20
Text: The Harper Single-Volume American Literature, 3rd edition, Donald McQuade 0321012690
Prerequisite: ENG 254 is the second of a 3-course sequence in American Literature, but you do not have to take the preceding course (ENG 253) to succeed in this class.

“The one thing in the world of value is the active soul.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

Course Description:
Welcome to our class. ENG 254 is designed to present you with an introduction to American Literature. As we survey almost a century of fiction, poetry, and essays, we will focus on how “American Literature” has been defined and how those definitions have been challenged. We will read works by long recognized “major” authors as well as “minor” ones. We will consider the literature in relation to literary and historical movements as well as on its own merit. Finally, we will pursue our own personal interests.

Learning Outcomes: When you successfully complete ENG254, you should be able to:
- Recognize how American Literature helps in understanding the human condition.
- Recognize literature’s place in American culture and history.
- Demonstrate how American Literature enhances our contemporary selves/cultural awareness and creativity.
- Read, write, and talk critically and insightfully about American Literature.
- Write and speak confidently about your own and others’ ideas regarding American Literature.

Succeeding in this class will require that you have college level writing and reading skills (write at the WR121 level). If you have not yet taken WR121, or aren’t taking it this term, please see me.

Office Hours: Please come by my office at least once during the term. If you can’t make my scheduled office hours, you can e-mail me or see me after class to set up an appointment for another time. I am happy to discuss your works in progress.
**Attendance**: You are expected to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. More than three absences will negatively affect your final grade for the course. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed. It is also your responsibility to access the handouts that you missed on our Moodle site so that you can be prepared for the next class.

**Participation**: You are expected to keep up with the readings and to be an involved member of the class by asking and answering questions and by listening and responding to other students’ comments. Prepare for class by reading the assignment carefully, looking up words or references you do not understand, and identifying important passages or issues you would like to discuss.

**Classroom Etiquette**: Cell phones must be turned off; laptops must be put away. During class time, you should be fully focused and engaged in what our class is doing.

**Assignments**: Assignments will be posted on Moodle. They are always due at the beginning of class and are not accepted via e-mail. All assignments should be typed with a header. Do not plagiarize; if you have any questions about academic honesty, see me.

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**Campus Resources**

- Conferences with your instructor – please visit with me early and often throughout the term.
- LBCC Library (917-4638)
- Diversity Achievement Center
- Writing Center and OWL (Online Writing Lab)

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**ENG254 Course Requirements**

**Attendance / Participation** (40 points)

Class discussions – in which we all participate – go a long way toward extending and deepening meaning, understanding, and pleasure. Plan to prepare well before class and to participate in readings, activities, and discussions during class. We’ll also have regular in-class presentations and writings based on the readings for that day’s discussion. Please always be present for class! You – your consistent presence and participation – contribute to the integrity of our classroom.

- The “A” student comes to class well prepared. He or she consistently participates in discussions and responds constructively to classmates’ ideas. The entire class benefits from this student’s participation.
- The “B” student does a good job overall but does not demonstrate excellent discussion consistently.
- The “C” student is physically in class most of the time. He or she may have skimmed the reading, but cannot summarize its content or address its main points.
- Participation grades lower than “C” are earned by students who are frequently absent, who routinely disrupt class (arriving late, leaving early or doing other things), who show a lack of respect for others’ contributions, or who are obviously and consistently unprepared.
• **Weekly Writings** (60 points / 6 of your choice @ 10 points each, due each Thursday)
You’ll compose weekly writings in response to questions and discussions about our readings. This informal writing will give you the opportunity to discover, analyze, and explain what you think and how you feel about the issues we discuss, as well as the stories and poetry. These writings, which are designed for you to reflect on and synthesize what you are learning, will lead you toward your Formal Essay and provide you with your own writing as foundation. (**Full credit**: turned in on time, represents clear understanding and critical thinking, well developed. **Partial credit**: not turned in on time, or does not represent a clear understanding or clear critical thinking, or is not well developed. Format: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.)

• **Final Essays** (Prewriting, 10 points and Final Draft, 80 points). Your final essay will involve two parts: a rough draft (which will require you to articulate your argument and construct close readings to support that argument) and your final draft. I will comment on the rough draft to help you strengthen the final draft, which must be 1,800 – 2,200 words single-spaced. Final essays may be submitted as late as March 10 without penalty; none will be accepted after that date.

• **Enrichment Events** (10)
Choose your own events, on or off campus, related to class concepts or artists (e.g. speakers, celebrations, exhibitions, club meetings) and write a summary and response. Format: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.

**Tips for Success:**
- **Be your best reader.** Develop excellent reading and writing strategies.
- **Come to class.** And come to class prepared, with assigned readings and writings completed before class.
- **Plan to participate actively** in class, in small groups and class discussions. Be willing to listen with respect and to share your own ideas with generosity.
- **Do your work on time.** So that you will get the most out of the material we cover, please be up to date on reading and writing assignments each week before you come to class.
- **Do your own work.** Plagiarism (using someone else’s work as your own without proper documentation) will result in your failing the assignment.
- **Ask questions.**
- **Make use of our library, Diversity Achievement Center, and computer resources.**

“The greatest compliment one ever paid me was to ask me what I thought and then attend to my answer.”

Henry David Thoreau