

English 360
Survey of American Literature:
Beginnings to 1865

Instructor: Ralph Pease, PhD., Professor of English

Office: Evans 414-A (South Wing)

Telephone: (936) 294-1436. I have voice mail.

E-mail: eng_rwp@shsu.edu Please note: DO NOT SEND ME AN E-MAIL THAT
REQUIRES A REPLY. (See further note below).

Office hours: to be announced

Teaching schedule: posted on office door

Leave messages at 936-294-1436. Please do not leave e-mail messages concerning tardies or absences; do not leave messages which require a reply.

Course Objectives:

I have two objectives for this course. First, I hope to further acquaint students with the literary heritage of America so they may better understand what Americans are like and why. Second, I hope to teach skills of literary evaluation which will enable students to determine the true merits of a literary work without having to be guided.

Teacher's Responsibility:

It is my responsibility (1) to determine appropriate reading assignments; (2) to comment upon the significance of the works to the time in which they were written as well as to our own time; and (3) to clarify the stylistic techniques employed by the authors.

Student's Responsibility:

You are expected (1) to attend classes diligently (see absence and tardy policy below); (2) to read assigned selections prior to their scheduled discussion time; (3) to think about what is being read, viewed, and discussed and evaluate its relevance to the objectives of this course; and (4) to meet minimum academic standards on your examinations (see grading scale below). You will be called upon to comment on the readings and on any other materials, such as films, which are utilized during this class time. Be prepared.

Absences:

Your presence in class, while no guarantee of success, does indicate to me your interest in the course. I don't like for students to be absent for two more reasons: (a) generally speaking, those who miss the most classes are those who need the most help. The relationship between absence and failure is rather remarkable, at least in my class, and you should keep that in mind. (b) Absences

create additional work for me and I don't need any additional work. Therefore, I will not give a passing grade to any student who misses more than six class hours except under the most extraordinary circumstances.

Entering Late and Leaving Early:

Generally speaking, attendance will be taken at the first of the class period. If you enter after attendance has been taken, you must notify me of that fact in writing at the end of that class period. If you must leave early, you must notify me of that fact in writing at the first of the class period. The notification should include: 1) your name; 2) English 360; 3) the date; 4) the time you entered or intended to leave. No reason for being late or leaving early is necessary. Any combination of three (leaving early twice and entering late once etc.) will constitute a class absence.

Examinations:

There will be no less than two and no more than four examinations, each of equal weight. The examinations will include a number of "objective" questions about the readings and lectures. The majority of the examinations will consist of quotations from the assigned readings which you must identify as to T (title); A (author); CS (character speaking); CST (character spoken to); CD (character described or spoken about); and PV (point of view of the quotation). There will also be questions concerning authors, background, and other lecture comments. Anything spoken or viewed or read in class is eligible for examinations. There may also be "short answer" and/or "essay" questions on these examinations. These sections will, of course, be subject to careful grading of content, grammar, and punctuation with reduction of grade for writing errors.

Examinations will be scored numerically; the numerical average of these examinations will constitute your semester grade (see grading scale below). There will be no statistical adjustment (i.e., "curve") applied to examination scores. You will have an opportunity to see your examinations after they are graded, but I will keep all examinations. I will announce the grade distribution and the high, median, and low grades of each examination so you can evaluate your progress in the class in relation to your peers.

A very important note:

I do not like for students to be absent on a scheduled examination date and discourage such practices two ways: First, all make-up examinations will be taken at a time and place designated solely by me. Second, the make-up examination will be adjusted to allow for the extra time which the student has had; in other words, it will be more thorough than the first examination and will include an essay section. If you must miss an examination, notify me by phone before the examination. If you miss an examination without prior notice your grade on the examination is "F" (as in zero).

Semester Grading Scale (by semester average):

My examinations are often based on an opportunity to make more than 100 points. That is why I have students who end the semester with averages of more than 100 (101.2 for example). Therefore, the semester grading scale (the semester average you must accumulate for end-of-the semester grade) is:

91-100	A
81-90	B
71-80	C
65-70	D
below 65	F

Some Good News About Examinations:

I never drop a grade (to do so penalizes those who did well), but I do offer an opportunity for you to double your high examination score and avoid a Final Examination at the same time. At the end of the semester you may double your high examination score and have it count as your Final Examination provided:

1. You have not missed more than six hours of classes.
2. You have not made an examination grade below 60.
3. You have not missed a scheduled examination.

This is a good deal; don't waste the opportunity.

Those who make a grade below 50 on an examination must take a re-exam as part of their Final Examination. This should be avoided.

Cell Phone and E-mail Rules:

Turn off cell phones as soon as you enter the classroom. Despite their "musical" ring, cell phones distract everyone within hearing as will your leaving the classroom to take or make a call. But leaving the classroom is better than chatting, so make all calls – including text messages – outside the classroom.

Do not send me an e-mail that requires a reply. If you wish to communicate with me about a matter that must be discussed, call my office number (see above). Do not send me an e-mail concerning absences unless you are going to miss three consecutive class periods.

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Cheating:

Any student who turns in work which is written by another student, copied from another student's work, or plagiarized from another source, will receive a semester grade of "F" in the course.

Pease's Final, Dogmatic House Rules:

No use of tobacco in class; no sleeping in class; no talking during lecture, during the viewing of films or during class discussion; excessive tardiness or early departures will be counted as hours absent (see above); all written work submitted for a grade must be done in dark ink or typed. Those opposed to any of these rules should not take this course.

Textbook: The American Tradition in Literature (Vol. 1) edited by George Perkins and Barbara Perkins; 11th edition (2006); McGraw-Hill: Boston, New York, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Lisbon, London, Singapore, Taipei and other exotic places (like Burr Ridge, Illinois).

A syllabus of assigned readings will be distributed from time to time. You will always have ample notice so you can read ahead and be prepared for class.