

**ENG 391 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Novel**  
Fall 2014 (CRN: 12226)  
MWF: 11:00-11:50 pm  
GER 248

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Office Hours: Monday and Friday 2-4 and by  
appointment

**Welcome!** In this course, we will examine the formal strategies and thematic concerns of 19<sup>th</sup> century American novels. Using close reading and historical context, we'll investigate how our authors imagine Americanness; we will explore the possibilities and limits of the novel form and how they are tied to personal and collective identities; and we will ask how these novels construct race, class, and gender. This course is an opportunity to hone your critical faculty through scholarly discussion and analytical writing about primary texts. The goal of this course is to help you engage with American literature, improving your writing, reading, and critical thinking skills in the process. This class requires substantial reading and writing and vigorous participation.

**Course Learning Outcomes.** This course is guided by the six desired learning outcomes of English Department undergraduate courses. Students will:

1. read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay's thesis.

### **Required Readings**

Novels (available at the UO Bookstore):

James Fenimore Cooper	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (1826), Penguin Classics
Harriet Beecher Stowe	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> (1852), Norton Critical
Harriet Jacobs	<i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861), Harvard UP
Mark Twain	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (1884), Norton Critical
Alice Callahan	<i>Wynema: A Child of the Forest</i> (1891), U of Nebraska P
Kate Chopin	<i>The Awakening</i> (1899), Norton Critical

Criticism (available on BB; please bring a **hardcopy** to class for discussion):

Mark Twain	"Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" (1895)
Paul Laurence Dunbar	"Harriet Beecher Stowe" (1898)
James Baldwin	"Everybody's Protest Novel" (1949)
Toni Morrison	"This Amazing, Troubling Book" (1999)
Craig Womack	"Alice Callahan's <i>Wymena</i> : A Fledgling Attempt" (1999)
Susan Bernardin	"On the Meeting Grounds of Sentiment" (2001) (BB)

## Grading

Reading Journal and Class Participation	10%
First Paper (3-4 pages)	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Paper Proposal (2 pages)	10%
Final Paper (6-7)	25%
Final Exam	25%

**Grading Principles.** Grades are based on a norm of “C.” Work done competently and adequately is “C” work. A “B” represents work that goes beyond the requirements of the assigned task and an “A” represents superior achievement well above the norm. In grading, I am responsible to your peers, your other teachers, your future graduate school administrators, and your future employers to accurately record the grades you earn. Thus, I do not “give” grades. You **earn** your grades through hard work, and you should be proud of every success and improvement you accomplish in my classroom. I will not inflate grades for ANY reason. If you are ever unclear about your grades, please come talk to me.

**Plagiarism.** Unacknowledged borrowing of others’ words or ideas constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic crime that results in disciplinary action up to expulsion. So please don’t do it. If you use someone else’s words or ideas, just quote them and provide the relevant source info in MLA format. If you have any doubts or questions about plagiarism or the University’s policy on it, come talk to me or refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website.

**Attendance and Participation.** At the start of class, you must sign the attendance sheet (if you arrive late, please remember that it is your responsibility to make sure the sheet is signed). I consider attendance in your final grade: **for every absence beyond three, your final grade will be reduced by a third of a grade (e.g. A- to B+).** In this class, we all serve as teachers to one another. Your voice, your perspective, and your questions are essential to our work. In this spirit, electronic **distractions** (i.e. cell phones) are not permitted in the classroom. I expect that you bring your textbook and a hardcopy of any secondary reading to class. **Failure to bring required materials may result in your being marked as absent for the day.**

**Email Policy.** I will respond to email Monday through Friday within 48 hours. If you email me and two days (weekends do not count) pass with no reply, please email me again with a friendly reminder that you have yet to receive a reply to your message. Please include a salutation, clear message, and closing (with your full name) when you email me; this is both courteous and respectful. It shows that you care about what you want to communicate and you care about my response.

**Reading journal.** You are required to keep an electronic journal with a short entry (about 150 words) for **each class period**. Your entries will be posted on our class BB site and you and I will have exclusive access to your journal. In your posts, record your experience of reading the novels. How do you respond to different characters? What do you notice about the author’s craft—style, plotting, character creation, description, imagery, symbols? What surprises you?

Puzzles you? Angers you? Please don't doctor your reading experience: it's fine not to like a book, as long as you can articulate the reasons why you don't like it. Each entry is due by the **start of classtime**. Journals can help generate ideas for papers and will serve as study guides for midterm and final exams. I'll ask students to read their entries to the class on an alphabetical schedule (which will be available on BB); when it is your day to read, please bring a printed copy of your entry to class.

**Papers.** All writing assignments must be typed in Times New Roman 12-pt font and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. Please **single-side print and use a stapler**. Your name, date, and course number should be typed in single spacing on the first page in the upper left hand corner. After page one, insert the last name and page number at upper right-hand corner of every page. All papers must be titled. When grading your papers, I'm looking for polished gems: thoughtful, concise, graceful treatments with a clear focus. Every word counts. Plan on writing several drafts of each paper (this means getting an early start). I'll provide more details about each assignment as it approaches. Assignment sheets will also be available on BB after we discuss the assignment in class.

**Late Papers.** If you anticipate needing an extension on paper, you must contact me before the due date. I'll deduct a third of a grade for each day papers are late (weekends count as two days): if you turn a B paper in one day late it will receive a B-; two days late, it will get a C+. After two class periods, I will not accept late papers for a grade; they count as missed assignments (F). **In order to pass the course, students must turn in both papers.**

**Midterm/Final Exam.** Exams test your comprehension of course content and give you additional practice in critical thinking. In our class, exam format will use multiple-choice questions and short essay questions. Exam content will draw from course readings, in-class lectures, individual reading journals, and class discussion. It is not possible to take exams early or make them up at a later date.

**Access.** The University of Oregon is working to create more inclusive learning environments. I want this class to be responsive to the diverse experiences of all students with disabilities. Please let me know if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that make it difficult for you to participate. If you have a disability, medical condition, or learning style that you think may affect your ability to participate in this class, please contact me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements for your full access to all classroom activities and assignments. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu). The AEC can offer guidance, support, and official documentation to help you request accessibility-related accommodations in all your classes. Also be aware that the Teaching and Learning Center is a great resource for study support and writing help. Located in PLC 72, their hours are 9-5 Monday through Friday and their phone number is (541) 346-3226.

## **Reading Schedule for Fall 2014 (Subject to revision)**

### **Week One**

M 9/29      Introductions

W 10/1 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Introductions and Preface, (p viiii-8)

F 10/3 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Ch I - XVIII (p 11-189)

### **Week Two**

M 10/6 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Ch XIX - XXIV (p 190-254)

W 10/8 *The Last of the Mohicans*, Ch XXV-end (p 255-350)  
Mark Twain, "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" (1895)

F 10/10 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Prefaces, Ch I - IX (p xi-115)

### **Week Three**

M 10/13 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch X - XV (p 116-199)

W 10/15 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XVI - XXII (p 200-301)

F 10/17 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XXIII - XXXI (p 302-97)

### **Week Four**

M 10/20 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XXXII - XLI (p 398-489)

W 10/22 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch XLIII - XLV (p 497-519)  
Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Harriet Beecher Stowe" (1898) (BB)  
James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" (1949) (BB)

F 10/24 **Workshop First Papers (Bring 2 copies)**

### **Week Five**

M 10/27 *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Prefaces and Introductions + Ch I-XII  
(p vii-67)  
**First Paper Due in my Office by 4pm**

W 10/29 *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Ch XIII-XXVIII (p 68-124)

F 10/31 *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Ch XXIV-XLI + Appendices (p 125-205)

### **Week Six**

M 11/3 **Mid-term Exam**

W 11/5 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Preface, Explanatory, Ch I-VIII (p 1-58)

F 11/7 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch IX-XVII (p 59-142)

### Week Seven

M 11/10 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch XIX-XXVIII (p 143-206)

W 11/12 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch XXIX-XXXVII (p 207-63)

F 11/14 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Ch XXXVIII-end (p 264-296)  
Toni Morrison, "This Amazing, Troubling Book" (1999) (BB)

### Week Eight

M 11/17 *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, Dedication-Editor's Introduction (p iix-xlvi)

W 11/19 *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, Ch 1-8 (p 1-33)

F 11/21 Workshop Paper Proposals  
**Bring 2 copies of Final Paper Proposal (2-3 pages) to workshop with peers**

### Week Nine

M 11/24 *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, Ch 9-18 (p 34-75)  
**Final Paper Proposal Due (2-3 pages) in 101 PLC by 4pm**

W 11/26 *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, Ch 19-24 (p 76-104)  
Craig Womack, "Alice Callahan's *Wynema*: A Fledgling Attempt" (1999) (BB)  
Susan Bernardin, "On the Meeting Grounds of Sentiment" (2001) (BB)

F 11/28 **Thanksgiving Break—no class**

### Week Ten

M 12/1 *The Awakening*, Ch I-VII (p 3-19)

W 12/3 *The Awakening*, Ch VIII-XXV (p 20-74)

F 12/5 *The Awakening*, Ch XXVI-XXXIX (p 74-109)  
**Final Paper Due in 101 PLC by 4pm**

### Final Exam Week

**Fri., 12/12 10:15am Final Exam**