Course Description:

This class introduces students to the novel as it developed in the United States. We will deal with the form as it begins in the “romance” and proceeds toward increasing emphasis on realism in its different manifestations. We will discuss the effects of various narrative conventions and audience/critical reception (including the phenomenon of the “bestseller”), as well as the influence of gender on these elements. We will also examine the influence of literature on the politics of the 19th century.

Required Texts:

Susanna Rowson  Charlotte Temple (1794)
James Fenimore Cooper  The Last of the Mohicans (1826)
Edgar Allan Poe  The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (1838)
Harriet Beecher Stowe  Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852)
Louisa May Alcott  Little Women (1868/1869)
Mark Twain  The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884)

Optional Texts:

William Dean Howells  The Rise of Silas Lapham (1885)
Henry James  The Bostonians (1886)

Handouts:

Mary Rowlandson  “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of...”*
Samuel Clemens  “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses”*
Edgar Allan Poe  “Philosophy of Composition”*
William Dean Howells  “Novel-Writing and Novel-Reading” (1891)*
Henry James  “The Art of Fiction” (1884)*

*All of these works can be found for free online.

All textbooks are available at the U of O Bookstore. You are required to buy either The Rise of Silas Lapham or The Bostonians, but not both. You may use alternative
editions for all novels EXCEPT *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. We will be using the background materials in the Broadview edition that I have ordered.

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Readings must be completed on the *first day* they appear on the schedule. Even though this is a fairly large class, students will be expected to participate in discussions, both asking and answering questions. The only “dumb” question is the one you were too timid to ask... okay, also the one I just answered when you weren’t paying attention.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Introduction: What is “American”? How do we approach literature that does not reflect contemporary values and uses language with which we are not familiar?</td>
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<td>March 30</td>
<td>Background lecture on the history of the novel in America</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td><em>Charlotte Temple</em> ALL</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td><em>Charlotte Temple</em></td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>“A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of...” (handout)</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td><strong>WRITING WORKSHOPS: REQUIRED</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td><em>The Last of the Mohicans</em> 1-10</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td><em>The Last of the Mohicans</em> 11-25</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td><em>The Last of the Mohicans</em> 26-33 and “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses” (handout)</td>
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<td>April 18</td>
<td>Poe, “Philosophy of Composition”</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td><em>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</em> Introduction (pp. 11-46)</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td><em>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</em> Preface and Chapters 1-12</td>
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<td>April 25</td>
<td><em>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</em> Chapters 13-25</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td><em>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</em> Appendices A. B, and C</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
<td><em>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</em> Chapters 1-15</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td><em>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</em> Chapters 16-30</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td><em>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</em> Chapters 31-45</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
<td><strong>ESSAY #1 DUE</strong></td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td><em>Little Women</em> Part I</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td><em>Little Women</em> Part II</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td><em>Film on Mark Twain</em></td>
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<td><strong>MIDTERM DISCUSSION—JOURNALS DUE</strong></td>
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<td>Group meetings re: Howells/James</td>
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May 16 | The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  Chapters 1-15  
May 18 | The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  Chapters 16-30  
May 20 | The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  Chapters 31-43  

May 23 | The Rise of Silas Lapham  Chapters 1-9  
“Novel-Writing and Novel-Reading”  
May 25 | The Rise of Silas Lapham  Chapters 10-18  
May 27 | The Rise of Silas Lapham  Chapters 19-27  
Questions for final exam distributed  

OR

May 23 | The Bostonians  Chapters 1-14  
“The Art of Fiction”  
May 25 | The Bostonians  Chapters 15-29  
May 27 | The Bostonians  Chapters 30-42  
Questions for final exam distributed  

May 30 | Memorial Day Holiday  
June 1 | The Rise of Silas Lapham presentation /Essay #2 due  
June 3 | The Bostonians  presentation /Essay #2 due  

June 6 (Monday) | FINAL EXAM and JOURNALS due in my office no later than 12:15 p.m.  

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

**Reading Journals:**

You are required to keep a reading journal that reflects your understanding of the texts as we read and discuss them in class. You should write at least one page for each daily reading assignment. Before we begin each novel, I will hand out some questions to guide your writing, but you are also expected to come up with questions and comments that will contribute to your active participation in class discussions. From time to time, I will ask students to read journal entries aloud, so you need to be sure you KEEP UP WITH YOUR READING AND WRITING, AND BRING YOUR JOURNAL WITH YOU TO CLASS EACH DAY.

Journals will be handed in for grading at midterm, and again at the end of the course.

**Two short formal essays:**

Write a short (4-page maximum) essay on one novel assigned before midterm and one novel assigned after midterm. Essays must be organized around an argumentative thesis, and they must demonstrate an understanding of the work as a whole as well as the particular elements on which you choose to focus. Use MLA in-text format to document all direct quotations, paraphrases and ideas which you use from the work under discussion.
More specific guidelines for the essays will be handed out and discussed in the WRITING WORKSHOP scheduled for Jan. 24. All students are required to attend the workshop. Students who fail to attend cannot expect to receive a grade higher than a “B” on the required essays.

**One examination:**
Your final examination will be a take-home essay test, and the questions will be handed out at least a week before the exam is due. The exam will emphasize the works read since the mid-term, but you will be required to address one question that deals with the course as a whole.

**Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:**
All work submitted in this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) must be properly documented. Refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct in the *Schedule of Classes*. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is my standard practice. The English Department owns software which makes it simple to discover if a paper has been “borrowed” from the internet. Please talk to me if you have any questions about your use of sources before you turn in something that might be questionable.

**Policy on Late Papers and Make-up Exams:**
If exigent circumstances cause problems with the due date for the short essays or the exam, you must discuss this with me before the deadline so that arrangements can be made. **JOURNALS MAY NOT BE HANDED IN LATE. Late work which is not cleared with the instructor prior to the due date will not be accepted.**

**Policy on Disabilities:**
Students with physical or learning disabilities should consult the instructor as soon as possible so accommodations can be made.

**Grades:**
Each of the following requirements has weight in determining your grade:
- Reading journals (20%)
- Essays (40%)
- Final Exam (20%)
- Attendance and Participation (20%)
  
  Note: This grade includes your participation in the group presentation
**Attendance and Participation:**

Students are expected to be in class, on time, having read the materials assigned for that day and having done any required writing. Assignments are due when class begins.

Attendance will be taken every day. It is your responsibility to sign in on the attendance sheet *for yourself only*. More than three absences will result in a one-half grade penalty in the final course grade. Attending class is a choice you have to make on your own, and that means you have to accept the consequences of that choice.

I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, except in two cases:

1. Illness so severe and prolonged that a doctor officially excuses you.
2. You are involved in a university-sanctioned activity.

Written proof of these excuses is required, but there is no need to explain your reasons for other absences. Emailing me that you are going to miss does not excuse you from class.

If you know you are going to miss a class, make advance arrangements with me to turn in any work that is due and/or to pick up handouts. Ask a classmate to catch you up on discussion that you will miss.

If you have an unplanned absence, see me *as soon as you return* to pick up missed handouts, and ask a classmate for any missed notes. If you have questions about material discussed while you were gone, come to my office hours. We will have carried on in your absence, so please don’t be arrogant enough to ask if you missed anything. Of course, you did.

STUDENTS MUST ALWAYS BRING TEXTS TO CLASS WHEN THEY ARE BEING DISCUSSED. IF JOURNALS ARE ASSIGNED, STUDENTS MUST BRING THEM TO CLASS. IT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING THAT WRITING IMPLEMENTS ARE ALSO REQUIRED.

Students are expected to contribute significantly to discussion, and to do so in a way that shows respect for classmates. Listening carefully is as important as speaking thoughtfully, so please do not interrupt or wave your hand insistently while someone else is speaking. All ideas are welcome in this class, but they should be **backed up by evidence from the texts**.

To be fully present in the class, you must be focused on the reading and the discussion at hand. THEREFORE, please **turn off and put away all electronic devices before class begins**. Please do not leave the room during class unless you have an emergency.