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:

Hannah W. Foster  
**The Coquette** (1797)

James Fenimore Cooper  
**The Last of the Mohicans** (1826)

Herman Melville  
**Redburn** (1849)

Harriet Beecher Stowe  
**Uncle Tom’s Cabin** (1852)

Mark Twain  
**A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court** (1889)

Kate Chopin  
**The Awakening** (1899)

Optional Texts (choose one):

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”*

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 except **Redburn** 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.
SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Readings must be completed on the first day they appear on the schedule. 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.

Jan. 9   Introduction: What is “American”? How do we approach literature that does not reflect contemporary values and uses language with which we are not familiar?

Jan. 11  Background lecture on the history of the novel in America

Jan. 13  The Coquette Letters 1-38

Jan. 16  Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday observed—NO CLASS

Jan. 18  The Coquette Letters 39-76

Jan. 20  WRITING WORKSHOPS: REQUIRED

Jan. 23  “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of . . . “ (handout)

Jan. 25  The Last of the Mohicans 1-10

Jan. 27  The Last of the Mohicans 11-25

Jan. 30  The Last of the Mohicans 26-33 and “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses” (handout)

Feb. 1   Redburn

Feb. 3   Redburn

Feb. 6   Redburn

Feb. 8   Background: Politics and Bestsellers

Feb. 10  Uncle Tom’s Cabin Chapters 1-15

Feb. 13  Uncle Tom’s Cabin Chapters 16-30

Feb. 15  Uncle Tom’s Cabin Chapters 31-45

Feb. 17  MIDTERM DISCUSSION—JOURNALS DUE

Group meetings re: Howells/James

Feb. 20  Film on Mark Twain

Feb. 22  A Connecticut Yankee Chapters 1-15

Feb. 24  A Connecticut Yankee Chapters 16-30
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>A Connecticut Yankee Chapters 31-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 29</td>
<td>The Rise of Silas Lapham Chapters 1-9 and “Novel-Writing and Novel-Reading” OR The Bostonians Chapters 1-14 and “The Art of Fiction”</td>
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<td>Mar. 2</td>
<td>The Rise of Silas Lapham Chapters 10-18 OR The Bostonians Chapters 15-29</td>
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<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td>The Rise of Silas Lapham Chapters 19-27 OR The Bostonians Chapters 30-42</td>
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<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>The Rise of Silas Lapham presentation</td>
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<td>Mar. 9</td>
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<td>Mar. 12</td>
<td>The Awakening Chapters 1-13</td>
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<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>The Awakening Chapters 28-38</td>
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<td><strong>Reading journals due</strong></td>
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<td>Mar. 21 (Wed.)</td>
<td>Final Exam due in my office by NOON.</td>
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**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. 20. **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.