Course Overview

Why study the novel? Why study the American novel? Why study the nineteenth-century American novel? If you’ve signed up for this course, my guess—my hope—is that you love to read longer works of fiction. You might even be interested in writing a novel. We will definitely discuss the novel as an artistic production with formal properties. This knowledge will benefit aspiring writers as well as anyone who enjoys taking something apart to see what’s inside. Do you, though, imagine the novel as a social force? In the newly-formed American nation, the novel was a powerful, even potentially dangerous force. One 1838 critic declared that “the object of novelists in general appears to be to seize the public mind, and hold it with a sort of enchantment.” What captivated and enchanted Americans about the novel? What about the novel form especially appealed to American women as the primary readers and producers of novels? Fifty percent of the bestselling books in the 1850s were by women authors, and by 1872 nearly three-quarters of American novels were by women. In our online course we will explore developments in the American novel over the nineteenth century, paying particular attention to the novel as a gendered literary form. How has the novel successfully represented women’s diverse experience? How has it been complicit in narrowly defining feminine identity? As we examine the possibilities and limitations of the novel to enchant readers and express American women’s lives, students will strengthen their critical reading and analytical writing skills. Students will learn the narrative elements of a novel and apply these along with knowledge of historical and cultural contexts to develop their literary interpretations.

Read me! The following pages introduce you to our broad learning outcomes, the four novels we will be reading this term, my policies on participation and late work, our labor and production and how it will be assessed, as well as guidelines and support for succeeding in an online course.
Learning Outcomes
What skills, experiences, and knowledge do I hope you will get out of this course? By the end of the term, my goals for your learning are that you will improve your proficiency and artistry at:

• reading novels and critical texts with a view to better understanding their conventions.
• drawing on relevant information to situate these novels and texts within their nineteenth-century American cultural, political, and historical contexts.
• using creativity and interpretive skills to develop original, thoughtful analyses rooted in close readings of the texts.
• synthesizing a diversity of primary/secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation.

***In our first week of class, we may add to this list of learning outcomes based on what you think is important in your English education and would like to get out of the course.

Required Materials
It’s your responsibility to make sure that you have the following materials. Plan to read a novel a week!

• Textbooks: The following four novels are required reading. I will be using and referring to page numbers in these editions, which are available through the UO Duckstore: Hannah Foster, The Coquette (9780195042399); Harriet Wilson, Our Nig (9780143105763); Stephen Crane, Maggie: A Girl of the Streets (9780393950243); Kate Chopin, The Awakening (9780393617313).
• Technology: Daily access to Canvas and your student @uoregon.edu email

Resources for Success
I am here to help you succeed; don’t hesitate to e-mail or visit me! I will make every effort to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours. In addition, you have many resources on campus to help you with writing and studying. Many of these offices have summer hours and most provide online tutoring via email on an individual basis: contact them directly to set that up.

• The Teaching and Learning Center’s Writing Lab located on the fourth floor of the Knight Library provides shorter drop-in sessions with a writing tutor for any subject
• The Writing Associates Program offers free, one-on-one peer tutoring appointments for students in English classes. Writing Associate tutors are advanced English majors who have been trained to tutor writing. They are available to help students with any aspect of their writing for this course, from learning how to write about literature and media to crafting clearer and more effective analysis.
• The Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence (CMAE) offers writing support on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00pm in the Coquille Room EMU #104 during the regular school year. They also offer many other mentoring services for students from all backgrounds in the utilization of all resources available regarding financial aid, scholarships, internships, career development, professionalization, and ultimately academic success!
• Student Support Services (SSS) is also taking qualified students. They offer advising, tutoring, a study lounge with computers and free printing, as well as personal counseling.
• You can find additional sources of academic support on the Undergraduate Studies webpage.
• Writing handbooks:
  Purdue OWL
  UNC Writing Center Tips + Tools
  Writing for Success

Need Canvas help? See the Student Technology Support page.
Navigating This Course
This course is fully online. You will be able to complete all work remotely. I have an office and office hours on the University of Oregon campus in 22 PLC, to which you are welcome, but you will not be required to attend class on campus or submit hard copies of work.

The course is organized in 4 modules, following the 4-week summer session. We will read a novel a week and complete a quiz, discussion board post, and writing assignment each week. Although some online courses can be completed in a flurry of activity at the very end of the term, this course will require consistent and regular participation in different activities and assignments each week. You cannot wait until the end of the term to complete the work for the course. To succeed in the course, you will need to follow the weekly schedule of readings and assignments. To help you manage your time, each week's content will only unlock on Sundays (at midnight), and only if you've completed the weekly quiz by then. Though you should complete all assignments for that week, only the quiz affects unlocking the next week's module. E.g. if you’ve finished the quiz for Week 1 on time, then Week 2's module will become available on Sunday, July 1st at midnight. The course will follow that pattern each week.

Remaining engaged also requires you to check your university email at least once a day. In an online course, that will still be my primary method of contact with you, and announcements made to the entire class will also notify in your university email's inbox. Double check your Canvas notification settings, and make sure if you have your university email forwarded to a personal email client that all relevant emails from me and/or Canvas are making it to your inbox. “I didn’t receive that email” or “I didn’t see that announcement on Canvas” will never be an excuse for late or missed work in this class. Let me know if you have questions or concerns about communications and notifications for this class.

Since your final paper will develop from our discussion board conversations and your weekly writing assignments, your success and the success of the course depend on your timely participation and submission of assignments.

Success in any online course requires keen time management and organization, as well as the ability to work both diligently and independently. Each week’s set of assignments—the quiz, discussion board post, and writing assignment—are due by 11:59pm on Sunday. However, it is not recommended that you wait until Sunday to complete all of the week's work. If at any time you find yourself struggling to keep up with the assignments, reach out to me as soon as possible. The quicker you make contact with me, the more helpful I can be.

Late Work
If you need extra time on an assignment, you should arrange that with me in advance. I am willing to offer extensions on some assignments*, regardless of your reason for needing them, provided that you ask for them before the due date, and make a plan with me for when you will get the work in. If you have an arranged extension, you will not lose points. Any work that is not turned in by the due date on Canvas is late and will reduce your score.

*Please note that I cannot offer extensions for the following assignments:

- **Weekly Quizzes.** Quizzes should be completed each week by Sunday at 11:59pm. Any quiz completed after midnight on Sunday will receive a zero.
- **Discussion Board Posts.** All discussion board posts must be completed and posted by Sunday at midnight to receive credit. No credit will be given for discussion board posts uploaded after midnight on Sunday.
• Optional “A” Labor. I strive to maintain a fair and equitable class for all students. Agreement to go above and beyond expectations is also agreeing to submit this work on time.

Any other assignment not listed here can qualify for an extension—including weekly writing assignments or the final writing project—as long as you ask for the extension before the due date!

I expect you to maintain a high level of engagement throughout the course and to conduct yourself ethically and responsibly. You can expect the same from me. I will do my best to be clear about assignment expectations and how I will assess your work. It’s your responsibility to contact me—in my office or by e-mail—when you are confused, overwhelmed, or unsure about class expectations. Talk to me before an assignment is due, not after. That way I can help you talk through your confusion, brainstorm ideas, consider possibilities, give you resources, and discuss your work with you—that’s an integral part of my role in our class! I can’t make exceptions or extend grading deadlines unless you talk to me before the assignment is due.

Assignments + Grading
Quizzes: 50 points (5 quizzes x 10 points)
Discussion Board Posts: 100 points (5 posts x 20 points)
Weekly Writing Assignments: 200 points (4 assignments x 50 points)
Final Writing Project: 200 points
Optional “A” Labor + Writing Project: 100 points

I use a labor-based grading system. In a nutshell, if you do all of the labor asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, then you’ll get a “B” course grade. If you do not participate fully, turn in assignments late, forget to do assignments, or do less labor than what is expected of you for assignments, etc., then it will reduce your score on assignments.

A labor-based grading system honors your hard work and gives you more control over your grade and the work you want to commit to doing. The grade of B depends primarily on behavior and labor. Have you shown responsible effort and consistency in our class? Have you done what was asked of you in the spirit it was asked? Higher grades, such as an “A,” however, require more labor. In order to raise your grade, you may complete, according to their guidelines and in the spirit asked of you, the optional “A” labor for discussion board posts and weekly writing assignments as well as an additional item of labor with the final project.

Weekly Quizzes (50 points total): There will be a short quiz assigned each week related to that week’s reading and topics. Some quizzes will be multiple choice and some will be short responses. These quizzes must be completed each week by Sunday at 11:59pm, and you will have one chance to take any quiz before the score is finalized. After midnight on Sunday the quiz will become a zero. NOTE: Each week’s quiz must be completed in order to unlock the next week’s module and content—even if it’s completed after midnight on Sunday for a zero. You can’t move on in the course if you do not complete the weekly quiz—no exceptions.

Discussion Boards (100 points total): In an online class, the only way for us to have consistent, shared discussion about readings and course topics is through the use of Canvas’s discussion boards. There will be at least one discussion board question (and sometimes more than one) every week of the course. You must post your reply to the initial prompt by Sunday at 11:59pm to receive credit. Your initial reply to my prompt is a minimum requirement, but replying to your classmates’ posts can raise your overall grade for that week’s Discussion Board participation. No credit will be given for discussion board posts uploaded after midnight on Sundays.
Weekly Writing Assignments (200 points total): These short writing assignments (they will generally be about 500 words) will help you work through course concepts and readings. They also target specific literary analysis skills, and give you an opportunity to experiment with different types of analysis in a low-stakes way. Becoming comfortable and confident readers requires practice (putting in the hours and the effort) and play (a willingness to experiment with analysis, style, and process), which are the purposes behind these assignments. These assignments must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm.

Final Writing Project (200 points): The major writing project in the course will be an 8-10 page analysis paper on two of the novels. Guidelines for the paper will be posted on Canvas. Writing is an important tool for communicating and sharing our ideas, and one of the core components of English coursework. The act of writing helps organize and deepen our thinking and is crucial in the work of producing new knowledge. The absolute last day to submit the Final Writing Project is by midnight on Friday, August 31. You cannot pass the course if you do not submit a final writing project. Failure to submit a final writing project will result in an “F” for the course.

Optional “A” Labor and Writing Project (100 points total): An “A” course grade requires more labor. Completing the additional labor and writing project does not guarantee an “A,” since that depends on your labor in the rest of the course. However, students cannot earn an “A” in the course without completing the additional labor for discussion posts, weekly writing assignments, and an additional writing project. Guidelines for additional labor are included in each assignment and the instructions for the additional writing project will be posted on Canvas. The absolute last day to submit the Optional “A” Writing Project is by midnight on Friday, August 31.

Other Policies + Expectations

Academic Honesty, Authorship, and Plagiarism: It’s important to understand ‘authorship’ and ‘ownership of ideas and words’ in academic writing. This helps writers give the correct credit to other writers and thinkers for their words and ideas. When you use someone else’s words or ideas without telling your reader where they come from, you are PLAGIARIZING. Common examples of plagiarism include incorrect citation of sources and copying and pasting parts of an assignment from the internet or other students. Getting too much help from someone editing your writing is also a form of academic dishonesty. I am looking to help you improve and gain important experience in analytic writing. I am not expecting perfect writing. If you have a question about using ideas and words from others in your essays, please ask!

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other course without permission. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please refer to our e-handbooks as well as the Library Citation and Plagiarism guide and the Student Conduct Code on the Office of the Dean of Students website. In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English Department. Please see me BEFORE you submit your work if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Incompletes: A request for the grade “Incomplete” must be placed in advance of the end of the quarter. Such approval will be granted only in cases when some minor but essential aspect of the course cannot be completed by a student through unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

Access: The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related
barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

**Observance of Religious Holidays:** Students who observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances must inform instructors in advance of the holiday. Students are responsible for making up missed work according to a schedule determined with the teacher.

**Technical Requirements + Knowledge**
If you are taking a course online you will need to have Internet access and a basic knowledge of computer and Internet skills in order to be successful.

- Knowledge of terminology, such as *browser, applications, upload, download,* etc.
- Understanding of basic computer hardware and software; ability to perform computer operations, such as:
  - Using keyboard and mouse
  - Managing files and folders: save, name, copy, move, backup, rename, delete, check properties
  - Software installation, security and virus protection
  - Using software applications, such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, email clients
  - Knowledge of copying and pasting, spell-checking, saving files in different formats
  - Sending and downloading attachments
- Internet skills (connecting, accessing, using browsers) and ability to perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Ability to use online communication tools, such as email (create, send, receive, reply, print, send/receive attachments), discussion boards (read, search, post, reply, follow threads), chats, and messengers.

***Technology problems:** Technology can be tricky, but you need to be organized enough to anticipate computer problems. I will never excuse late work based on technology problems. The university has provided ample computer labs, so if your personal technology has failed, you need to find an alternative on campus or near your residence. Because everything will be turned in online, be sure to back up your hard drive regularly.

**Netiquette Guidelines**
Expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

- Respect the privacy of your classmates and what they share in class. It is prohibited to screenshot and repost posts or material from this course on social media.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks
- Ask classmates for clarification if you find a discussion posting offensive or difficult to understand.
- Avoid sweeping generalizations. Back up your stated opinions with facts and reliable sources. Keep your focus on the literary text.
- Understand that we may disagree and that exposure to other people’s opinions is part of the learning experience.
• Be respectful of each other. We’re all in this together. Before posting a comment, ask whether you would be willing to make the same comment to a person’s face.
• Keep in mind that you are taking a college class. Something that would be inappropriate in a traditional classroom is also inappropriate in an online classroom.
• Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar. Tip: Start in Word and use the spell and grammar check.
• Be careful with humor, sarcasm, acronyms (LOL) and emoticons (smiles). All can easily be misunderstood!
• Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and texting abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you”.
• Be careful with personal information (both yours and other’s).
• Use a descriptive subject line and don’t forget to sign your message with your name.
• Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
• Be aware that typing in all capital letters indicates shouting.

Course Schedule
Week 1  Introductions + Hannah Foster’s The Coquette
  Discussion: America and the Novel
  Syllabus Quiz due by Wednesday, June 27
  Introduction Discussion Board Post due by Friday, June 29
  Week 1 Quiz, Discussion Board Post, Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 1

Week 2  Harriet Wilson’s Our Nig
  Discussion: Slavery and the Novel
  Week 2 Quiz, Discussion Board Post, Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 8

Week 3  Stephen Crane’s Maggie: A Girl of the Streets
  Discussion: Social Class and the Novel
  Week 3 Quiz, Discussion Board Post, Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 15

Week 4  Kate Chopin’s The Awakening + Wrap-Up
  Discussion: The New Woman and the Novel
  Week 4 Quiz, Discussion Board Post, Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 22

Final  Final Writing Project due by midnight on Friday, August 31