



ENG 391: The Novel in Nineteenth-Century America

ENG 391: CRN 41038

Summer 2019

WEB

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What Students Say

- “Taking this course and reading these novels has really helped me get back into the mindset of what it means to close read and be a deeper thinker. As an academic college-level reader, you cannot gloss over, you cannot rush. You have to be able to take your time and really investigate all the weird things that literature can do.”
- “Having been motivated by the structure of this course and its grading system, I have seen both my ability to focus on my reading and my capacity to glean the most valuable information from it improve noticeably.”
- “In Dr. Clevinger’s class, we help each other. Hearing other students’ perspectives and using them to shed light on topics relating to the text has made me a stronger reader.”
- “This course has likely been the most reading dense class I’ve taken throughout my undergrad this far. It has taught me a lot about who I am as an academic reader. I find myself a significantly better reader now than at the beginning of this term.”

Instructor: Dr. Kara B. Clevinger

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Office Hours (on campus or virtual): by appt.

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Course Overview: Why am I here?

Work hard and you'll succeed. A simple statement that is the moral and economic foundation of the U.S. It began with Benjamin Franklin and the self-made man mythos. It crashed and burned—well, crashed,

shot, and drowned—with Jay Gatsby and the death of the American Dream. In between Franklin and Gatsby was the nineteenth century: the rise of the great democratic experiment, the freeing of over four million enslaved black Americans after the Civil War in the 1860s, the growth of the U.S. as an economic and global superpower with the Industrial Revolution, and the dawning of the new woman. In short, hope defined much of nineteenth-century life and letters. This optimism found form in the novel, a newer literary genre that offered the potential to define and shape America's greatness.

The big questions I'm excited to discuss with you over the course of our readings are: If America's greatness stemmed from the simple idea that anyone can succeed so long as they work hard, then how has the novel both perpetuated and pushed against that idea? What can the novel tell us about who has access to and who is excluded from the American Dream? How does the novel successfully

or unsuccessfully tell stories of work in the U.S.? To pursue this inquiry we'll read four novels by women about women's lives and work: Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859), Louisa May Alcott's *Work* (1872), Frances E.W. Harper's *Iola Leroy* (1892), and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899).

As we examine the possibilities and limitations of the novel to express American women's work and attitudes toward work, you will have opportunities to strengthen your critical reading and analytical writing skills. I invite you to learn the narrative elements of a novel and apply these along with knowledge of historical and cultural contexts to develop your literary interpretations.

Read me! The following pages introduce you to our learning outcomes, the four novels we will be reading this term, our labor and production and how it will be assessed, my policies on participation and late work, 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 with a view to better understanding their conventions, innovations, and limitations.
- 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 thoughtful, critical analyses rooted in close readings of the texts.
- writing and communicating your ideas with consideration of audience and purpose, using proper citation and acknowledgment of sources.

***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.

Our Course Readings

What will we be reading in this course? We will read and discuss four nineteenth-century novels by women about women. Plan to read a novel a week! I'll refer to page numbers from the editions listed here, and these are the editions that are available through the UO Duckstore.

Can you purchase a different print or digital edition from a different seller or can you use a free full-text edition? Yes! In class discussions, please refer to chapter numbers instead of page numbers to help us find passages you reference.

- Harriet Wilson, *Our Nig* (9780143105763)
- Louisa May Alcott, *Work* (9780140390919)
- Frances E.W. Harper, *Iola Leroy* (9780143106043)
- Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (9780142437322)

To help you plan and manage the reading load (based on the average of reading 250 words per minute):

Week	Text	Word Count	Estimated Reading Time
1	<i>Our Nig</i>	25,450	plan for about 2 hours of total reading time; or, if English is your second language or you're a slower reader like me, plan for about 4 hours of total reading time hours
2	<i>Work</i>	119,487	8 hours, or 11-12 hours of slower reading time
3	<i>Iola Leroy</i>	74,628	5 hours, or 7-8 hours of slower reading time
4	<i>The Awakening</i>	50,105	4 hours, or 6-7 hours of slower reading time

*****Note: Nineteenth-century novels are denser because they use "old-timey" English and idioms. This usually means slower reading times for everyone, but especially if English is not your first language. It's a good idea to factor in extra reading time as you get used to the denser language, and talk to me if you are really struggling with comprehension.**

Assignments + Grading

The following is a brief overview of the work for the course. I provide more detailed guidelines with each assignment on Canvas.

Quizzes are how I keep the course paced. They ask multiple choice questions on the reading. You have two chances to earn your desired score. Quizzes should be completed each week by Sunday at 11:59PM, and each week's quiz must be completed in order to unlock the next week's module and content.

Discussion Board Posts are the lifeblood of our course. Refer to the "Guidelines for Discussion" for instructions on primary and secondary posts and peeps. Primary posts are due each week by Friday at 11:59PM. Secondary posts and peeps are due each week by Sunday at 11:59PM.

Weekly Writing Assignments will help you work through course concepts and readings, test interpretations, and practice close reading skills. WWAs are approximately 500 words and will be due each week by Sunday at 11:59PM.

The **Final Writing Project** asks you to develop an extended literary analysis of 1-2 major texts we read. The essay will be approximately 6-8 pages, and the last day to submit it will be on Sunday, July 28 by 11:59PM.

Advanced Labor Activities are for students who want to achieve mastery or practice the methods for achieving mastery in the study of nineteenth-century American novels. There are advanced labors for discussion board posts ("peeps"), for each weekly writing assignment, and for the final writing project. Students also choose one additional advanced labor activity, and submit a portfolio with the final project.

Completing the advanced labor activities 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 advanced labors.

What do you want from the course? What work do you want to commit to doing? I use a holistic and labor-based grading system. In a nutshell, if you do all of the labor asked of you by meeting the requirements for each assignment, then you'll earn a "B" (85%) 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 engagement and assignments, then it will reduce your final grade.

"How do I get an A?" So you want to strive for Jedi mastery, do you, my young padawan? *To be considered for an "A" course grade, you may complete, according to their guidelines and in the spirit asked of you, advanced labor activities with the discussion board posts, weekly writing assignments, final writing project, and one additional advanced labor activity. Completing these advanced labor activities does not guarantee an "A" in the course!* I also ask that students submit a portfolio of their best work and a personal statement for review.

Our ENG 391 Labor Table

	P/NP (C)	Core Course (B)	Mastery (A)
Quizzes	70-100% on all quizzes	80-100% on all quizzes	90-100% on all quizzes
Discussion Board Posts	primary post each week	primary post each week; three secondary posts across the term	primary + secondary posts each week; ten peeps across the term
Weekly Writing Assignments	all weekly writing assignments	all weekly writing assignments	all weekly writing assignments with advanced labor task
Final Writing Project	meets requirements	meets requirements with reflection	meets requirements with reflection and advanced labor task
Advanced Labor Activities	-	-	one additional advanced labor activity and a portfolio

Incomplete and Late Work

Submitting complete assignments on time helps you to manage your time and the workload. It helps your colleagues, who will benefit from your voice and perspective in the discussions. It helps me give you timely and useful feedback on your work. However, life happens. . . and sometimes technology happens, too. Please review the items below for how incomplete and late work affects the final grade.

What is "Incomplete" work? Instead of using a letter grade for individual assignments, I assess each as "Complete" or "Incomplete." All assignments and discussion posts include grading criteria so that you know what is expected for complete work. If I let you know that a Weekly Writing Assignment or the Final Writing Project is incomplete, then you have 48 HOURS to revise and resubmit it. It will then count as a Late assignment.

What is "Late" work? Late work is defined as any assignment/post that is submitted after the due date/time BUT within 48 hours of that due date/time. To keep things fair and equitable for everyone, I do not accept work beyond 48 hours after the due date/time; it gets a zero. In order to earn at least a B, you must submit all Core Course assignments and posts. Incomplete assignments that are resubmitted will count as Late.

The table below details how many "Incomplete" posts and "Late" assignments you are allowed within each grade category in order to maintain good standing. Exceeding the number of "Incomplete" posts or "Late" assignments allowable will lower your final grade by -3% (1/3 of a letter grade) for each assignment/post. Example: A student with a B in the course who has 3 late assignments will earn a B-. Remember, "Incomplete" assignments that you need to resubmit count as Late. Keep track of your Late assignments! Ask me at any point if you are unsure of where you stand in the course.

Incomplete/Late Work Table

*** "Incomplete" refers to work that has been attempted, but is not meeting requirements. It does not refer to work that has not been submitted. Students must submit all assigned work to earn a passing grade.

	P/NP (C)	Core Course (B)	Mastery (A)
Incomplete Discussion Board Posts	You may have up to 2 "Incomplete" discussion board posts	You may have 1 "Incomplete" discussion board post	All primary + secondary discussion board posts and peeps must be complete
# of late assignments allowable	3	2	1

Exemplary Labor

If by the end of the course, you have no late assignments, posts, or quizzes, have posted 10 peeps on the discussion boards throughout the term, and have not exercised the clemency clause, then your course grade will increase by 1/3, e.g. from a B to a B+.

Clemency Clause

A student may request clemency for any reason that is related to rare and unusual circumstances out of their control, but only once in the term. The clemency plea is NOT an "opt out clause" for anyone who happens to not fulfill the course requirements in some way.

My job is to make sure that whatever agreement we come to will be fair to others in class. I will decide in consultation with the student whether clemency is warranted. The student must contact me as soon as possible, usually *before they are unable to meet the course requirements*, so that we can determine an equitable arrangement, one that will be fair to all in the class and still meet the university's expectations for student engagement hours, conduct, and workload.

Academic Honesty, Authorship, and Plagiarism

What is 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, thinkers, and sources for their words and ideas. When you use someone else's or another source'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. Copying from unauthored webpages is plagiarism. 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 other sources in your work, please ask!

Submit original work and cite the sources you consult! 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.

What are the consequences of plagiarizing? In cases where academic misconduct has been clearly established, the assignment earns a zero, and in some cases an 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.

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 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](#)

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.

Paced Modules: 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 posts, 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 asks for 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 unlocks on Sundays (at midnight), and only if you've completed the weekly quiz by then. E.g. if you've finished the quiz for Week 1 on time, then Week 2's module will become available on Sunday, June 30 at midnight. The course follows that pattern each week.

Turn on Canvas Notifications + Check your UO Email! 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 missed work in this class.** Let me know if you have questions or concerns about communications and notifications for this class.

I care about your success! 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. **If at any time you find yourself struggling to keep up with the readings and assignments, reach out to me as soon as possible. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. The quicker you make contact with me, the more helpful I can be.**

Other Policies + Expectations

Can I make up work I have missed? I am happy to work with students on a case-by-case basis for using additional discussion board posts or advanced labor activities as make-up work while the course is in session. Beyond that, we would need to discuss using the Clemency Clause.

Incompletes: A request for the grade "Incomplete" must be placed in advance of the end of the term. 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. 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.

Need Canvas help? See the [Student Technology Support](#) page.

Netiquette

To create a safe, productive working environment, be mindful when you communicate with both your colleagues and professors. 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 be in complete sentences and proofread for clarity. 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	<p>Introductions + Harriet Wilson's <i>Our Nig</i> Discussion: Women's Work and the Novel Introduction Post due by Wednesday, June 26 Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, June 28 Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, June 30</p>
Week 2	<p>Louisa May Alcott's <i>Work</i> Discussion: The Quest for Meaningful Work Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, July 5 Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 7</p>
Week 3	<p>Frances E.W. Harper's <i>Iola Leroy</i> Discussion: Race and the Work of Reconstruction Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, July 12 Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 14</p>
Week 4	<p>Kate Chopin's <i>The Awakening</i> + Wrap-Up Discussion: The New Woman and the Novel Primary Discussion Board Post due by Friday, July 19 Secondary Post, Peeps, Quiz, and Writing Assignment due by Sunday, July 21</p>
Final	<p>Final Writing Project and optional portfolio due by midnight on Sunday, July 28</p>



Hello! I am excited that you've signed up for ENG 391 on the nineteenth-century American novel. I love sharing my passion for reading and writing with my students.

What can you expect from me as a fellow reader?

I approach analyzing novels with a deep cultural and historical knowledge of nineteenth-century American women's lives and writings. As a writer of fiction, I also enjoy reading these novels with an eye toward how long-form narratives are formally constructed. Along with close reading, these contextual and formal approaches open up rich interpretive possibilities, which is what I love exploring with my students.

What can you expect from these texts?

A challenge! **Nineteenth-century novels are denser because they use "old-timey" English and idioms. This usually means slower reading times for everyone, but especially if English is not your first language. It's a good idea to factor in extra reading time as you get used to the denser language, and talk to me if you are really struggling with comprehension.**

What can you expect from this course?

Expect to develop cognitive patience and read deeply as you engage long-form fiction. This is an intensive summer course where we are reading a novel a week. Familiarity with close reading practices and literary analysis are crucial to success. In order for us to have vibrant discussions, I expect students to be able to talk about things like characterization, point of view, metaphor, symbolism, and irony. Refer to the [Novel Guides](#) resources page for terminology to help develop your interpretations.

I use a holistic and labor-based grading system that honors the labor of reading and writing. The "Core Course" offers a straightforward path to success and earning a B. If your goal is to achieve "Mastery," then expect to develop more complex analysis and interpretations. This is not an "easy A" course!

When contacting me: Kara, Dr. Clevinger, Professor Clevinger, or Your Royal Highness are all fine with me! Not "Mrs." "Ms." "Miss" or "Hey." My pronouns are she/her/hers.