Early American Literature Syllabus

# General Information

## Instructor Information and Availability

Tristan Striker

Phone number: 4574

E-mail: striket@linnbenton.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 11-12

Office Location: North Santiam Hall 214

## Course Information

Course name: ENG 253 Early American Literature

CRN: 31738

Scheduled time/days: Tues and Thurs 10-11:50

Number of credits: 4

Classroom(s): North Santiam Hall 110

### Prerequisites:

A C or better in WR121.

## Course Materials

Required:

* *Access to the Internet! All course materials are available online for free!*

## Course-Specific Requirements

Your presence and a high tolerance for puns and bad jokes.

## Course Description

Welcome to Early American Literature! In this course, we will explore how what we now know as American Literature came to be. In fact, part of our mission will be to investigate what “American” actually means. What qualifies as American Literature? Why do so many things we read in this class seem more like non-fiction writing as opposed to fiction? To address these questions, we will look at “American” literature not just as an established canon, but as an ever-changing and dynamic conversation between conflicting and often contradictory ideals, worldviews, and agendas. In short, we will think about American literature through the lens of what Chela Sandoval calls “oppositional consciousness.”

## ENG 253 Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe how Early American Literature (beginnings to 19th century) explores the human condition.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the early diversity of cultures which have contributed to American Literature.
3. Interpret Early American Literature through critical reading.
4. Participate in activities that encourage personal awareness, growth, and/or creativity through the experience of early American literature.
5. Write and speak effectively about your own and others’ ideas regarding Early American Literature.

# Class Policies

## Behavior and Expectations

You are held accountable to the [Student Code of Conduct](https://www.linnbenton.edu/current-students/administration-information/policies/students-rights-responsibilities-and-conduct), which outlines expectations pertaining to academic honesty (including cheating and plagiarism), classroom conduct, and general conduct.

### Guidelines for communication

1. Stay focused on the conversation. Refer back to texts we are reading in class to make your points.
2. Engage ideas instead of attacking each other.
3. If you start feeling defensive, attacked, or put on the spot, try asking yourself why you feel that way. Share your feelings with the class.

### Use of cell phones

Please put away your cell phones until class is finished. See it as a test to determine if screens and electronic devices really are addictive.

## Attendance/Tardiness Policy

I expect you to be on time and to attend every class. Attendance is worth 10 points out of 100 for the course. I understand that life happens. You have two (2) freebies, or absences that will not count against your final grade. My policy is simple:

1. Each absence is worth two (2) points. This means that each time you are absent beyond the two freebies, you will lose two points.
2. Every two tardies, or every two times you are late to class, will count as one absence. So, if you are tardy four times, that counts as two absences.

## Grading

Here’s how the class breaks down (out of 100 points):

* Response Papers (4)- 20 points (5 points each)
* Paper 1- 15 points
* Paper 2- 25 points
* Final Project- 20 points
* Attendance- 10 points
* In-class Writing- 10 points

Final Grade Calculation:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Percentage | Performance |
| A | 90-100% | Excellent Work |
| B | 80-89% | Good Work |
| C | 70-79% | Average Work |
| D | 60-69% | Poor Work |
| F | 0-59% | Failing Work |

### Late Assignment Policy

Because of how short quarters are, I cannot and will not accept late papers. However, do not hesitate to contact me if you are feeling overwhelmed or something happens. It is always better to let me know than to not hand anything in.

# College Policies

## LBCC Email and Course Communications

You are responsible for all communications sent via Moodle and to your LBCC email account. You are required to use your LBCC provided email account for all email communications at the College. You may access your LBCC student email account through Student Email and your Moodle account through Moodle.

## Disability and Access Statement

LBCC is committed to inclusiveness and equal access to higher education. If you have approved accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR) and would like to use your accommodations in the class, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible to discuss your needs. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with CFAR, please visit the [CFAR Website](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar) for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

## Statement of Inclusion

To promote academic excellence and learning environments that encourage multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas, all courses at LBCC will provide students the opportunity to interact with values, opinions, and/or beliefs different than their own in safe, positive and nurturing learning environments. LBCC is committed to producing culturally literate individuals capable of interacting, collaborating and problem-solving in an ever-changing community and diverse workforce.

## Title IX Reporting Policy

If you or another student are the victim of any form of sexual misconduct (including dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment), or any form of gender discrimination, LBCC can assist you. You can [report](https://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php/pid073717) a violation of our sexual misconduct policy directly to our Title IX Coordinator. You may also report the issue to a faculty member, who is required to notify the Coordinator, or you may make an appointment to speak confidentially to our Advising and Career Center by calling 541-917-4780.

## Public Safety/Campus Security/[Emergency Resources](http://www.linnbenton.edu/public-safety-emergency-planning):

In an emergency, call 911. Also, call LBCC Campus Security/Public Safety at 541-926-6855 and 541-917-4440.

From any LBCC phone, you may alternatively dial extension 411 or 4440. LBCC has a [public safety app](http://lbccpublicsafety.mobapp.at/landing/Desktop) available for free. We encourage people to download it to their cell phones. Public Safety also is the home for LBCC's Lost & Found. They provide escorts for safety when needed. Visit them to learn more.

# Campus Resources

## Learning Center

This is an amazing resource. You should go here for all of your classes. For this class, you can go to the Writing Center for help with your writing assignments. I strongly encourage all of you to use this resource as much as you can. Many studies have shown that students who use the Writing Center perform better on their assignments. Did I mention that it’s free?

## Library

The library is your best friend. We have excellent librarians here who are trained in helping you with your research projects. You can use the library online or in person. Either way, use it! It is such a wonderful place. Why wouldn’t you want to go?

## Me

Seriously? Seriously. I am here for you. I want you to succeed. I am not a gatekeeper. I am not here to see whether you make the cut. I am here to do whatever I can to get you where you want to go. We are in this together, so please remember that I would LOVE to help you succeed in this class beyond our given class time. Use my office hours or let me know if there is a better time for you. We can make it work.

# Tips for Success in This Class

1. Hand in your assignments, even if they aren’t finished.
2. Take on the mindset that you are coming to class on time every day. Treat our class like a professional environment.
3. Come to office hours or communicate with me in some other way. Do this as often as you want to. The relationships you build with your instructors here are vital to your success.
4. Make friends and build a community here! Your classmates are perhaps your most valuable resource (even more valuable than me, and that’s saying something).

# Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to change the contents of this syllabus due to unforeseen circumstances. You will be given notice of relevant changes in class, through a Moodle Announcement, or through LBCC e-mail.

**Week 1: Civilizing, Encounters, and the Myth of Discovery**

Tuesday: Read:

Arthur Barlowe’s [The First Voyage to Roanoke](https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/barlowe/barlowe.html) (1684)

[Genesis 2 from the King James Bible](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2&version=KJV)

Bartolome De Las Casas’s [A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies (The Mainland in the Region Known as Florida)](http://www.columbia.edu/~daviss/work/files/presentations/casshort/)

Thursday: Read:

Christopher Columbus’s [Letter to the King and Queen of Spain](http://www.vlib.us/amdocs/texts/columlet.html)

Olaudah Equiano’s [Narrative (Chapter 2)](https://history.hanover.edu/texts/equiano/equiano_ch2_a.html)

**Week 2: Slavery, Genocide, and Religious Extremism**

Tuesday: Read:

Jonathan Edwards’s [Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God (Intro and Doctrine only)](http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?path=aHR0cDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS5lZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwaGlsby9nZXRvYmplY3QucGw/Yy4yMTo0Ny53amVv)

Mary Rowlandson’s [Narrative of Captivity and Restoration (1st and 20th Remove)](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/851/851-h/851-h.htm#link2H_4_0020)

Thursday: Read:

Saghym Whothah’s [Reply to a Missionary](https://18thcenturyreadingroom.wordpress.com/2008/03/05/item-of-the-day-red-jackets-reply-to-a-missionary-at-a-council-of-the-chiefs-of-the-six-nations-1805/)

Samsom Occom’s [A Short Narrative of my Life and Sermon](https://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Occom_NarrativeandSermon.pdf)

William Apess’s [An Indian’s Looking Glass](http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HSH/Whitec/texts/Amerind/apesslkggls.htm)

**Week 3: Towards Revolutionary Thinking**

Tuesday: Read:

Phillis Wheatley’s [His Excellency General Washington](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/his-excellency-general-washington), [On Being Brought From Africa to America](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45465/on-being-brought-from-africa-to-america), [On Recollection](https://www.bartleby.com/150/18.html)

Thomas Jefferson’s [Notes on the State of Virginia](https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/jefferson/jefferson.html#p138) (Aboriginies and Laws p.146-155)

Thursday: Read:

Thomas Paine’s [Common Sense](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/147/147-h/147-h.htm) (Intro and Throughts on the State of Common Affairs)

J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur’s [Letters from an American Farmer](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~Hyper/CREV/letter09.html) (Letter IX)

**Week 4: Slavery and the American Consciousness**

Tuesday: Read:

Thomas Gray’s [The Confessions of Nat Turner](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/The_Confessions_of_Nat_Turner_by_Thomas_R_Gray_1832)

David Walker’s [Appeal](https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/walker/walker.html) (Preamble only)

Thursday: Read:

Sojourner Truth’s [Ain’t I a Woman?](http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/185/civil-rights-and-conflict-in-the-united-states-selected-speeches/3089/aint-i-a-woman/)

Frances E.W. Harper’s [The Slave Mother](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/51977/the-slave-mother-56d23017ceaad)

**Week 5: The American Renaissance**

Tuesday: Read:

Ralph Waldo Emerson’s [Nature](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/29433/29433-h/29433-h.htm) (Intro, Chapter 1 and Chapter 3)

Frances E.W. Harper’s [The Slave Auction](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47686/the-slave-auction) and [Bury Me in a Free Land](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/bury-me-free-land)

Thursday: Read:

Emily Dickinson’s [I’m Nobody, Who Are You?](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/im-nobody-who-are-you-260), [Success is counted sweetest](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45721/success-is-counted-sweetest-112)

Edgar Allan Poe’s [The Masque of the Red Death](https://archive.org/stream/themasqueofthere01064gut/1064-8.txt)

**Week 6: The American Renaissance II: Resistance and the Trope of Self-Reliance**

Tuesday: Read:

Frederick Douglass’s [The Heroic Slave](https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/douglass1853/douglass1853.html)

Thursday: Read:

Herman Melville’s [Benito Cereno](https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/melville/herman/benito-cereno/)

**Week 7: Resistance and Self Reliance Cont’d**

Tuesday: Read:

Harriet Jacobs’s [Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/11030/pg11030-images.html) (The Trials of Girlhood, The Loophole of Retreat, The Fugitive Slave Law)

Thursday: Read:

Henry David Thoreau’s [Civil Disobedience](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper2/thoreau/civil.html)

**Week 8: Renaissance Cont’d**

Tuesday: Read:

Walt Whitman’s [Song of Myself](https://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1881/poems/27)

Thursday: Read:

Lydia Maria Child’s [The Quadroon](http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/abolitn/abfilmcat.html)

**Week 9: Whispers of War**

Tuesday: Read:

Emerson’s [John Brown](https://www.bartleby.com/90/1110.html) (Notes optional)

Melville’s [The Portent](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45903/the-portent)

Thursday: Read:

Dickinson’s [Because I Could Not Stop For Death](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/because-i-could-not-stop-death-479), [286, 358, 384,409](http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/ajscheiber/ENGL%20214/Dickinson%20War%20Poems.htm)