ENG 253

Survey of American Literature: early

**Instructor** Robin Havenick

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**Office Hours** Mon 11:00 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 2:00, Tues, 12 – 1:00, Wed 1:00 – 2:00

**Class Info** CRN 37867 NSH210, Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 – 3:00

**Text:** *The Norton Anthology of American Lit, 8th edition, Volumes A & B*

**Prerequisite:** ENG 253 is the first of a 2-course sequence in American Literature*.*

Note: This series course may be taken individually and out of sequence.

**“The one thing in the world of value is the active soul.”**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**Course Description:** Welcome to our study of American Literature. They say that in order to understand the meaning of something you have to go back to its origins. In ENG253, we’ll go back to the beginnings of America and explore the literature through Native American stories, European exploration writings, the writings of Colonial America, the Literature of the New Republic, and finally the Literature of the Renaissance. Throughout our study, we’ll appreciate these works in relation to their historical and philosophical backgrounds, in relation to other world literature, and even in relation to other art forms. I encourage you to recognize your own important place as world citizens of the 21st century in understanding the literature of this country and its people.

**Learning Outcomes:**  When you successfully complete ENG253, you should be able to:

* Recognize how American Literature helps in understanding our human condition.
* Recognize literature’s place in American culture and history.
* Demonstrate how Early American Literature enhances our contemporary selves/cultural awareness and creativity.
* Read, write, and talk critically and insightfully about American Literature.
* Write and speak confidently about your own and others’ ideas regarding American Literature.

Succeeding in this class will require that you have college level writing and reading skills (write at the WR121 level). If you have not yet taken WR121, or aren’t taking it this term, please see me.

**“The greatest compliment one ever paid me was to ask me what I thought and then attend to my answer.” Henry David Thoreau**

**ENG253 COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance/Discussion Participation (40 points):** Please commit to these goals from the beginning: 1) to attend class regularly, 2) to arrive on time, prepared, and feeling confident, enthusiastic, and generous to share your thoughts and ideas.

More than three absences will negatively affect your final grade for the course. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed. It is also your responsibility to access the handouts that you missed on our Moodle site so that you can be prepared for the next class.

Keep up with the readings so that you can be an involved, active member of our class discussions. Prepare for class by reading the assignment carefully, using all of your critical reading and thinking strategies – annotate, look up words and references that you don’t understand, identify important passages you’d like to discuss with us in class. The *Weekly Reading and Writing* assignment handouts will help you focus your readings and prepare for class. Also, always keep in mind the *Essay One* and *Essay Two* guidelines.

Classroom Etiquette**:** Please arrive on time and plan to stay from 1:00 – 3:00 (please don’t leave in the middle of our discussions). Please remember to turn off your cell phones before class. I heartily encourage your active note-taking during our discussions; if this must be on a laptop, so be it, but if you’re using a laptop for note-taking, please sit in the back so that you don’t distract others. During class time, focus your attention on our discussion of the readings, the themes we’re exploring, and the ways in which you can contribute to our active discussion. Finally, please don’t create or contribute to “sidebar discussions” which distract and insult the rest of us.

**Weekly Writings** (60 points / 6 of your choice @ 10 points each, due on Thursdays)

Each week I’ll give you an *ENG253 Weekly Reading and Writing* handout. The reading is required each week, but the writing is only required six times, i.e. you’ll choose six times from the ten weekly possibilities to write. In your writings, you’ll compose responses to questions and discussions about our readings. This informal writing will give you the opportunity to discover, analyze, and explain what you think and how you feel about the issues and readings. These writings, which are designed for you to reflect on and synthesize what you are learning, will lead you toward your Formal Essays and provide you with your own writing as foundation. (**Full credit**: turned in on time, represents clear understanding and critical thinking, well developed. **Partial credit**: not turned in on time, or does not represent a clear understanding or clear critical thinking, or is not well developed. Format: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.)

**Essay One American Lit Begin to 1820 (30 points) DUE**

**Essay Two American Lit 1820- 1865 (50 points)**

**One History/Culture Group Presentation** (**20 points) OR**

**Enrichment Events (two event write-ups at 10 points each = 20 points)** Choose your own events, on or off campus, related to American Lit class concepts or artists (e.g. speakers, celebrations, exhibitions, club meetings) and write a summary and response. Format for both: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.