ENGL–3354.001
American Literature to 1900
Time/Place: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:15 p.m.
Center for Science Room 111

Dr. Sarah H. Salter
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Office: Faculty Center 256
Office Hours: Tues/Thurs. 12:00–2:00 p.m. and Wed. 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Course Description. This course introduces students to the history of U.S. literature through units organized by region. Throughout this survey, the course attends to a foundational paradox in U.S. literature and culture: some populations move to or within the U.S. to pursue greater opportunities while others experience those movements as an imposition. How are these distinct communal experiences represented in U.S. literature? In what ways does U.S. literary history record cultural exchange and movement? The course includes the purchase of one major literary anthology (The Heath Anthology of American Literature, vol. B) and includes other readings in pdf through Blackboard.

Course Objectives. This course will support the following learning goals:

- Introduce students to literary and cultural histories in the United States
- Introduce students to theories of space, migration, and colonialism in a US context
- Support the development of student libraries and vocabularies for the further study of literature, American culture, or race and ethnicity in the US
- Introduce geographical/regional frameworks for analysis.

Required Text

Assignments
Short Reading Responses. 30% (3 @ 10%)
Living Syllabus Selection/Reflection. 20%
Final Argumentative Essay. 20%
Visual History Object. 15%
Participation. 15%

Reading Responses. Reading responses allow students to experiment with an argument in a short form, low risk format. In three reading responses, students should formulate a short thesis statement work through an example or two from the chosen text(s). In practical terms, the reading response is a
practice for the final paper: a place to try out daring ideas, experiment with counter-intuitive arguments, organize observations around an unexpected or innovative question. Two of these responses will have prompts associated with them; the third response will serve as proposal/practice for your final argumentative essay.

Living Syllabus Project. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss how and why the “canon” in literary studies shifts (or doesn’t) to better account for diverse histories, movements, and literatures in the US. As part of that conversation, each student will propose an additional reading to our syllabus, and will describe and defend that choice within the context of our larger learning community. The most successful additions will engage with the regional or migratory focus of our course by addressing such questions as: How does this text change our sense of the relevant region or community? What other period, communities, or regions might this text connect to? How could you use this text to draw together seemingly distinct places, persons, or collectives?

Argumentative Paper. Students will develop a sustained, original argument in the service of an argumentative thesis. The purpose of this assignment is twofold: (1) students identify a cultural, historical, or literary “conversation” in which they will take part and (2) students develop and present an argument (including supporting examples, outside sources, and original analysis) that advances a particular intervention or perspective within what they identify as their conversation of interest.

Visual History Object. As part of our survey of US literary history, students will have a chance to expand focus beyond the linguistic object. Each student will select a visual object (from a selection of databases to be provided) that represents something about US literary or cultural history they find important. Each object will include a short introductory/contextualizing essay as well as some bibliographic information. More detail about digital curation and process to follow.

Specific Course Policies.

Class Participation. Success in literary and cultural criticism requires good communication and productive interaction, so attending class and contributing usefully to discussion are important parts of the final grade in this class. It will be difficult, if not utterly impossible, to retain the important aspects of class discussion without some textual marking and active reading practices, so bring the appropriate text to class every day and be ready to write in it. Students who are routinely without hard copies (either bound books or, when appropriate, printouts) will lose participation points. While you need not contribute to class discussion on every single day we meet, every student should arrive to class prepared by having done the reading and considered a question or two about the text. Asking informed and productive question is as important as answering them!

Studying American literature in a serious way means getting to enjoy the pleasures of beautiful writing and the insights of sophisticated minds. It also means confronting violent histories, especially histories of race, sex, and labor. Our readings include accounts of physical abuses, rapes, and other harms, as well as literally dozens of instances of racist epithets. We will talk openly about how hard it can be to read this work, but all assigned readings are required. Also important is your willingness to engage.
thoughtfully, generously, and sympathetically with your peers in this learning community. Please see Professor Salter to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your own participation in this course. During the course of the semester, I will give unannounced reading quizzes and require assorted extra activities, such as mini-presentations on passages of text or work with secondary critical material. All such activities will count toward the class participation grade.

Class Attendance. Students are allowed a maximum of three (3) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed 3 absences will be penalized .05 points on their final grade for every absence over the limit. Additionally:

- Students who participate in university-sanctioned activities should meet with me during the first week of classes.
- If you are unable to attend class, you do not need to email me to explain the circumstances. You should contact another student in class and copy his/her notes.

For more detail, consult TAMU-CC’s “General Academic Policies and Regulations.”
http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=177

Communication. As members of a learning community, everyone is expected to be up-to-date and responsible for any changes or additions to the course schedule. I will be using your TAMU-CC email, through Blackboard, to send messages about readings, assignments, and assorted matters to the class throughout the semester. It is imperative to check email regularly and stay aware of what is happening in and outside of the classroom. I will also take my communication responsibility to you seriously: if I have not responded to an email within 24 hours, do not hesitate to follow up. Be advised that emails sent after 10pm will not be read until the following day.

Technology. There will often be required supplementary readings posted to Blackboard; these should be printed out on hard copy, or students can bring a digital reading device, such as a Kindle, to class. The use of laptops in class has been found to lower course grades for the students who use them (see this article, one of several: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/05/16/why-smart-kids-shouldnt-use-laptops-in-class/)
Thus, laptops and tablets will not be considered appropriate digital reading device for class; students using laptops, tablets, or cell phones during class will be considered absent for the day.

Work Policies: All late work will lose 1/3 of a letter grade each day for as long as the assignment continues to be overdue. Students must complete all major assignments (as listed in the syllabus) to pass the course.

General Educational Policies.

Dropping a Class. Although I hope we will learn together for the course of this semester, sometimes a
student must drop a course. Please see me if you are considering doing so. You must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 15 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct. TAMU-CC identifies “Academic Misconduct” as “engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.”

Specifically, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the act of using someone else’s words and ideas without attribution. The TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct defines Plagiarism as “Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge. Examples:
- Using another’s work from print, web or other sources without acknowledging the source.
- Quoting from a source without citation.
- Using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgement of the source.
- Using a past assignment the student has completed as a portion of a new assignments, without providing citation. Please note that without instructor permission, this is also considered a multiple submission violation.

We will discuss MLA citation style and the appropriate use of academic sources and conventions throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions about academic misconduct and academic integrity at anytime. If you are discovered plagiarizing you will automatically receive an "F" for the paper, or depending on the severity, for the class, and will be reported to the appropriate officials for further disciplinary action. See the TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct for more detail. http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html

Classroom / Professional Behavior. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Grade Appeals. As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For
complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Disability Accommodations. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity. In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Academic Advising. The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full- time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

Campus Carry. Beginning August 1, 2016, it is legal in the State of Texas for “a handgun license holder to carry a concealed handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education.” As a state institution of higher learning, Texas A&M–Corpus Christi must recognize and abide by the Campus Carry law, which limits concealed carry to those over the age of 21 who hold the appropriate permit. By law, employees of TAMUCC cannot restrict permit holders, under the appropriate circumstances, from carrying a firearm on campus (with the exception of university restricted zones, which are clearly marked). I hope that you will consider participating in our learning community’s safe-space mentality in the classroom and my office. If you have concerns about this law and its effect on your learning...
experience, you can speak to your professor, a representative of the office of Student Engagement and Success, a employee of Campus Security, or a member of the ICARE community. For more information about this policy, please consult the TAMUCC website at http://campuscarry.tamucc.edu/ and http://www.tamus.edu/campus-carry-rules/

Proposed Schedule.

NB: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule as necessary

Week 1

T 08/29: Introductory

Unit 1: Texas/California/Mexico. Week 2 (Sept. 05–Sept. 07) – Week 3 (Sept. 19–21)
T 09/05: de Vaca, Alvar Núñez Cabeza. From Relation of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (1542). Blackboard PDF (Heath A pp.147-60)
Th 09/07: “Tales from the Hispanic Southwest” (traditional). Heath pp. 1710-1719/ Compilation: La Llorona. English texts (2); Spanish texts (1)
T 09/12: Texas and the US Invasion of Mexico (1846-1848). Tornel, Lowell, and Douglass. Heath pp. 1703-09; 1726-1733
Th 09/14: Sui Sin Far, short stories. Blackboard PDF

Unit 2: The US South. Week 4 (Sept. 19–21) – Week 7 (Oct. 10–12)
T 09/19: Smith, John. From The Generall Historie of Virginia (1624). Blackboard PDF (Heath A pp. 315-329)
T 09/26 Delany, Martin. Blake, or the Huts of America & multilingual excerpts from The North Star
Th 09/28: Stowe, Harriet Beecher. From Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852) and Jacobs, Harriet. From Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861). Heath pp. 2338-2367; 2770-2794
T 10/03: Chesnutt. The Marrow of Tradition (1901)
Th 10/05: Chesnutt. The Marrow of Tradition
T 10/10: Chesnutt. The Marrow of Tradition
Th 10/12: Chesnutt. The Marrow of Tradition

Unit 3: New England. Week 8 (Oct. 17 – 19) through Week 10 (Oct. 31 – Nov. 02)
T 10/17: Anne Bradstreet/Anne Hutchinson. Poems (1650)
Th 10/19: Phillis Wheatley. Poems (1768-1772)
T 10/24: Longfellow, William Wadsworth. “Evangeline” (1847) and “The Song of Hiawatha” (1855)
Th 10/26: Dickinson, Emily. Selected Poems (1860s-80s)
T 10/31: Poe, Edgar Allan. “The Raven” & “The Philosophy of Composition” (1830s)
Th 11/02: Whitman, Walt. From “Song of Myself” and Selected Poems (1855/1892)

Unit 4: Mid-Atlantic/ Midwest. Week 11 (Nov. 07–Nov. 09) – Week 14 ( Nov. 21)
T 11/07: “Rosa; Or, American Genius and Education” (1810)

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Heath pp. 1795-1821

W 11/21: Woolson, Constance Fenimore. “Peter the Parson” & “The Lady of Little Fishing” (1875)
Week 15: Nov. 28 – Nov. 30
Reading: Transregional Readings TBD

Week 16: Dec. 05
Course Conclusion

Finals Week: Dec. 8 – 14
Final Draft of Argumentative Assignment Due