HU 2501: American Experience in Lit I

Fall 2005

Office: Walker 340
Classroom: Walker 108
Class time: MWF 3:05-3:55 pm.

Assigned Readings

8/29 Introduction to course
31 Creation Stories, Read 19-27.
9/ 2 Columbus and de las Casas, 34-42.
  ~ Labor Day ~
  ~ K-Day ~
  ~ Labor Day ~
  7 Cabeza de Vaca, 58-70
  9 ~ K-Day ~
  12 John Smith, 103-20.
  14 Wm Bradford, 156-183; 190-91.
  19 Anne Bradstreet, 238; 262-271.
  21 Mary Rowlandson, 308-40.
  23 ~ Homecoming ~
  26 Cotton Mather, 390-92; 394-97.
  28 Samuel Sewall, 371-86.
  30 Discuss Exam # 1.

10/ 3 Exam #1 on Early Writers
  5 Sarah Kemble Knight, 436-46.
  7 Samson Occam, 645-52.
  10 Ben. Franklin #1: 515-22; 534-37.
  12 Ben Franklin #2: 538-68; quiz #1.
  14 Franklin, 569-83; 607-08; quiz #2.
  21 Olaudah Equiano, 747-62; 779-81.
  24 Phillips Wheatley, 808-10; 812-15.
  26 Royall Tyler, 825-45 (First two acts).
  28 Discuss Exam # 2
  END of "A" Volume

11/ 2 Discuss Romanticism as an artistic movement.
  ~ What are Irving’s characters so popular?
  7 Wm Cullen Bryant, 1071-77.
  9 R. W. Emerson, 1103-10; 1135-39; 48-54
  11 Emerson, continued.
  14 N. Hawthorne Week, 1263-72.
  16 Read 1272-89, "Minister's Black Veil."
  18 Read 1313-33; Film, "Rappaccini’s Daughter." Those attending class need not write a Commentary.

Suggested Commentary Topics

- Why do all cultures have these?
- Has your impression of Columbus changed?
- Why was de Vaca ignored? Begin Commentaries.
- What values of BF are different from earlier writers?
- What makes a good autobiography? Why is this one great?
- What are her views about race? Similar to the 1960s?
- Do any sitcoms use similar, comic techniques?
- Does Mme Knight have any weaknesses?
- Why was he treated so poorly?
- What makes Edwards’ sermons so powerful?
- Why is Equiano [ECK-ee-AH-no] so easy to read?
- What are her views about race? Similar to the 1960s?
- Do any sitcoms use similar, comic techniques?
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What is the class attendance policy?

My expectation is that you will attend all classes. Since illness is part of life, I will allow four class absences to accommodate minor illnesses, plant trips, weddings, funerals, and for other personal reasons. More than four absences will commonly drop your grade one level (B to C; C to D, etc.). Missing six classes (two weeks) is grounds for failure.

If you must miss class, try to let me know beforehand. Inform me and/or the Dean of Student’s office about extended illness, such as hospitalization or family emergency.

As a Disabled Person, What are My Rights?

MTU Complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA).

If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please contact the Dean of Students.

For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your academic advisor, the department head, or the Affirmative Action Office.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Readings

The class will use both volumes of the Norton Anthology, 6th edition, beginning with vol. A.

Please read the biographical blurb at the beginning of each author’s selection to understand better the writer’s perspective. Read the assigned material very carefully. For poems and other short pieces, read the material at least twice.

We will not be able to discuss all works in any great detail, but you will still be responsible for reading everything listed in the syllabus unless you are told otherwise.

What are Commentaries?

For most class meetings you will be expected to generate 200 words (about one double-spaced typed page) on each day’s assigned reading. You need not write more than one commentary per class, regardless of how many authors or titles are discussed on that day. The commentaries are always due on the day we discuss the topic.

Commentaries will not be accepted later than the class meeting immediately following the due date. In other words, you may submit Monday’s commentary the following Wednesday, but not the following Friday.

If you maintain a consistent heading in your commentaries, I am less likely to miss giving you credit. In the upper right-hand corner of your commentary, write your name; under that print the author’s name (along with a “# 1” or “# 2” if we have discussed that author for more than one class period). For example:

Ted Schmitt  
Ben. Franklin #1

I do not expect your commentaries to be polished essays, but rather personal statements reflecting your view of the author and what that person wrote. Do not rehash the plot or copy material from the biography, but otherwise you may discuss any aspect of the day’s assignment while filling up your page. For example, what did you learn from the reading? Did the author keep you interested? Either way, explain. (You will find some authors appealing, and some not.)

Grading will be pass/fail on individual commentaries, with the number you submit providing the letter grade (e.g. all but two submitted = ‘A,’ all but four = ‘B,’ etc.

Grading

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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Commentaries</td>
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Extra credit topics will be announced in advance throughout the term. Volunteer early.