COURSE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE: Through discussion, critical thinking, and writing about significant literary works, you will be exposed to the rich diversity of writers and traditions that constitute the American experience, from the Colonial through the Modern periods. By using persuasive techniques learned during class discussions, you will learn to write clear, logical, well-structured formal critical essays about literature, free from serious errors in usage and mechanics.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED:
1. An ability to render close textual analysis;
2. An ability to synthesize information from multiple texts;
3. An ability to render clear, cogent ideas;
4. An ability to structure well-developed essays, with thesis, textual support, and analysis;
5. An ability to correctly employ standard written English usage;
6. An ability to utilize effective research methodology and research paper skills;
7. An understanding of ethnic/cultural diversity;
8. An aesthetic and critical judgment for literature;
9. A concept of chronology associated with literary periods;
10. An understanding of the inter-relationship of the arts, history, and philosophy
11. An ability to utilize basic technology to improve writing and thinking skills.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
* Norton Anthology of American Literature
  * Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*

RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
* Harbrace College Handbook
  * A recent college-level dictionary

THE COLLEGE WRITING CENTER: To receive individual instruction and feedback on writing in progress, students should use the services of the Knutti Writing Center (K207). Visits are by appointment or through ShepOwl: http://www.shepherd.wvnet.edu/scwcweb

CLASS ATTENDANCE: You are expected to attend class, on time, fully prepared. Please contact me as soon as possible if you will be absent from class. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY WORK YOU MISS IF ABSENT!

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Your final grade depends on active participation in class. Always bring your texts with you. Always read your assignments as listed in the syllabus, **before** you come to class! In this class, your participation is vital to the success of the course – both to you and to the class as a whole. For those of you who may hover between one grade and another, active participation can raise your final grade. Therefore, read and think critically and thoughtfully. Assess the assignments, compare and contrast them, question them, and come prepared to discuss them fully.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: Four (4) researched written essays are required. Assignments will be generated by me, but you will be able to tailor them to your own interests. MLA documentation style (found in Harbrace) must be used for all out-of-class essays and the research paper. All out-of-class essays must be computer drafted and submitted via a Microsoft Word attachment to an e-mail. Additional writing assignments will be required through WebCT (See below).
THE SEMESTER RESEARCH PAPER: Your research paper is a formal researched essay of at least 1500 words. You will choose the topic from a list I generate – and the topic will be discussed in a short conference before you begin your research. Since this essay will count more than any other work you do this semester, I strongly encourage you to seek help from one of the consultants in the Knutti 207 Writing Center. You will know well in advance the due date for this research paper, and can make appointments with the same consultant, thus giving yourself a continuity you would not receive any other way. I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE SUBMISSIONS OF YOUR FINAL SEMESTER RESEARCH PAPER. IF YOU FAIL TO TURN IT IN ON TIME, YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF “F” ON THE PAPER.

WebCT:

1. Some of the work in this class will be done via WebCT. Each Friday I will post questions about the present and previous week’s work. You will post your answers to these questions in a discussion group. I will grade your responses. If you do not post to WebCT, you cannot make it up, and will receive a 0 as a grade. However, at the end of the semester, the lowest WebCT discussion grade will be eliminated before calculating your final grade.

2. You may contact me anytime by email, but if it is a question that the rest of the class might help with, post it to the discussion group on WebCT.

CONCERNING PLAGIARISM: DON’T!!!! I expect academic honesty from my students. However, students don’t always see this the way the faculty does. Heads up! Academic honesty means that all the work you do is your own work. You should not borrow, copy, or buy any paper from another student, a publishing house, or an Internet site. Although guides to literature proliferate today, you should NEVER borrow passages or words from the introductory summaries in your anthology, a study guide, an internet site, or other sources, including another student’s work – UNLESS you give the author(s) credit, using parenthetical notation. If you DO use another writer’s words or ideas in your paper without correct citation, you will receive a zero on the paper, and could fail this course. One last thing: I am scanning papers to be certain you do not use work that is not yours. Any papers I find that are plagiarized will be turned over to the department chairman and the disciplinary committee of this college.

STUDY GUIDES: There are various study guides that can help you understand these assignments. The bookstore stocks acceptable and departmentally sanctioned study guides from Twayne publishing. Sparknotes.com also has well-written, academically accurate study guides. But these are GUIDES, not acceptable research sources. Study Guides may not be listed in your Works Cited bibliography. They may not be used in your papers. If you try to do so and I discover it, you may receive a failing grade on your paper.

GRADING: Grading scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 0-59 = F.

WebCT participation 10%
1 Essay – Colonial Literature 10%
1 Essay – Literature before 1900 10%
Midterm Exam 10%
Final Exam 15%
1 Essay – Literature before WWII 20%
Research Paper – Literature after WWII 25%

100%
SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK: All work must be computer generated in Microsoft Word format, and sent via an attachment to an e-mail. All work is due by 6 p.m. on the date specified in the syllabus. It is your responsibility to see that I receive your work on time. Late essays will not be accepted unless you consult with me concerning the reason for missing a deadline and get my permission to do so BEFORE the essay is due. (See additional comments about the Research paper, above.) In any event, papers that are handed in late will be lowered one letter grade for each day in arrears.

COURSE CONTENT: We will study American Literature with an emphasis on those voices which are often neglected, but have given richness and texture to the American literary experience: female and minority/ethnic authors.

EXTRA CREDIT: You may do extra credit assignments (1 to 2-page papers) at any time in this class. The only requirement is that you have the topic approved by me. Three extra credit assignments will offset a low grade, IF the cumulative grade you receive on the extra credit assignments is B+ or higher.

SYLLABUS

Jan 11 Introduction to Course/Discussion of Syllabus
What Is Literature?
What Is American Literature – and why study it?

The Pima Creation Story – pp 21 & 22
The Iroquois Creation Story – p. 17
The Holy Bible: Genesis
First Essay Assignment Given

Jan 18 Bradstreet – “The Prologue” – p. 115
“To My Dear and Loving Husband” – p. 125
“In Memory of My Dear Grandchild . . .” – p. 126
Taylor – “Huswifery” – p. 160
“Upon Wedlock and Death of Children” – p. 157

Jan 20 De Crevecouer – “What Is An American” – p. 300
Paine – “Common Sense” – pp. 321-327
Smith – “A Description of New England” – p. 53
“New England Trials” – p. 57

Franklin – “Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America” – p. 227
“The Way to Wealth” – p. 221
“Autobiography” (Part I) – p. 231

Jan 27 Equiano – “Narrative” – p. 351
Wheatley – “On Being Brought from Africa to America” – p. 367
“Thoughts on the Works of Providence” – p. 370

Feb 1 1st Essay Due – approximately 600 words – Colonial America
Stowe – “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” ALL
Feb 3  Emerson – “Self-Reliance” ALL – p. 539
Feb 8  Hawthorne – “The Minister’s Black Veil” – p. 626
Young Goodman Brown” – p. 610
Feb 10  Thoreau – Walden – 3 Sections
“Where I Lived. . .” – p. 895
“Sounds” – p. 905
“Solitude” – p. 915
Feb 15  Whitman – “Song of Myself” ALL – p. 1003
Feb 17  Douglass – Narrative. . . (ALL) – p. 939 to end
Cochise – “I am alone” – p. 1462
Introduction to Emily Dickinson – READ AHEAD!
Feb 22  Dickinson – “This is my letter to the World” – p. 1178
“I cannot live with you – ” – p. 1182
“My life closed twice before its close;” – p. 1187
“Because I could not stop for Death – ” – p. 1184
“The world is not Conclusion” – p. 1180
Feb 24  Fern – “Male Criticism on Ladies Books” – p. 808
“A Law More Nice Than Just” – p. 810
Mar 1  2nd ESSAY DUE – approximately 750 words – Literature before 1900
Frost – “The Death of the Hired Man” – p. 1881
“Fire and Ice” – p. 1890
“Nothing Gold Can Stay” – p. 1890
“Mending Wall” – p. 1880
“The Road Not Taken” – p. 1887
“Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” – p. 1891
Mar 3  Field trip to the National Museum of the American Indian. I’m trying to arrange it!
The Navajo Night Chant – “The Sacred Mountains” – p. 1774
Zitkala Sa – “Impressions of an Indian Childhood” – p. 1794
Mar 8  Sandburg – “Fog” – p. 1918
“Grass” – p. 1918
Williams – “The Young Housewife” – p. 1935
Pound – “In a Station of the Metro” – p. 1949

Mar 12-20  SPRING RECESS

Mar 22  McKay –  “If We Must Die” – p. 2086
Toomer –   “Portrait in Georgia” – p. 2125
Hurston –  “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” – p. 2097
Hughes –  “Song for a Dark Girl” – p. 2229
Cullen –  “Yet Do I Marvel” – p. 2245

Mar 24  Faulkner –  “Barn Burning” – p. 2178
“A Rose for Emily” – p. 2160

Final semester research paper topics to be given

Mar 29&31  CONFERENCES! (To discuss research proposal) – 3:15 CLASS IN KN 203 ON 31ST
3rd ESSAY DUE – Early 20th Century Literature – 1000 words
Final Semester Research Paper PROPOSAL Due (TYPED)

Apr 5  Glaspell –  *Trifles* – 1894
3:15 CLASS IN KN 203

3:15 CLASS IN KN 203

Apr 12&14  Bellow –  “Looking for Mr. Green” – p. 2386
O’Connor – “Good Country People” – p. 2428
Kingston – “No Name Woman” – p. 2557
Walker – “Everyday Use” – p. 2581
Baldwin – “Going to Meet the Man” – p. 2415
Erdrich – “Fleur” – p. 2598

Apr 19  Brooks –  “The Bean Eaters” – p. 2700
“The White Troops Had Their Orders But...” – p. 2699
“We Real Cool” – p. 2702
Ginsberg – “Howl” – p. 2732
Plath – “Lady Lazarus” – p. 2778
“Child” – p. 2784

Apr 21-24  SPRING WEEKEND

Apr 26&28  RESEARCH PAPER DUE – 1250 words
Morrison – *The Bluest Eye*
Film As Literature?

May 3  Final Class – Film As Literature & Wrap-up of Semester’s Work

May 5  FINALS BEGIN – FINAL EXAM IN CLASSROOM ON DATE ASSIGNED
EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR ALL ESSAYS IN ENGL204

“A” Paper (90-100) - Superior:
- Originality of thought and effectiveness
- Logical, emphatic development of a central idea
- Sophisticated, lively, and precise diction
- Well-developed, effectively organized essay and paragraphs
- Clear, engaging illustrative support
- Mature and diversified sentence structure
- Absence of errors in punctuation, usage, and spelling

“B” Paper (80-89) - Good
- Convincing and engaging expression
- Logical development of a central idea
- Appropriate, lively, acceptable diction
- Effectively organized essay and paragraphs
- Detailed support of ideas
- Correct, clear, and varied sentence structure
- Absence of major errors in punctuation, usage, and spelling

“C” Paper (70-79) - Competent
- Clear Communication
- Satisfactory development of a central idea
- Appropriate diction
- Satisfactory organization of essay and paragraphs
- Adequate support of ideas
- Some variety of sentence structure
- Relative absence of major errors in punctuation, sentence structure, usage, and spelling

“D” Paper (60-69) - Deficient
- Superficial, unclear, or repetitious content
- Some instances of illogical thinking
- Immature, simplistic diction
- Poor organization of essay and paragraphs
- Weak support of ideas
- Awkward, monotonous sentence structure
- Some *gross errors in punctuation, structure, usage, and spelling

“F” Paper (0-59) - Unacceptable
- Confusing content
- Flawed central idea
- Inappropriate, unclear diction
- Random organization of paragraphs
- Unsupported generalizations
- Awkward, wordy, or simplistic sentence structure
- *Gross errors in punctuation, structure, usage, and spelling

*Gross errors include awkward/unclear sentence structure, fragments, fused (run-on) sentences and comma splices, agreement mistakes, vague/unclear pronoun reference, faulty verb forms, unjustified tense shifts, faulty parallelism, and dangling and misplaced modifiers. All of these errors are explained in detail in your Harbrace Handbook. Use it!