



**Chaminade University**

## **EN 314, Backgrounds in American Literature**

**Fall Day Semester, 2002**

**Instructor: Jim Kraus, [jkraus@chaminade.edu](mailto:jkraus@chaminade.edu)**

**Henry Hall 206-A, ph. 735-4877 -- Office Hours: MWF 1 - 2 p.m., 3 - 4 p.m.**

**Course Homepage: <http://madrona.forest.net/kraus/cham/314/fallday02>**

English 314, Backgrounds in American Literature, provides students with a survey of American literature from its beginnings to the late 20th Century. The course centers on examining major works, including European ones, native American creation stories, exploration and colonial narratives, the rich period of the 19th Century American Renaissance, Modernism, and the evolution of regional and ethnic literatures. The course also provides an introduction to critical theory and its application to literary study. The course is one of two "literary backgrounds" courses required of all English majors, yet open to English minors and non-majors as well. As is the case with all English courses, this one places a strong emphasis on the continuing development of research and writing skills.

Students take quizzes, engage in online discussions and prepare essays for presentation to their instructor and to their classmates. The course features a discussion forum that enables an online learning community focused on course readings and the critical analysis of literature. By the end of the semester, students should feel that they have a clearer and deeper sense of the disparate origins of American literature and have substantially refined their analytical, research and writing skills.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the term, students who have been actively and consistently engaged in the course readings, quizzes, discussions and other assignments, who have consistently developed and refined their insights via regular journal writing, and who have completed the two research projects, should be able to:

- Understand and articulate the global contexts in which American literature is studied.
- Evaluate and explain ethical and religious ideas that emerge in the study and discussion of American literature.
- Distinguish the major literary/intellectual movements, styles and authors that have evolved within and about the broad context referred to as "America" by outlining its chronological development from its beginning to the present.
- Identify and categorize various critical strategies used in the analysis of American literature.
- Apply insights about American literature to the preparation and delivery of interpretative statements to diverse readers (different ages, cultural backgrounds, etc.).
- Formulate questions grounded in concepts related to the study of American literature and direct them to instructor, classmates and diverse others.
- Summarize, critique and extend class discussions and related ideas about the concepts "America," "American" and "literature."
- Make qualitative distinctions among the wide variety of American literature research sources available via the internet and libraries.
- Propose, execute and prepare research projects in American literature.
- Appropriately self-assess one's own insights and skills related to the study of American literature.

### **Texts**

Maxine Hairston, et. al. *Scott Foresman Handbook*, 6th edition.

Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (available online)

Baym, et. al., Eds. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature (Shorter Fifth Edition)*



## Requirements

Participation in online discussions (approximately 20%)

Reading journal (approximately 10%)

Two essays (approximately 20%)

Quizzes and miscellaneous assignments (approximately 10%)

Mid-term and Final exams (approximately 40%)

## Tentative Course Outline

*Unit 1* -- Monday, August 26, 2002 to Friday, September 06, 2002

*Preliminary / Review*

Log in to WebBoard Forum for this course and read through the "Help" files there. Due Wednesday, August 28, 2002

WebBoard Forum Write an autobiographical statement of at least 150 words describing your own literary education. Ideally, you might describe a particular experience, good or bad, from your educational background. . . . in school, in church, or maybe in a hula halau. Post to the "Literary Backgrounds" conference in WebBoard. Due Wednesday, August 28, 2002

- "The Writing Process," Scott Foresman, Part 1
- Reading and Thinking Critically, Scott Foresman (5th ed. pp. 107 - 119) (6th ed. Ch. 9)
- Literary Analysis, Scott Foresman (5th ed. pp. 821 - 833) (6th ed. Ch. 12)
- Keeping a course journal
- Glossary of Literary Terms
- Guidelines for Essay Assignments

*Unit 2* -- Native vs Foreign . . . British, Colonial, American . . . Literature? -- (NAAL 55 - 403) -- Monday, September 09, 2002 to Monday, September 16, 2002

*Unit 3* -- American Renaissance, Part 1 -- (NAAL 409 - 790) -- Wednesday, September 18, 2002 to Wednesday, September 25, 2002

- Essay 1 Due: Friday, September 20, 2002

*Unit 4* -- American Renaissance, Part 2 - (NAAL 791 - 1240) -- Friday, September 27, 2002 to Friday, October 04, 2002

*Unit 5* -- American Realism -- (NAAL 1241 - 1754) -- Monday, October 07, 2002 to Wednesday, October 16, 2002

- Mid-term Exam: Wednesday, October 09, 2002

*Unit 6* -- The Emergence of Modernism -- (NAAL 1755 - 1959) -- Friday, October 18, 2002 to Friday, October 25, 2002

*Unit 7* -- "The Waste Land" and New Criticism -- (NAAL 1959 - 2259) -- Monday, October 28, 2002 to Wednesday, November 06, 2002

*Unit 8* -- The Harlem Renaissance -- (NAAL 1959 - 2259) -- Friday, November 08, 2002 to Friday, November 15, 2002

*Unit 9* -- Fiction after 1945 (NAAL 2260 - 2580) -- Monday, November 18, 2002 to Wednesday, November 27, 2002

*Unit 10* -- Poetry after 1945 (NAAL 2581 - 2817) -- Monday, December 02, 2002 to Wednesday, December 11, 2002

- Essay 2 Due: Wednesday, December 11, 2002
- Final Exam: Wednesday, December 11, 2002, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.