



INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Mr. Daniel J. Valdez Jr., M.A.

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Office Phone: 409-247-5242

Office Location: TC 222

Office Hours: MWF: 8 AM – 10 AM / TR: 12 PM – 2 PM

CREDIT

3 Semester Credit Hours (3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab)

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Online

PREREQUISITE/CO-REQUISITE:

A-D or better in ENGL 1301 (Composition I).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of American literature from the period of exploration and settlement to the present. Students will study works of prose, poetry, drama, and fiction in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. Texts will be selected from among a diverse group of authors for what they reflect and reveal about the evolving American experience and character.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Identify key ideas, representative authors and works, significant historical or cultural events, and characteristic perspectives or attitudes expressed in the literature of different periods or regions.
2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods in different regions.
4. Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
5. Write research-based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

A reliable electronic device with internet access.

The instructor will provide information for supplemental required reading resources.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance in this online class is based on your digital presence and your mental participation in my class, including interacting with me in email, in assignments, and in synchronous meetings. You will receive an email from me through Starfish, LIT's student monitoring system, if you do not have a digital presence in class. I can also monitor how often you log on to Blackboard, so please be mindful to log on often to check for class updates and assignments.

DROP POLICY

If you wish to drop a course, ***you*** are responsible for initiating and completing the drop process by the specified drop date as listed on the [Academic Calendar](#). If you stop coming to class and fail to drop the course, you will earn an “F” in the course.

STUDENT EXPECTED TIME REQUIREMENT

For every hour in class (or unit of credit), students should expect to spend at least two to three hours per week studying and completing assignments. For a 3-credit-hour class, students should prepare to allocate approximately six to nine hours per week outside of class in a 16- week session OR approximately twelve to eighteen hours in an 8-week session. Online/Hybrid students should expect to spend at least as much time in this course as in the traditional, face-to-face class.

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS (Due on this Date)	ASSIGNMENTS (Due on this Date)
Week 1: Start Here (01/20 – 01/23)	Welcome to American Lit American Literary Movements	“Periods of American Literature” (01/23/26)	Syllabus Quiz “Periods of American Literature” Discussion (01/23/26)
Week 2: Beginnings (01/26 – 01/30)	Native American Literature Myths, Fables, and Folktales	Iroquois Creation Myth Cherokee Legend – “The First Fire” (01/30/26)	Native American Literature Discussion Creation Myth Quiz “The First Fire” Quiz Participation Journal Entry 1 (01/30/26)

Week 3: Discovery (02/02 – 02/06)	Christopher Columbus Discovery of America	Letters of Columbus Letters of Cortes Letters of Ponce de Leon (02/06/26)	Discovery of American Discussion Letters Discussion Letters Quizzes (02/06/26)
Week 4: Colonialism (02/09 – 02/13)	Colonialism John Smith and William Bradford Anne Bradstreet	John Smith – “Description of New England” William Bradford – “Of Plymouth Plantation” Anne Bradstreet – Poems (02/13/26)	Colonialism Discussion Key Figures Quiz Participation Journal Entry 2 Weeks 1-4 Short Essay (02/13/26)
Week 5: The Enlightenment (02/16 – 02/20)	The Enlightenment The Founding Fathers American Revolution	The Declaration of Independence Thomas Paine – “Common Sense” The Federalist Papers (excerpts) (02/20/26)	The Enlightenment Discussion “Common Sense” Discussion Founding Fathers & Their Documents Quiz (02/20/26)
Week 6: Romanticism and Transcendentalism (02/23 – 02/27)	Romanticism Transcendentalism	Walt Whitman – Poetry Herman Melville – <i>Moby-Dick</i> (excerpts) Emily Dickinson – Poetry Charlotte Perkins Gilman – “The Yellow Wallpaper” (02/27/26)	Romanticism Discussion Transcendentalism Discussion Readings Quiz Participation Journal Entry 3 (02/27/26)

Week 7: Dark Romanticism/Gothic Literature (03/02 – 03/06)	Dark Romanticism/Gothic Literature Irving, Poe, and Hawthorne	Washington Irving – “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” Edgar Allan Poe – “The Masque of the Red Death” Nathaniel Hawthorne – “Young Goodman Brown” (03/06/26)	Dark Romanticism/Gothic Literature Discussion Readings Quizzes MID-TERM (03/06/26)
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Week 8: SPRING BREAK (03/09 – 03/13)	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
Week 9: Civil War Literature and Realism (03/16 – 03/20)	Civil War Realism Bierce, Longfellow, Douglas, and Chopin	Ambrose Bierce – “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” Henry Wordsworth Longfellow – “The Spirit of Poetry” Frederick Douglass – Excerpts Kate Chopin – “The Story of an Hour” (03/20/26)	Civil War Discussion Realism Discussion Readings Quizzes Participation Journal Entry 4
Week 10: Naturalism (03/23 – 03/27)	Naturalism London, Crane, and Chopin (again)	Jack London – “To Build a Fire” Stephen Crane – “The Open Boat” Kate Chopin – “The Storm” (03/27/26)	Naturalism Discussion Readings Discussion Readings Quizzes (03/27/26)

Week 11: WWI and Modernism (03/30 – 04/03)	WWI Modernism “The Waste Land” and Eliot Hemingway and Teasdale	T.S. Eliot – “The Waste Land” Ernest Hemingway – “Soldier’s Home” Sara Teasdale – “There Will Come Soft Rains” (04/03/26)	WWI and Modernism Discussion “The Waste Land” Readings Quizzes Participation Journal Entry 5 (04/03/26)
Week 12: Modernism Pt. 2 (04/06 – 04/10)	Modernism Pt. 2 William Faulkner Frost, Pound, and Cummings	William Faulkner – <i>Absalom! Absalom!</i> Excerpt Robert Frost – Poetry E.E. Cummings – Poetry Ezra Pound – Cantos (Poetry) (04/10/26)	Modernism Discussion 2 <i>Absalom! Absalom!</i> Poems Quiz (04/10/26)
Week 13: WWII Literature (04/13 – 04/17)	World War II Lit Salinger, O’Connor, and Gass	J.D. Salinger – “For Esme: --with Love and Squalor” Flannery O’Connor – “Good Country People” William H. Gass – “In the Heart of the Heart of the Country” (04/17/26)	WWII Discussion Readings Discussion Readings Quiz Participation Journal Entry 6 Research Essay Proposal (04/17/26)
Week 14: Postmodernism (04/20 – 04/24)	Postmodernism Allen Ginsberg and the Beats Kurt Vonnegut and Postmodern Authors	Allen Ginsberg – “Howl” Kurt Vonnegut – “Harrison Bergeron” (04/24/26)	Postmodernism Discussion “Howl” Discussion “Harrison Bergeron” Quiz Research Essay Rough Draft (04/24/26)
Week 15: Contemporary Era (04/27 – 05/01)	Contemporary Era and Where American Lit is Going Smith, Collins, and Others	Zadie Smith – “Two Men Arrive in a Village” Billy Collins – Poetry Neil Hilborn – Poetry (05/01/26)	Contemporary Era Discussion Poetry Readings Discussion “Two Men...” Quiz Participation Journal Entry 7 (Final Entry) (05/01/26)
Week 16: Prep for Final (05/04 – 05/06)	Summary of American Literature	Final Exam Review	RESEARCH ESSAY FINAL DRAFT (05/04/26)
FINAL EXAM DUE	FINAL EXAM DUE 05/11/26 BY 5 PM	FINAL EXAM DUE 05/11/26 BY 5 PM	FINAL EXAM DUE 05/11/26 BY 5 PM

05/11/25 BY 5 PM			
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COURSE EVALUATION

Final grades will be calculated according to the following criteria:

- Participation 10%
- Daily Work Assignments 40%
- Mid-Term Exam 15%
- Research Paper—Common Core Assignment 20%
- Final Exam 15%
- Total 100%

GRADING SCALE

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

0 – 59 F

LIT does not use +/- grading scales

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students found to be committing academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, or collusion) may receive disciplinary action. Students need to familiarize themselves with the institution's Academic Dishonesty Policy available in the Student Catalog & Handbook at <http://catalog.lit.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=80#academic-dishonesty>.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The latest technical requirements, including hardware, compatible browsers, operating systems, etc. can be online at <https://lit.edu/online-learning/online-learning-minimumcomputer-requirements>. A functional broadband internet connection, such as DSL, cable, or WiFi is necessary to maximize the use of online technology and resources.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities. LIT provides reasonable accommodations as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to students with a diagnosed disability. The Special Populations Office is located in the Eagles' Nest Room 129 and helps foster a supportive and inclusive educational environment by maintaining partnerships with faculty and staff, as well as promoting awareness among all members of the Lamar Institute of Technology community. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Special Populations Coordinator at (409)-951-5708 or email

specialpopulations@lit.edu. You may also visit the online resource at [Special Populations - Lamar Institute of Technology \(lit.edu\)](#).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of all registered Lamar Institute of Technology students to access, read, understand and abide by all published policies, regulations, and procedures listed in the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook*. The *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* may be accessed at www.lit.edu. Please note that the online version of the *LIT Catalog and Student Handbook* supersedes all other versions of the same document.

STARFISH

LIT utilizes an early alert system called Starfish. Throughout the semester, you may receive emails from Starfish regarding your course grades, attendance, or academic performance. Faculty members record student attendance, raise flags and kudos to express concern or give praise, and you can make an appointment with faculty and staff all through the Starfish home page. You can also login to Blackboard or MyLIT and click on the Starfish link to view academic alerts and detailed information. It is the responsibility of the student to pay attention to these emails and information in Starfish and consider taking the recommended actions. Starfish is used to help you be a successful student at LIT.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT

Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) recognizes the recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, have changed the landscape of many career disciplines and will impact many students in and out of the classroom. To prepare students for their selected careers, LIT desires to guide students in the ethical use of these technologies and incorporate AI into classroom instruction and assignments appropriately. Appropriate use of these technologies is at the discretion of the instructor. Students are reminded that all submitted work must be their own original work unless otherwise specified. Students should contact their instructor with any questions as to the acceptable use of AI/ChatGPT in their courses.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES/INFORMATION

- Personal Responsibility:**

- It is *my* responsibility to convey the course information to students in a clear and concise manner that is aligned with the course objectives. It is *the student's* responsibility to interact with the material, ask questions as needed, complete assignments in a timely manner, and check Blackboard and their email daily.
- It is the student's responsibility to reach out to me with any questions or concerns they may have.
- Students *must* listen to lectures and take notes in this course. Failure to do so will result in the student falling behind, and if a question is asked that has been mentioned in the lecture, I will simply refer the student to the lecture.
- Technical issues are not a valid excuse for not completing an assignment if the student waits until the day the assignment is due. The student should work on assignments before the day they are due. I will not accept the work, and the

student will receive a 0. This is especially true if one does not stay up-to-date with one's LIT passwords. Forgetting one's log-in information is not a valid excuse for missing an assignment.

- I use a lock-down browser for quizzes in this course. It is the student's responsibility to download the lock-down browser software and do their best to troubleshoot it if there are any issues. However, if the student has tried getting it to work multiple times, it is the student's responsibility to reach out to me to let me know if it is not working.
- Students must advocate for themselves in this course. Please, always contact me first if there is any issue involving something in the course, whether that be grades, content, or anything else. For dual-credit students: Emails and messages from counselors will be ignored unless the student and I have thoroughly discussed the issue.

- **Grading:**

- For essays: If a student receives their rough draft and does not correct any of the suggestions from the instructor for the final draft, their grade will be 10 points lower than the rough draft. If they only corrected half of their work from the instructor, then their grade will be at least 5 points lower than the rough draft. More points could be deducted based on what the student needed to do for the rough draft.
- After the first 2 weeks of class, I will begin taking off 5 points automatically for improper MLA format.
- Unless otherwise stated, most essay assignments will require an MLA-formatted Works Cited page and in-text citations. Failure to include **both** will result in an automatic 0.
- Assignment due dates are subject to change at instructor discretion.
- Any assignment containing *any* AI generated work will receive a zero. I do not recommend using AI for grammar correction, as it is sometimes flagged as AI generated content by the checkers I use (ZeroGPT, QuillBot, Scribb, GPTZero, and Undetectable). However, if you need to use it to help you understand a grammatical error, please make sure you are the one typing in the correction, not the AI itself.
- Plagiarized assignments will receive a 0.
- Students who collude on assignments will receive zeroes.
- I do not mark every little error on a students' essay. I mark the most frequent errors I notice a student is committing, leave feedback for correction, and it is then up to the student to go through their own essay and find errors on their own.
- Gradebook will be updated weekly, but essays may take up to 2 weeks to grade.

- I will not reopen quizzes for any reason. Students are to pay close attention to all directions, questions, time limits, and buttons for all quizzes and tests.
- **Contact:**
 - I am typically out of the office by 1 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays, 2PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 11 AM on Fridays. Phone calls will not be answered after I have left the office. Feel free to leave a message, but if you have an urgent matter, email me and place “URGENT” in the subject line. I reserve the right to determine what matters are urgent or not.
 - If you email me after 11 AM on Friday, you will most likely not receive a reply until the following Monday unless the matter is urgent.
 - Please use my LIT email address to contact me, not Blackboard messenger.
- **Miscellaneous Policies:**
 - Students are to keep their “Version History” on throughout the course whether they are using Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Apple Pages, or any other document software. If I suspect plagiarism or AI use from the student, I will ask for his or her document to be shared with me through email. The student will then have to “share” his or her document with me, so I am able to search through his or her version history. The student is given 48 hours (on weekdays) for this to be done. The student is to make sure that they are using different documents for different assignments to avoid any kind of suspicious activity. Lastly, one should not write his or her work on one document and then “copy and paste” it to another document. The student will be suspected of cheating and will receive a 0 if this occurs.
 - Students who collude with each other on discussion boards, quizzes, or essays will receive automatic zeroes.
 - I allow 2 attempts on certain assignments. However, once the 1st attempt has been graded the student may no longer submit a 2nd attempt. It will be deleted if the student does so.
 - Going out of town, leaving one’s electronic device used for schoolwork somewhere, and working late are not valid excuses for not turning in one’s work. The student will need to contact me if they are going out of town so that we can work on getting his or her work completed early.
 - If the student has a job, please note that I am not unsympathetic to those that are working while pursuing an education. However, as stated, the student will need to keep up with due dates. Failure to do so will result in a 0. The student should let me know if his or her work schedule hinders them from completing an assignment on time at least 24 hours prior to the assignment’s due date.
 - The more a student begs for an assignment to be reopened, the less likely I am to reopen it no matter the reason given.

- **I reserve the right to update my syllabi as needed throughout the semester.**

LATE WORK

All late work will receive a zero. Students must tell me **at least twenty-four hours before the due date** if they are going to miss work. The assignment must *only* be turned in to Blackboard. Once the student turns in the assignment, they *must* immediately email me, or I will not know to look at the assignment. **Students who turn in late assignments but do not notify me will not get the chance to have their assignments re-graded.** Approved late assignments will be re-graded for full credit. Students who turned in assignments late may not get detailed feedback on how to improve their assignments. Depending on the excuse, I will most likely ask for some kind of proof that the excuse is valid. Extenuating circumstances such as severe illness or death of a loved one are valid excuses for missing assignments.

Extenuating circumstances do **not** include going out of town, going on vacation, Internet/technology issues that can quickly be solved by IT/Blackboard support, time management issues, etc.

RETAKING ASSIGNMENTS

Other than late work and the major assignments I allow remediation for, I do not allow students to retake assignments. However, I *may* ask students to resubmit assignments if they do them incorrectly. Once an assignment is graded, it cannot be revised and resubmitted *unless* it is a major assignment.