

# American Literature and Culture

050.227  
Spring 2010

TTH 2:15-3:35

HSB 204

Professor Louise Barnett

Office 205C

Office Hours: W 2:00-3:00, Th 10:00-12:00 and by appointment

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American Literature and Culture will emphasize texts written in the first half of the nineteenth century. We will have time only for the highest of high spots: a celebrated autobiography, the three greatest novels of the time period, essays by Emerson and Thoreau, and poetry by Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

## Course Texts

Most of our short readings will be downloaded from the internet or posted on our sakai site. However, I have ordered the following paperbacks at the Douglass bookstore now run by Barnes & Noble and at New Jersey Books:

Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

## Requirements

Strong attendance and class participation are essential.

\*\* Prolonged absence will make it impossible to receive credit for the course.

Cell phones must be turned off in class.

Students are expected to know and observe the university's standards of academic integrity in all coursework. Please familiarize yourself with

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Work must be handed in on time or an extension agreed to by the instructor. Missed assignments cannot be handed in during the last week of class.

There will be a number of short in-class writing assignments and short out-of-class papers which—along with attendance and participation—will account for the classwork 30% of the course grade. There will also be 2 examinations, weighed according to the amount of material they cover. The second exam will be given during the final examination period.

**Evaluation**

Classwork	30%
First Exam	30
Second Exam	40

**Objectives**

Students will learn to engage a literary text in increasingly sophisticated ways, deepening their ability to analyze the written word and to write analytical papers. They will acquire cultural, historical, and literary knowledge of early nineteenth century America, its concerns and values.

**Tentative Schedule of Assignments**

January	19	Introduction
	21	The Declaration of Independence
	26	Emerson, “Nature” †
	28	Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience”†
February	2	Columns of Fannie Fern†
	4	Introduction to <i>Moby-Dick</i> **
	9	Chapters 1-17
	11	Chapters 18-46
	16	Chapters 47-74
	18	Chapters 75-104
	23	Chapters 105-epilogue
	25	<b>First Examination</b>
March	2	Film on slavery; preface of William Lloyd Garrison and Letter of Wendell Phillips to Douglass’s <i>Narrative</i>
	4	Douglass, <i>Narrative</i> , chapters 1-8
	9	<i>Narrative</i> , chs. 9-appendix
	11	Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> , chapters 1-11
	23	<i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> , 12-18
	25	<i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> , 19-30
	30	<i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> , 31-45

April	1	Twain, <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> , chapters 1-16
	6	<i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> , chs. 17-28
	8	<i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> , chs. 29-42
	13	film; poetry of Walt Whitman••
	15	poetry of Whitman
	20	poetry of Whitman
	22	film; poetry of Dickinson••
	27	poetry of Dickinson
	29	poetry of Dickinson

**\*\* We will not read every one of the chapters on whaling. I will tell the class which chapters to omit.**

**•• Specific assignments will be made at a later date.**

**† Assigned text will be posted on sakai.**