

**Emory University
Department of English**

**ENG 350 (Spring 2020)
American Literature to 1830
T/Th 1:00pm-2:15pm, Callaway S105**

Professor: Lauren Klein (lauren.klein@emory.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-12:30pm, Thursdays 2:15-3:15pm, Callaway N310

Course Description

This course explores the origins and expressions of American literary culture from the time of “first contact” through the colonial, revolutionary, and early national eras. By sampling letters, personal narratives, poetry, essays, short stories, and novels, among other textual forms, we will explore what constitutes literature in an early American context and identify a range of techniques for infusing that body of work with meaning. We will also explore a set of theories about the early American archive—and put them into practice at the Rose Library--enabling us to ask questions about why certain documents remain available for our analysis today, and why others resist recovery (or, in some cases, resist print altogether). In the process, we will come to understand the constitution of a range of American cultural and national identities, and how certain literary works have contributed to these identities’ preservation and perpetuation. We will also discover how many of today’s most potent social and political issues, such as the role of government, class inequality, racial division, gender roles, moral and religious values, and scientific and technological change, are animated in some of our earliest cultural records, giving early roots to contemporary debates.

Required Course Materials

- *The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Beginnings to 1820*, 9th edition (Norton; ISBN 978-0-393-93571-4)
- Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok and Other Writings* (Rutgers; ISBN 978-0-813-51164-1)
- Leonora Sansay, *Secret History; Or, the Horrors of St. Domingo* (Broadview; ISBN: 978-1-55111-346-3) -- \$10 if you order direct from Broadview

All other required readings will be posted on Canvas.

List of Graded Assignments

Your grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Attendance and Reading Assignments: 15%
- Canvas Discussions: 15%
- First two papers: 30% (15% each)
- Revised paper: 25%
- Final exam: 15%

Description of Graded Assignments

Reading Assignments

You will be reading a wide range of texts—some written clearly, some more dense; some short, some long. Because these texts will inform our classroom discussions—and what you, in particular, have to contribute—it is absolutely essential that you stay on top of the reading assignments and complete them before the start of each class. Reading assignments are assessed through classroom participation, as well as the occasional quiz. At the end of the semester, you will receive a letter grade (A-F) that reflects your in-class engagement with the reading assignments.

Canvas Discussions

In effort to stimulate classroom discussion, as well as to allow you to introduce new material into the course, we will employ an innovative format for our Canvas discussions. During the second week of the course, I will divide the class into four groups. Each group will rotate through the following roles (developed by Dr. Mark Sample of Davidson College):

First Readers: This is akin to the standard blog post assignment: a 250-500 word response to the week's materials. There are a number of ways to approach the "first reader" response: to consider the week's material in relation to its historical or theoretical context; to write about an aspect of the week's material that you don't understand, or that you don't agree with; to formulate an insightful question or two about the material and then attempt to answer your own question; or another line of inquiry of your own choice. First readers are responsible for posting their response to the class blog 24 hours BEFORE the class meets.

Respondents: Students in this group build upon, disagree with, or clarify the first readers' posts. Respondents are required to comment on *at least two "first reader" posts*, in comments of around (or longer than) a short paragraph. Comments are due by midnight on the night BEFORE the class meets.

Searchers: Students in this group find and share at least one relevant online resource (broadly conceived), and are responsible for providing a short (i.e. 250 word) evaluation of the resource, highlighting what makes it relevant to the class. Due by midnight on the night BEFORE the class meets.

The fourth group has the week off.

You will receive a whole letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) upon the completion of each discussion cycle. Students seeking additional feedback on their discussion posts should schedule a meeting with the professor during office hours.

Written Assignments

Over the course of the semester, you will be writing two 5-7 page papers and choosing one of those papers to revise for an additional grade. The papers are intended to allow you develop your ideas with both specificity and depth. The goal of the revised paper is to produce a polished piece of literary scholarship that reflects the full extent of your thinking on the subject.

Papers must be submitted via Canvas by the date and time listed on the syllabus. You will receive a letter grade (A-F) on the basis of your submission, as well as written feedback.

Specific information about each paper will be distributed no later than two weeks before the due date.

Final Exam

A final exam will be administered on the exam date set by the registrar. The exam is intended to assess the comprehensiveness of your learning over the course of the semester, and will consist of a combination of short answer and essay questions. You will receive a letter grade (A-F) on the final exam.

Specific information about the exam will be distributed no later than two weeks before the end of class, and a review will be conducted on the date listed on the syllabus.

Attendance, Punctuality, and Late/Skipped Assignments

You are allowed three excused absences, no questions asked. However, you are responsible for finding out what was discussed in the course on any days that you miss; I do not provide copies of lecture notes, but Jupyter notebooks will be made available on GitHub after each course meeting.

Beginning with the fourth absence, your overall course grade will be lowered by a half letter grade (e.g. B to B-) for each unexcused absence.

Please be respectful to your fellow students and arrive on time. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be considered absent for that class. If you absolutely must miss a class meeting, please contact me at least 24 hours in advance in order to make alternate arrangements.

All assignments are mandatory. Should you submit an assignment after the due date, your grade for that assignment will decrease by a 1/3rd letter grade for each day that it is late (e.g. B becomes B-). Should you fail to submit an assignment entirely, you will receive an F on that assignment and consequently, a lower grade for the course. Should you need an extension, please contact me *in advance* to discuss your situation.

Grading Process

At the end of the semester, I will convert each of your letter grades to a 12 point GPA scale (e.g. A = 12, A- = 11, B+ = 10) and weight each of these numbers according to the percentage listed above. On Canvas, the letter grade—and NOT the numerical/percentage grade—reflects your grade in the course.

Grading Characteristics

This chart of grading characteristics, adapted from criteria developed by Dr. Mark Sample of Davidson College, describes the general rubric I employ when evaluating written work:

GRADE	CHARACTERISTICS
A	Exceptional. The work is focused and its premise is sound. It clearly conveys the stakes of its research question. It coherently integrates direct quotations from the text(s) with explanations and analysis, and offers new insights into the research question. The work demonstrates awareness of the implications and/or limitations of its argument, and it incorporates secondary scholarship when appropriate. The work reflects <i>in-depth</i> engagement with the topic.
B	Satisfactory. The work is reasonably focused and its premise is reasonably sound. It attempts to convey the stakes of its research question, but those stakes are not articulated as clearly as they could be. The work includes direct quotations from the text(s), and secondary scholarship when appropriate, but the accompanying explanations and/or analysis are not developed as fully as they could be. While new insights are offered, they are also not fully developed. The work demonstrates some awareness of the implications and/or limitations. The work reflects <i>moderate</i> engagement with the topic.
C	Underdeveloped. The work is mostly description or summary and/or not very well focused. There is little to no consideration of the stakes of the research question. The work includes little to no direct quotations from the text(s), and underdeveloped explanations and/or analysis. It offers few insights, and it does not consider the implications and/or limitations of the argument. The work reflects <i>passing</i> engagement with the topic.
D	Limited. The work is unfocused or incomplete, and displays <i>no evidence of student engagement</i> with the topic.
F	No Credit. The work is missing or consists of one or two disconnected paragraphs/lines/etc.

Office of Accessibility Services

Office of Accessibility Services works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact OAS. It is the responsibility of the student to register with OAS. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and that disability accommodations are not provided until an accommodation letter has been processed. Students registered with OAS who have a letter outlining their academic accommodations, are strongly encouraged to coordinate a meeting

time with your professor that will be best for both to discuss a protocol to implement the accommodations as needed throughout the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the semester as possible. Students must renew their accommodation letter every semester they attend classes. Contact the Office of Accessibility Services for more information at (404) 727-9877 or accessibility@emory.edu. Additional information is available at the OAS website at <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html>.

Writing Center and ESL Program

Tutors in the Emory Writing Center and the ESL Program are available to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment, at any stage of the composing process. Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. Writing Center and ESL tutors take a similar approach as they work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Students who are non-native speakers of English are welcome to visit either the Writing Center tutors or the ESL tutors. All other students in the college should see Writing Center tutors. Learn more and make an appointment by visiting the websites of the ESL Program and the Writing Center. Please review tutoring policies before your visit.

Honor Code

The Honor Code applies to all work submitted for courses in Emory College. Students who violate the Honor Code may be subject to a written mark on their record, failure of the course, suspension, permanent exclusion, or a combination of these and other sanctions. The Honor Code may be reviewed online at: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>.

If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me before submitting your assignment.

Class-by-Class Schedule

Class schedule subject to change.

Please consult Canvas for the most current class schedule.

Unit 1: Origins and Archives

Jan 14 – Introduction and Overview

Jan 16 – “The Iroquois Creation Story” and “The Navajo Creation Story” (NA 31-43)

Jan 21 – Christopher Columbus, letters from the first and fourth voyages (NA 58-66); John White/Theodor De Bry engravings (explore before class)

Jan 23 -- William Bradford, from “Of Plymouth Plantation” (NA 129-167)

Jan 28 – Roger Williams, from “A Key into the Language of America” (NA 203-214); Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok*, through Chapter 4 (##-##)

Jan 30 -- Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok*, Chapters 5-12 (##-##)

Feb 4 -- Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok*, Chapters 13-20 (##-##)

Feb 6 – Jake Silverstein, “[Why We Published the 1619 Project](#)”; Nikole Hannah-Jones, “[The Idea of America](#)”; Mary Elliott and Jazmine Hughes, “[A Brief History of Slavery](#)”; Clint Smith, “[August 1619](#)” [available via the New York Times website]

Friday Feb 7, noon, paper #1 due

Unit 2: From Predestination to Enlightenment

Feb 11 – John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (NA 176-189); Anne Bradstreet, “The Prologue” (NA 217-220), “The Author to Her Book” (NA 236), “Before the Birth of One of Her Children,” (NA 236-7), “A Letter to Her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment” (NA 238), “Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House” (NA 243-244)

Feb 13 – Mary Rowlandson, “A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration...” (NA 267-301)

Feb 18 -- Jonathan Edwards, "Personal Narrative" (NA 356-368), "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (NA 390-402); Samson Occom, “A Short Narrative of My Life” (NA 589-595), “From A Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian” (NA 595-606)

Feb 20 -- NO CLASS, Dr. Klein at UCLA

Feb 25 – Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (NA 787-789), “To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth...” (NA 789-90), “Thoughts on Works of Providence” (NA 792-795), “To S.M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works” (NA 795-796), “To His Excellency General Washington” (NA 767-777), “Letter to Rev. Samson Occom,” (NA 798-799)

Feb 27 -- Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography, Part One* (NA 467-514)

March 3 -- Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography, Parts Two and Three* (NA 514-585)

March 5 -- Olaudah Equiano, from “The Interesting Narrative” (NA 731-769)

Friday, Mar 6, noon, revision of paper #1 OR paper #2 due

[EMORY SPRING BREAK]

Unit 3: Authoring Independence

Mar 17 -- J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, from *Letters from an American Farmer* (NA 634-657)

Mar 19 -- Thomas Jefferson, from *The Autobiography and Notes on the State of Virginia* (NA 704-721); David Walker, from the *Appeal* (PDF; on Canvas)

Mar 24 -- Meet at the Rose Library Teaching and Learning Studio (Woodruff Library, 10th floor)

Mar 26 -- Leonora Sansay, *Secret History*; or, *The Horrors of San Domingo*, through *Letter XVI* (SH 59-110)

Mar 31 -- Leonora Sansay, *Secret History*; or, *The Horrors of San Domingo*, through end (SH 111-154)

April 2 -- Charles Brockden Brown, “Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist” (NA 941-984)

Friday, April 3, noon, paper #2 OR revision of paper #1 or #2 due

Unit 4: Reimagining Pasts, Imagining Futures

Note: The following three reading assignments may be rearranged depending on if/when we're able to obtain tickets to Hamilton at the Fox Theater.

April 7 -- Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (NA 1003-1015); James Fenimore Cooper, excerpts from *The Leatherstocking Tales* (PDF; on Canvas)

April 9 -- NO CLASS. Optional: Attend Dr. Klein's talk at Georgia Tech (noon-1pm; with free lunch!) or reading at Charis Books (7:30-9pm).

Apr 14 -- Tecumseh, "Speech to the Osages" (NA 994-996); William Apess, selections (PDF; on Canvas)

Apr 16 -- Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton: The Musical* soundtrack (audio on Spotify; lyrics on Canvas)

Apr 21 – NO CLASS, Dr. Klein at Columbia

Apr 23 -- Final exam review

FINAL EXAM DATE: Wednesday, May 6th, 8-10:30am