English 343: American Literature to the Late 19th Century
T Th 4-5:30, ML 246

Kevin McGuirk: HH 255/ 385-1211, x2419 // Office hours: T Th 12:30-2:00

English 343 is a survey of American literature from its beginnings to the second half of the 19th century emphasizing interrelations between literature, history, and culture.

Texts:
Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom’s Cabin.
Mark Twain, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Dover

Schedule of readings:
NOTE: minor adjustments to the readings (i.e. excisions, no additions) may be made as the term proceeds, depending on our progress.

(Week of)
Sept 10: introduction;
Smith "from A Description of New England" (192-94; all page references are to the Heath Anthology);
Handsome Lake "How America was Discovered" (182-84);
Irving "History of New York bk I, ch 5" (1286-94);
Apess "An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man" (1782-86)

17: Winthrop "from A Modell of Christian Charity" (226-34) "from The Journal of John Winthrop" (239-45);
Bradford "from Of Plymouth Plantation" (247-66);
Rowlandson "from A Narrative of the Captivity and Restauration of Mrs Mary Rowlandson" (343-68);
Hawthorne "Young Goodman Brown" (2129-38)

24: Crevecoeur "Letters from an American Farmer" III (823-28) XII (835-50);
Paine "The American Crisis Number 1" (861-67);
Jefferson "from Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson" (890-94);
Douglass "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" (1732-51)

Oct 1: Franklin "from The Autobiography" (selections TBA);
Edwards "from Personal Narrative" (573-83);
Emerson "Nature" (introduction and ch I 1502-05)

8: Emerson "Self-Reliance" (1542-58) "The Poet" (1566-81);
Thoreau from Walden (2029-39, 2056-63)

15: Whitman "Preface" (2744-57)
begin "Song of Myself" (2758-2809)
*No class on October 17*

22: "Song of Myself"
"The Sleepers" (2809-17)
"There Was a Child Went Forth" (2817-19)  
"A Woman Waits for Me" (2820-21)  
"In Paths Untrodden" (2821-22)  

29:  "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass" (1669-1731);  
begin Stowe Uncle Tom's Cabin  

Nov 5:  Uncle Tom's Cabin  

12:  Twain Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  

19:  Dickinson poems TBA  

ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 21  

26:  Melville "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (2445-70);  
Hawthorne "The Minister's Black Veil" (2147-58)  

Dec 3:  continued; conclusion  

Coursework:  
1 You are expected to read all assigned material and to read specific texts  
before the class on which they are discussed. Discussion will be part of the  
course; students who contribute to the class (and to everyone's learning)  
through verbal participation may receive up to three bonus marks to be added  
to their final grade. In addition, for every class you must prepare two  
questions relevant to the text at hand or to developing topics of the course.  
The kinds of questions you pose to texts will determine what sorts of meanings  
you get from texts. No questions = no answers; asking good questions promotes  
learning. Make two copies of each set of questions. Each week submit a copy of  
one set of questions to me (these may be handwritten). Before the final exam,  
submit the same questions (six sets) to me honed and sharpened by 12 weeks of  
reflection (these should be typewritten). This assignment (worth 10% of the  
course mark) will be evaluated according to the thoughtfulness,  
suggestiveness, and exactitude of the questions as a whole.  
2 Each student will submit a term paper (worth 40%) on November 21 or earlier.  
The paper should be about 2,000 words in length. I will distribute a list of  
topics in due course. Please make use of my office hours to discuss these  
topics with me, or to suggest ways you would like to modify a topic to suit  
your interests. If you wish to develop your own topic you must consult with me  
as you proceed. Submit papers to me in class or at my office; always keep an  
extra copy of your work.  
3 The final exam will be worth 50% of your course grade.  

Late policy for term paper:  
If you want an extension of no more than one week please write a note  
indicating the day, after November 21 and before November 29, on which you  
will submit the paper to me. Sign the note, have me initial it, and include it  
with the paper when you give it to me. All this must take place before  
November 21. Do not explain to me why you need an extension. If you have a  
medical or other emergency which affects all of your courses, see an academic  
counsellor. Otherwise please observe the procedure I've described.