

English 3314 Nineteenth Century American Novel

Spring 2015

T01 Del Rio Room 109

T02 Eagle Pass Room B111

T04 Castroville Room 108

Dr. Sarah Roche

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Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the nineteenth-century American novel and its historical and cultural contexts. We will read seven novels that represent different nineteenth-century American perspectives including Romanticism, Transcendentalism, American Realism, and Naturalism.

Course Texts

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. Dover

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. Dover

Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*. Dover

James, Henry. *Washington Square*. Dover

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. Dover

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Dover

Audible Texts

If don't have more than an hour a day to read, consider audio versions of the books. Each of the novels we will read is available at *Audible.com* at <http://www.audible.com/>. You can both listen to and read the novels. A 30-day free trial is available. You can download books to your smart phone, a Kindle, a tablet, a laptop.

Blackboard

This course requires daily reading and writing and numerous written assignments, all of which *must* be submitted to Blackboard by the published deadline—no exceptions. You may bring laptops, tablets, smart phones to each class meeting in order to use Blackboard for submitting group work and other tasks. If you do not have a laptop, email me and I will see if RGC has one you could borrow.

Teleconference Courses

I am teaching this course by teleconference in Castroville, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass. I won't always be in the classroom that you are in which makes it difficult for you to speak with me before and after class. Also, I will be transitioning to Castroville so I won't always be with my office phone. Please email me (see email address above) to make an appointment for us to meet or to have a phone conversation. My goal is your success and I am very available for students; I will welcome all requests for phone or office appointments.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- define *novel* and describe the various kinds of nineteenth-century American novels
- Analyze the various historical, social, and textual contexts of nineteenth-century American novels

- Develop and hone critical writing skills, research methods, and the skills of electronic communication

Grade Determination

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Commonplace Book	5 entries per week	200
Weekly Question with Close Reading	Each Tuesday	200
Midterm Exam	3/12/15	200
Paper/Project	4/23/15	200
Cumulative Final Exam	5/12/15	200

Assignments

Commonplace Book

Your own collection of quotations. More on this soon.

Weekly Question due Tuesdays

Post Question to appropriate Question link in Blackboard and print out copy for class (or open it on your table/smart phone/etc. Bring printout Tuesday and be prepared to present your question on Tuesday or Thursday.

Each question should be a thoughtful one that elicits more than a yes or no from classmates. With each question, provide a quotation from the novel that relates to your question. You do not have to answer your question; that is for the class to do.

Paper/Project

To be developed with students.

Exams

Both the midterm and final exam will consist of short answer questions and essay questions. They will be in-class exams.

Evaluation Criteria for In-Class Responses and Essay or Paragraph Answers on Exams

A and B answers will clearly and completely answer **all parts** of the question. A answers may incorporate helpful connections; A answers may take risks that succeed, exhibiting a lively and well-prepared writer. A and B paragraphs will be unified and well-developed because the general statements will be supported with relevant references to the text that the writer can recall. A answers will very clearly (and eloquently) explain how the textual references illustrate the writer's general statements. The writer will use authors' names and texts' titles, **avoiding** "the author says" or "in the story it says" etc. The paragraphs will be sensibly organized; the sentences will be complete and clear (without fragments or run-ons); vocabulary will be precise, and grammar and mechanics will be as correct as possible in first-draft writing; in other words, unclear passages in the text will not distract the reader so that she struggles to understand the content. A answers will open and close the paragraph with intelligent and appealing statements.

C answers will "do the job." C answers will quite clearly (with some unclear places) and nearly completely answer all parts of the question. C answers will use more vague and general terms than A and B answers; for example, these answers will lapse into "the author said," or "the

poem/play/essay/diary entry says.” The writer will refer to the text once or twice, but the references may not be the most relevant the student could have made and the references will be few. The paragraphs will be complete, but perhaps the sentences won’t be as well-connected as in the A and B paragraphs. Some sentences may be a little general, and the vocabulary will be less precise thus less clear than in the A and B paragraphs. The writer will demonstrate the ability to construct conventional sentences, but there will be a few sentences that are unclear because of structural error or unclear thought and these will interfere with the reader’s ability to understand the writer.

D answers will not “do the job” adequately. D paragraphs will address the question and answer part of it. D answers will demonstrate that the writer does not fully understand the text or perhaps did not read it. D answers will use vague or even irrelevant terms, they will fail to use specific names of authors and titles, and they will rarely, if at all, refer to the text, or refer to the wrong text. Although most of the sentences will be clear, enough sentences will be fragments or run-ons or unclear in meaning and thus leave the reader unable to understand the writer’s message.

F answers will not answer the question, demonstrating that the writer either did not read the text or did not understand it. F answers may have sentences that do not relate to the question, they may refer to unrelated texts or concepts. F answers will contain unclear statements, the errors of which interfere with the reader’s comprehension of what the writers was attempting to communicate. F answers may not even contain a paragraph, but instead may only contain a list of ideas or fragments.

Course Policies

Scholastic Honesty

All work submitted must be your own and must be written exclusively for this class; the use of sources must be appropriately, correctly, and consistently documented. Quotations, paraphrases, or summaries that are not documented and the use of papers written by others constitute plagiarism. According to the *Rio Grande College Student Handbook*, “The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials” (p. 39). In English 3314, the penalty for plagiarism is a grade of F for the course.

Attendance

Any student who accumulates nine hours of absences will be dropped from the course. The registrar will assign a grade of “F” to the student’s transcript. If you have some reason for not being able to attend class such as a new job, you need to withdraw from the class; I will not make special arrangements. Leaving class early will constitute an absence.

Turning in Papers/Assignments

To pass the class you must successfully complete and turn in to me each assignment by the due date. All assignments must be submitted to Blackboard. If you do not submit assignments to Blackboard, they will be considered late. If you fail to turn in any assignments, even one, you may earn an F for the course. If life gets in the way, and you find yourself not getting two

Questions written by Tuesday, withdraw from the course and take it in a semester when you have more time.

Grade Changes

Please talk to me about your grade during the first ten weeks of the course; I welcome it. Once the semester is over and I have entered grades into the system, however, I will not consider grade changes unless I, myself, miscalculated. Please do not ask for extra credit or chances to revise after the fifteenth week of class because I will refuse such appeals. You should know that you have the right to appeal your grade. According to the *Sul Ross Rio Grande College Student Handbook*, "if you disagree with a grade you received, you should discuss it with the instructor of the course. If you are not satisfied with results of that discussion, make an appointment to discuss it with the Chair of the Department [in this case, me, Dr. Sarah Roche]" (17).

Reading Schedule

Week One 1/20-1/22

Introduction to course and the *novel*

Assignment: Read Kate Chopin *The Awakening*

Week Two 1/27 – 1/29

Kate Chopin *The Awakening*

Week Three 2/3 – 2/5

Nathaniel Hawthorne *Scarlet Letter*

Week Four 2/10 No class 2/12

Nathaniel Hawthorne *Scarlet Letter*

Week Five 2/17 – 2/19

Nathaniel Hawthorne *Scarlet Letter*

Week Six No class 2/23 We will meet 2/26

Henry James *Washington Square*

Week Seven 3/3 – 3/5

Henry James *Washington Square*

Week Eight 3/10 – 3/12 Midterm Exam Thursday March 12

Mark Twain *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Week Nine 3/24 – 3/27

Mark Twain *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Week Ten 3/31 – 4/2

Mark Twain *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Week Eleven 4/7 – 4/9

Stephen Crane *The Red Badge of Courage*

Week Twelve 4/14 – 4/16

Stephen Crane *The Red Badge of Courage*

Week Thirteen 4/21 – 4/23 Paper/Project Due

Theodore Dreiser *Sister Carrie*

Week Fourteen 4/28 – 4/30

Theodore Dreiser *Sister Carrie*

Week Fifteen 5/5 – 5/7

Review

Final Exam Tuesday May 12 3:00 – 6:00 pm