

**The American
Renaissance**

MW MAB 205
12:30 – 1:45

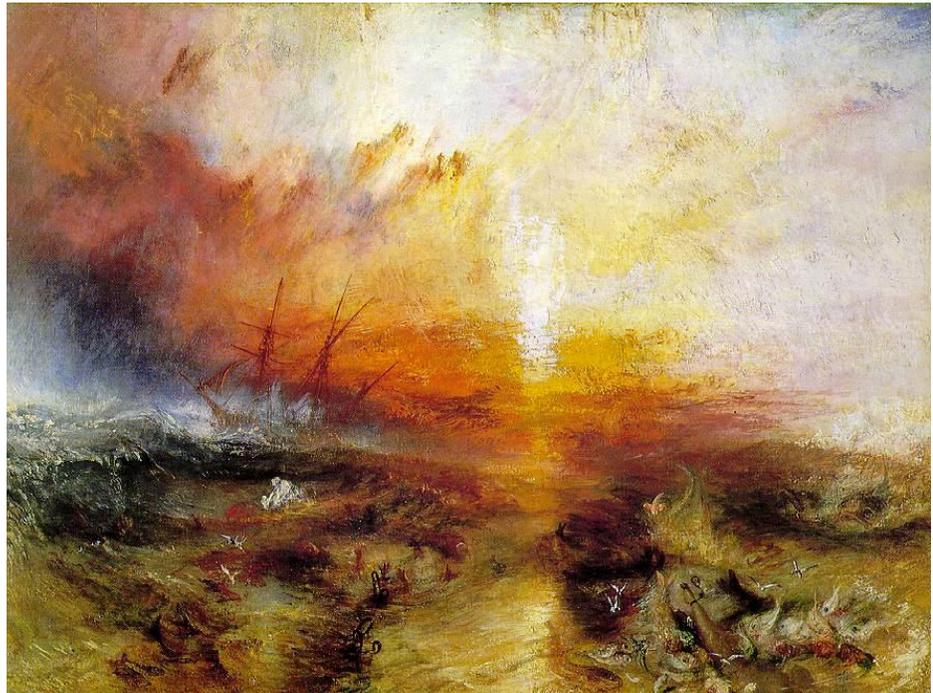
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Office Hours:
MW 11-12:20
TT 2-4; or by
appt



JMW Turner. "The Slave Ship," originally titled *Slavers Throwing overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhon coming on,* 1840. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Texts

In order of reading

Irving, Washington. *The Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon*. Ed. Susan Manning. Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2009.

Melville, Herman. Moby-Dick. New York: Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, 1999.

Ridge, John Rollin (Yellow Bird). *Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta: Celebrated California Bandit*. (The Western Frontier Library Series) Revised ed. Edition The Western Frontier Library Series (Book 4) Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977.

Thoreau, Henry D. Walden / Civil Disobedience / and Other Writings. Ed. William Rossi. New York: Norton Critical Edition. 3rd Edition.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, New York: Norton Critical Edition, 2nd Edition, 2016.

Davis, Rebecca Harding. *Life in the Iron Mills*. Bedford Cultural Edition. Ed. Cecelia Tichi. Boston: Bedford St. Martins, 1998.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 1941 the scholar F.O. Matthiessen coined the term “the American Renaissance” to describe a brief period from 1850-55, which forged a national literary identity and was remarkable for the production of masterpieces, like *Moby Dick*, *Leaves of Grass*, and *Walden*. More recent scholarship has expanded the era to include earlier authors, like Washington Irving, and minorities authors, like the Cherokee author of the borderlands John Rollin Ridge, the feminist Margaret Fuller, and the African-American writer and orator Frederick Douglas. Their philosophy drew on transcendentalism, utopian reform, and abolitionism. Their style could involve sentimentalism, romantic irony, realism, the Arabesque and the Gothic. These authors continue to resonate through the works of contemporary authors: nature writers emulate Thoreau; novelists follow Melville; feminists connect with Fuller; and poets try to capture the voice of Whitman.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to

1. Develop an awareness of the literary tradition of American Transcendentalism.
2. Apply the transcendentalist thought to solve problems related to education, race, class, sexism, and the environment.
3. Use literature as a means of critically understanding our society.
4. Apply techniques of literary research and criticism to write about writing.
5. Use theoretical concepts in early American literature as a lens for interpretation.

DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university’s academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, such as online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students’ identities and to protect students’ information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Class Participation

The class participation grade will be determined by

- a. Participation in sustainability events
- b. Attendance
- c. Participation in classroom discussion and problem solving.
- d. The help you give to others in conferencing and editing.

Attendance: Two absences are permitted during the semester. One letter grade (5 points) will be subtracted from the Class Attendance percentage for each additional absence. **More than nine (6) unexcused absences will result in the student being dropped from the course with a failing grade.** Absences resulting from required school activities, direct personal emergencies, or health issues will be

excused--but you must notify the instructor within one week of the absence and make up any class work in a timely manner.

Projects

I. Response Papers (500 points)

I will expect a total of 10 two-page response papers through the semester. The due dates for each blog post is on the calendar on the syllabus. The length of each post should be from 400-500 words, which could be two to four paragraphs. Although summarizing is one step in analysis, focus on raising questions, interpreting, and responding critically. To develop your ideas, use quotes. Another good strategy is to consider the reading through reference to other—contemporary or earlier--literature you know: inter-textual reading. Response papers are less formal, but they still require some care and art. A response paper is an *essay* in the original sense—a try.

II. Term Paper (400 points)

The term paper can focus on one aspect of one work of literature or compare two works of literature. Send a brief statement of purpose to me a month before the paper is due (3.31). We will share ideas for papers and help each other through peer review and editing.

Peer Feedback and Editing.

I will give up to 25 points extra-credit to any student who carefully responds to and proofreads another student's term paper (up to 50 points total). The best means of proofreading is by using the review functions in Word. This allows you to "track changes" and make marginal "comments," then accept or reject the changes when you receive your paper from the proofreader. Email the proofread copy to the classmate, and cc the instructor in order to receive extra-credit.

Projects	Due Date	%	Points
Posts to the Class Reading Blog (10 in number)	About once a week with some breaks	50	500
Term Paper 10-15 pages in length	5.3	40	400
Class Participation		10	100
Total Points Available		100	1000

DEADLINES

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments will be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. All alternative arrangements must be approved before the relevant deadline. Late work without previous arrangement with me will only be accepted upon demonstration of extenuating circumstances.

Blackboard

If you confront technical issues which interfere with your ability to use Blackboard, contact the LTAC (Lobo Technology Assistance Center) at 432-837-8888 or <https://techassist.sulross.edu>

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements to ensure the most hospitable and enhancing (cyber) learning environment as possible.

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact

Mary Schwartze, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112.

The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832.
Telephone: 432-837-8691. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu.

Writing Center and Academic Learning Center

The Writing Center is located in MAB 102 and the Academic Learning Center is located in FH 213. Tutors are available to help you with any problems you may have with an assignment. Take advantage of this service any time you need help. The tutors are there for you. You may contact the Writing Center at extension 8270 and email writing@sulross.edu

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Dishonest acts, such as plagiarism (using words or a specific author's ideas from another source without acknowledging the source) or collusion (having other people write parts of your paper for you), may result in an "F" on the assignment and may lead to a disciplinary hearing conducted through the office of the Dean of Students, which could result in suspension or expulsion from SRSU. If you have questions about whether your use of other sources (such as books, websites, friends, or Writing Center tutors) is fair or not, please ask before turning in the work that you have a question about.

COURSE CALENDAR

Dates	Topics	Readings	Project Due Dates and Notes
M 1.16	Martin Luther King Holiday 		
Week One			
1.18	Discuss syllabus and primary topics		
Week Two			
1.23	The picturesque	Irving 11-68 "The Author's Account of Himself" through "The Broken Heart."	

1.25		Irving 69- 99 "The Art of Book-making through "The Widow and Her Son."	
Week Three			
1.30	German Irony	Irving 100 – 120 "A Sunday in London" and "The Mutability of Literature."	Response Paper 1: Irving February 1: Last day to drop a 16 week term course without creating an academic record
2.1		Irving 240 – 265 Native American essays.	
Week Four			
2.6	Dark Romanticism	Melville pp 1-100	Response Paper 2: Irving
2.8			
Week Five			
2.13	Imperialism	Melville pp 100-200	Response Paper 3: Melville
2.15			
Week Six			
2.20	Labor and economics	Melville pp 200-300	
2.22			
Week Seven			
2.27	Native American Literature	Finish Melville 300 – 427 And begin Ridge's <i>Joaquin Murrieta</i>	Response Paper 5: Melville
3.1			
Week Eight <i>Midterm</i>			
3.6	The Western	Finish Ridge and	Response Paper 6: Ridge
3.8		Ridge and begin Thoreau's <i>Walden</i>	
Week Nine			
3.13/17	Spring Break		

Week Ten			
3.20	Transcendentalism	Thoreau 5-70: "Economy and "Where I Lived and What I Lived for."	
3.22		Thoreau 71-89: "Sounds and "Solitude"	
Week Eleven			
3.27	Utopianism	Thoreau 90-114: "Solitude" through "The Bean Field."	Response Paper 7: Thoreau
3.29		Thoreau 143 – 160: "Higher Laws" through "Brute Neighbors."	
Week Twelve			
4.1	Sublime Nature	Finish Thoreau's <i>Walden</i> : "House Warming" through "Conclusion."	4.7: Last day for instructor initiated drop for excessive absences. Must reach the Provost's office by 4 pm, Friday, April 7.
4.3	Abolitionism	Begin Douglass' <i>Narrative</i> , Chapters 1-4, pp 13-27	
Week Thirteen			
4.10	Bildungs Roman	Douglas: chapters 5-10, pp 28-68	Response Paper 9: Thoreau or Douglas
4.12		Finish Douglas: chapter 11 and appendix, pp 69-84	
Week Fourteen			
4.17	Muckraking tradition	Rebecca Harding Davis, pp 39 – 74	
4.19		Rebecca Harding Davis, pp 39 - 74	
Week Fifteen			
4.24	Democratic writing	Walt Whitman	Response Paper 10: Davis, Fern or a poet
4.26		Fanny Fern	
			Submit Proofreading of term paper by Sunday 5.1 for 25 pts EC

Week Sixteen			
5.1	Last class days	Emily Dickinson	Due May 3 Term Paper 10-15 pages, grounded in theory and criticism
5.3			