

ENGL 3005 W, section 11: American Literatures and Cultures I  
 Fall 2005  
 Monday 6:20-8:50  
 315 Lind Hall

Professor: Abigail Davis  
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#### REQUIRED TEXTS:

*A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* by John Demos  
*The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* by John Rollin Ridge  
*Ruthless Democracy* by Timothy B. Powell  
*The Pequot War* by Alfred A. Cave  
*Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* by Edmund S. Morgan  
*Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., ed. Baym  
*A Son of the Forest* by William Apess  
*Women's Indian Captivity Narratives* ed. Kathryn-Derounain-Stodola  
 Photocopy packet (available at Paradigm)

#### OPTIONAL TEXT:

*The Writer's Harbrace Handbook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Miller et. al.  
 Note: Unless you already own a handbook, this is required.

#### PURPOSE:

EngL 3005W fulfills three CLA requirements: literature core, writing intensive, and cultural diversity theme. We will survey American literature from first European contact to 1860, exploring the intersections between literature and history through a variety of texts. My goal for this course is to expand each individual's knowledge and understanding of the roles of gender, ethnicity, and race in structuring the human experience in the United States; to discover new approaches to the human condition through diverse literary genres; to employ the writing component of this course to deepen your relationship to the works we read; and to consider how these dissimilar sources contributed to the formation of national identity.

#### ATTENDANCE:

You are expected to attend class without fail. Because illness and emergencies arise, **you will be allowed ONE absence during the semester** (the equivalent of one week of class). If you are absent more than one time, your grade will be lowered by half a grade point. If you are absent more than the equivalent of two weeks—in this case, two

classes—your final grade will be lowered by a full grade point (i.e., an A becomes a B). If you must miss a class, find out from a classmate what material was covered, along with any special assignments for the next meeting. There will be additional assignments not listed on this syllabus.

This class begins punctually. **Please be on time!**

Please turn off your cell phones before class.

Scholastic dishonesty (including plagiarism), disruptive classroom conduct, and harassment will not be tolerated in this class. Please refer to university policy for definitions and consequences of these behaviors. Put simply, I expect everyone to conduct him/herself in a mature and honorable fashion, and to be respectful of the ideas and opinions of others.

#### CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Class participation will constitute 30% of your final grade. “Participation” includes involvement in our discussions, thoughtful reading, insights shared with the class, good preparation, and a willingness to take risks and venture into original thinking. It also includes your formal stint as a discussion leader, during which time you will team with several classmates and, prior to our meeting, prepare questions or other means of directing our talk about the day’s reading.

#### IMPORTANT!

**If you have valid personal issues which preclude class participation (shyness, an inability to speak publicly, medical problems, etc.) SEE ME EARLY IN THE SEMESTER and together we will prepare substitute assignments so that your final grade will not be adversely impacted by lack of participation.** I am happy to arrange alternative work for you, but I can’t help you if you don’t communicate with me. It is not at all unusual for at least one of two people in each class to have concerns in this area.

#### THE READING REQUIREMENT:

**Please read Demos’s *A Little Commonwealth* PRIOR TO OUR FIRST MEETING.**

It is your responsibility to come to class prepared to discuss the day’s readings. Always bring the relevant texts with you.

#### THE WRITING REQUIREMENT:

Three formal papers, 3-5 pages in length, will be required during the semester, one of which must be revised. A Revision Memo must accompany the second draft (see attached Revision Memo Assignment form). A Self-Assessment Checklist must accompany all

final drafts (see attached). Your formal essays will be assigned a letter grade in accordance with university grading policy and will constitute 60% of your final grade.

In-class writing exercises will be used to help you focus your thoughts on the readings and prepare for the formal writing assignments. These exercises will be designed not as “busy-work” but as building blocks for future writing. These assignments will be collected and read by me and assigned a grade of check plus (excellent), check (satisfactory), or check minus (sub-adequate). The average will constitute 10% of your final grade.

Papers are due on the dates indicated on the syllabus. I do not accept late work except under exceptional circumstances, and in that case you must make prior arrangements with me.

I will assign several topics to choose from for at least two of your essays. These are designed to allow you to write about the texts and ideas which interested you most.

#### EXAMS AND QUIZZES:

I reserve the right to test at any time although it is not my intention to do so. You will work hard in this class, and if you are on track with your reading, writing, attendance, and class participation, you will not have a midterm, final, or any other exam. HOWEVER, if your performance is not satisfactory, I will revert to testing. In this situation I will be evaluating the performance of the class as a whole, so your attitude as a group will determine the fate of each individual; if one is tested, all are tested.

#### GRADING:

Prepared writing (formal essays)	60%
Class participation	30%
In-class writing	10%

## DAILY SCHEDULE

## SEPTEMBER

- 12 Introduction to the course. Read Demos's *A Little Commonwealth* in preparation for this first class.
- 19 Read *Visible Saints*; from the packet, read excerpts from the Garret execution sermon.
- 26 In Norton, vol. A, read B. Franklin 515-16, 528-37; in packet, Mason and Underhill's narratives of the Pequot War.  
PAPER #1 DUE w/SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## OCTOBER

- 3 Read Cave, *The Pequot War*; *Ruthless Democracy* 3-48.
- 10 In *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives*, read the narratives of Mary Rowlandson & Hannah Dustan (including the introductions).
- 17 *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta*; *Ruthless Democracy* 49-76.  
FIRST DRAFT PAPER #2 DUE
- 24 Captivity narrative of Mary Jemison 119-210.
- 31 In Norton, vol. A, Equiano 747-81; Jefferson 725-32; Norton vol. B, Douglass 2029-97; *Ruthless Democracy* 103-32, 151-52.  
First draft paper #2 will be returned to you in class.

## NOVEMBER

- 7 View film "Amistad."  
SECOND DRAFT PAPER #2 DUE w/REVISION MEMO and SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST
- 13 Apress, "A Son of the Forest" (in the text by the same name); "Panther Captivity" 83-90.
- 21 In Norton, vol. B, Melville, "Moby-Dick" 2287-2330; *Ruthless Democracy* 153-176.  
PAPER #3 DUE w/SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST
- 24-25 Thanksgiving holiday
- 27 View film "Moby-Dick."

## DECEMBER

- 5 View remainder of film and discuss film, text, and critical readings. No additional reading assigned.
- 12 Last class