



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Course information:

Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

Academic Unit New College Department School of Humanities, Arts & Cultural Studies
Subject ENG Number 241 Title Literatures of the United State to 1860 Units: 3
Is this a cross-listed course? No
Is this a shared course? No

Catalog description: Surveys literary movements and genres from colonization to the Civil War.

In-depth description: Survey of eras of literary production from the first English colonies in North America up to the U.S. Civil War and examinations of the Puritans of Massachusetts, then early eighteenth-century British colonials such as Jonathan Edwards to revolutionaries such as Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine, to the romantic period of literary production that led to the the so-called "American Renaissance" of the 1840s and 50s, and on to writers such as Emily Dickinson, Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Edgar Alan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frederick Douglass, Henry Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson among others.

Requested designation: Literacy and Critical Inquiry-L

Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

Eligibility:

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process. For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu or Lauren.Leo@asu.edu.

Submission deadlines dates are as follow:

For Fall 2015 Effective Date: October 9, 2014

For Spring 2016 Effective Date: March 19, 2015

Area(s) proposed course will serve:

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:

- Complete and attach the appropriate checklist
Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses (L)
Mathematics core courses (MA)
Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses (CS)
Humanities, Arts and Design core courses (HU)
Social-Behavioral Sciences core courses (SB)
Natural Sciences core courses (SQ/SG)
Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)
Global Awareness courses (G)
Historical Awareness courses (H)

A complete proposal should include:

- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
Criteria Checklist for the area
Course Catalog description
Course Syllabus
Copy of Table of Contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

Respectfully request that proposals are submitted electronically with all files compiled into one PDF. If necessary, a hard copy of the proposal will be accepted.

Contact information:

Name Christopher Hanlon Phone 605-543-6092



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Mail code 2151

E-mail: christopher.hanlon@asu.edu
(cc: tracy.encizo@asu.edu)

Department Chair/Director approval: *(Required)*

Chair/Director name (Typed): Louis Mendoza

Date: 12/9/2014

Chair/Director (Signature): 

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for
LITERACY AND CRITICAL INQUIRY - [L]

Rationale and Objectives

Literacy is here defined broadly as communicative competence—that is, competence in written and oral discourse. **Critical inquiry** involves the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence. Any field of university study may require unique critical skills that have little to do with language in the usual sense (words), but the analysis of written and spoken evidence pervades university study and everyday life. Thus, the General Studies requirements assume that all undergraduates should develop the ability to reason critically and communicate using the medium of language.

The requirement in Literacy and Critical Inquiry presumes, first, that training in literacy and critical inquiry must be sustained beyond traditional First Year English in order to create a habitual skill in every student; and, second, that the skill levels become more advanced, as well as more secure, as the student learns challenging subject matter. Thus, two courses beyond First Year English are required in order for students to meet the Literacy and Critical Inquiry requirement.

Most lower-level [L] courses are devoted primarily to the further development of critical skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, or analysis of discourse. Upper-division [L] courses generally are courses in a particular discipline into which writing and critical thinking have been fully integrated as means of learning the content and, in most cases, demonstrating that it has been learned.

Notes:

1. ENG 101, 107 or ENG 105 must be prerequisites
2. Honors theses, XXX 493 meet [L] requirements
3. The list of criteria that must be satisfied for designation as a Literacy and Critical Inquiry [L] course is presented on the following page. This list will help you determine whether the current version of your course meets all of these requirements. If you decide to apply, please attach a current syllabus, or handouts, or other documentation that will provide sufficient information for the General Studies Council to make an informed decision regarding the status of your proposal.

Revised April 2014

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU - [L] CRITERIA

TO QUALIFY FOR [L] DESIGNATION, THE COURSE DESIGN MUST PLACE A MAJOR EMPHASIS ON COMPLETING CRITICAL DISCOURSE--AS EVIDENCED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>CRITERION 1: At least 50 percent of the grade in the course should depend upon writing assignments (see Criterion 3). Group projects are acceptable only if each student gathers, interprets, and evaluates evidence, and prepares a summary report. <i>In-class essay exams may not be used for [L] designation.</i></p>	See (1) course description (Grading Formula); (2) Blogging requirement; (3) Close Reading Essay assignment; (4) Final Essay Assignment
<p>1. Please describe the assignments that are considered in the computation of course grades--and indicate the proportion of the final grade that is determined by each assignment.</p> <p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-1".</p> </div> <p>C-1</p>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>CRITERION 2: The writing assignments should involve gathering, interpreting, and evaluating evidence. They should reflect critical inquiry, extending beyond opinion and/or reflection.</p>	(1) Close Reading Essay assignment; (2) Final Essay assignment.
<p>1. Please describe the way(s) in which this criterion is addressed in the course design.</p> <p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-2".</p> </div> <p>C-2</p>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>CRITERION 3: The syllabus should include a minimum of two writing and/or speaking assignments that are substantial in depth, quality, and quantity. Substantial writing assignments entail sustained in-depth engagement with the material. Examples include research papers, reports, articles, essays, or speeches that reflect critical inquiry and evaluation. Assignments such as brief reaction papers, opinion pieces, reflections, discussion posts, and impromptu presentations are not considered substantial writing/speaking assignments.</p>	(1) Close Reading assignment; (2) Final Essay assignment.
<p>1. Please provide relatively detailed descriptions of two or more substantial writing or speaking tasks that are included in the course requirements</p> <p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-3".</p> </div> <p>C-3</p>			

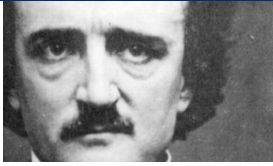
ASU - [L] CRITERIA

YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>CRITERION 4: These substantial writing or speaking assignments should be arranged so that the students will get timely feedback from the instructor on each assignment in time to help them do better on subsequent assignments. <i>Intervention at earlier stages in the writing process is especially welcomed.</i></p>	<p>(1) Please see assignment due dates in course schedule, including preliminary abstract due date for Final Essay.</p>
<p>1. Please describe the sequence of course assignments--and the nature of the feedback the current (or most recent) course instructor provides to help students do better on subsequent assignments</p>			
<p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 20px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Please circle, underline, or otherwise mark the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies this description of the grading process--and label this information "C-4".</p> </div> <p>C-4</p>			

Course Prefix	Number	Title	General Studies Designation
ENG	241	Literatures of the United States to 1860	L

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the **specific** designation criteria.
 Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checklist)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
Criterion 1	60% of final grade will be determined by evaluation of writing projects.	See "C-1" marginalia in course description.
Criterion 2	All writing assignments require students to gather, evaluate, and analyze evidence, whether textual, historical, or aesthetic.	See "C-2" marginalia in assignment descriptions for First Essay Assignment and Final Essay assignment (50% of course grade). See also assignment sheets for these two essay assignments.
Criterion 3	Students will write a midterm essay that calls upon internal textual evidence to make an argument connecting two literary texts over their treatment of a similar problem or issue. Students will also write a final essay that engages contemporary scholarly criticism in order to more fully develop a similar argument about one literary text.	See "C-3" marginalia in course description and assignment sheets for First Essay assignment and Final Essay assignment.
Criterion 4	These writing assignments are scheduled so as to allow for timely feedback on early drafts. The midterm essay allows student to consider deeply instructor feedback prior to the due date for the final essay (eight weeks), and the Final Essay requires students to hand in a preliminary abstract for us to discuss in advance of the essay itself.	See "C-4" marginalia in course description, First Essay assignment, and Final Essay assignment.



Professor Christopher Hanlon
 Class: Tu Th 1:30-2:45, Sands 235
 Office Hours: Tu Th 3-5 pm & by appointment

School of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies
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 christopher.hanlon@asu.edu

This semester we'll examine eras of literary production from the first English colonies in North America up to the U.S. Civil War. Beginning with the Puritans of Massachusetts, we'll move toward early-eighteenth-century British colonials such as Jonathan Edwards before examining revolutionaries such as Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine. From there, we'll enter the romantic period of literary production that led to the so-called "American Renaissance" of the 1840s and 50s, getting to know writers such as Emily Dickinson, Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Frederick Douglass, Henry Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson among others.

In many ways, the writers we'll study this semester authored the sensibilities that define so many of us, whether we think about it or not. The writings of the Revolutionary period shaped political formulations—an emphasis on individual liberty, for example, as a positive good on par with more communitarian strivings toward the best for the most—that often still seem to distinguish the United States from Europe. For that matter during the first half of the nineteenth century U.S. writers indulged in reveries over American landscapes as the focal point of sublime associations; to experiment with poetic form so as to change permanently the ways poems in English are written; to participate in a broadening of the very possibilities for fictional narrative; and to engage widespread hopes over possibility that the United States might really turn out not only to channel but actually transform individual conscience and civic power. Those fundamentally romantic ways of thinking surround us every day in twenty-first century America. Katy Perry's promise that you're gonna hear her roar, no less than Lady Gaga's reassurance that you were born this way—an individual, utterly specific and something to celebrate rather than efface—are contemporary expressions of the same romantic individualism that once found expression in the writing of Emerson, Fuller, Whitman. "I celebrate myself and sing myself," Whitman wrote. "For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

At the same time, the social and cultural circumstances "beneath" the American Renaissance should serve to complicate merely triumphalist accounts of the era. By 1860 over four million slaves lived in the United States, and the system of bondage under which they were held produced deep political frictions that would eventually result in a war that killed almost one million Americans, or 3% of the total population. It was a period of both scientific advancement and religious revival, and the interplay of these opposing cultural forces produced multiple disruptions in U.S. public discourse. The movements of temperance, abolition, and women's rights were only the most significant examples of a more general culture of reform based in a genuine belief, held by many, that civilization was perfectible but clearly on the wrong track.

Two works among others will help us to talk about the ways such circumstances temper the ecstatic strains of our national literature: Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, a pair of books over which we'll linger more gradually than the others, making them into a backdrop for our study of the period. I'll warn you that these extremely important books can be frustrating ones, too. They're not perfect—each is flawed in all kinds of ways, in fact—and each pushes back against any attempt at simple encapsulation à la Sparknotes. But both, at their best, can be spellbinding. So we're going to take special time with these as a way to frame our exploration of the broader literary landscape of the North American British colonies, and later the United States.

Course Requirements & Policies

Final Grades this semester will be determined in accordance with this formula:

1st paper (5 pp.).....	20%	
Midterm Exam.....	15%	
2nd paper (7 pp.).....	30%	C1
Final Exam.....	15%	
Online discussion.....	10%	
Citizenship.....	10%	
	100%	

You'll write two major essays, the first approximately five pages or 1250 words in length, the second approximately 7 pages or 1750 words long. The first paper is due on October 9 and requires you to build a statement about one of the works we have read in class up until this point. The second paper will be due on December 4, may deal with any *other* work(s) on the syllabus, and requires you to build an argument that similarly puts to work your skills in close reading, but that also places the work into some sort of historical context and that takes into consideration some of the critical work that has been written about that text over the past twenty years. For the final paper, students are required to turn in a one-page project proposal outlining the scope and purpose of the paper by November 20 at the latest. Handouts detailing further guidelines for both papers will be forthcoming.

C2, C3

You'll take two examinations, one on October 16, and the other during finals week in December. Each of these will consist of objective questions that examine your recollection of the works themselves as well as the historical and cultural information I've provided you in class, along with an essay section requiring you to write extended, well-crafted answers to pointed questions about the readings and the culture from which they emerged.

Citizenship. Just as a democracy depends upon the active and thoughtful engagement of its citizenry, university seminars depend upon students who meet their obligation to prepare for and carry out an informed and rigorous discussion. Often in this course I'll lecture, but because I think part of higher ed involves putting learning to work through conversation and debate, much of the time we'll exchange perceptions. So to do this well, you'll need to have read everything in advance and with the skill and perseverance I would expect of a grown-up—having sharpened your reactions by taking notes, committing questions to paper as they arise, drawing connections with other reading assignments and things that other people have said, integrating such observations with the material I teach you through lecture and handouts, and so on.

Because it will help you to collect your thoughts in preparation for this participation requirement, **I also require everyone to post contributions to our online discussion** about U.S. literature, hosted on the forum section of our course Blackboard page. I'll give you more information on the logistics here in class, but here are the essentials: These contributions should take the form of observations and/or questions about the assigned reading, and at least one should be posted prior to the class meeting during which we're scheduled to discuss the text. (So in other words, you should make a post—or even simply respond to someone's—prior to each class.) You don't have to write anything like an essay, and in fact, some of what you post can be quite short, though I also think other contributions should be long enough to show some specificity and readerly perseverance on your part, maybe as long as a well-developed paragraph or two. But at the end of the day, what I want to see on the discussion page is an unfolding discussion about what we're reading and learning—an energetic exchange of views where participants respond to one another courteously and thoughtfully. And as is always the case in university-level classes, your sentences should be edited and proofread. Before each class, I'll take note of what's going on for you as readers, and

sometimes I'll jump in, but in the end I'll give high grades to students who have helped to promote a searching, active, interesting discussion like the kind I mention. Those who don't participate enough, or who offer contributions that seem unobservant, or too quickly written, or too half-hearted may well hear from me before their online discussion grade crystalizes. Lastly: sometimes I'll prompt the class with some kind of question or observation of my own, whether I do or not, everyone is welcome either to respond or to initiate their own thread in the online forum.

We should also communicate outside of class to talk about your ideas, perceptions, and questions. Whenever possible we should use my office hours to do so in person, because the liberal-arts-college atmosphere of New College places a premium on the kind of communication still only possible through face-to-face conversation. Or, if you're otherwise committed during that time block, we can make an appointment. The second avenue at our disposal should be via phone, and in fact, here's my personal mobile if you ever need to call: 217.549.0130. Our last conduit should be by e-mail, because it's the least efficient way of exchanging views. I'm not absolutely against it, but here's my requirement: if you send me e-mail, I want you to write it well. It should start with a salutation, and in fact, during at least the first few weeks, that salutation should be "Dear Professor Hanlon." Later, when we get to know each other and if we get friendlier, I don't mind "Hey, Dr. Hanlon" or whatever, but until then I value a bit more formality. At the end of the e-mail, you should sign your name. In between these two elements, you should write in complete sentences, and you should avoid text-speak, most of which I do not understand and to which I probably won't respond.

Want some advice that can have serious ramifications for your quality of communications over the next few decades? I would recommend drafting all e-mails you send – whenever they are at all important – at least a few hours in advance and then coming back to them before hitting send. Do this, students, and trust me: you'll be *amazed* at how drastically your correspondence improves, and at how much more often you'll be sent the replies you would prefer.

Attendance Policy: Don't be absent. Being a strong class citizen means being here for each class meeting. If you must know in advance, however, three or more absences will reduce final grades; in no case may a student accumulate five and still pass the course. Students who habitually walk into class a few minutes after it's started should find a professor who's into that and take their class instead.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately.

Lastly, students are of course responsible for knowing Arizona State University regulations and policies regarding academic honesty, as published in the Student Code of Conduct. Plagiarism, even if unknowing or accidental, can result in your failing the course and in further action by the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, feel free to ask me to clarify. Also, please make a point of noting the following: I will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in this course. If I come to suspect misconduct of any kind, I will become dogged about rooting it out, and if my suspicions are confirmed, I will dispense appropriate penalties.

Required Texts:

Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851)

The Norton Anthology of American Literature, vols. A, B (2012)

Other readings available through course Blackboard page or by handout.

Reading Schedule

(items may be added or amended)

1. Call Me Ishmael	Aug 21	Introductions In-class reading: Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (handout)
	Aug 26	John Winthrop, selection from <i>A Model of Christian Charity</i> (Norton 1: 166-77) The Iroquois Creation Myth (Norton 1: 23-25) William Bradford, selections from <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> (Norton 122-27, 131-48) Psalm 2 from <i>The Bay Psalm Book</i> (Norton 1: 188) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , "Etymology," "Extracts," chaps. 1-4
	Aug 28	Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory," "To Her Father with some Verses," "Contemplations" (Norton 1: 208-24); "The Author to Her Book" (Norton 1: 225) Mary Rowlandson, selection from <i>A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson</i> (Norton 1: 257-63) <i>Moby-Dick</i> chaps. 5-9
	Sep 2	John Locke, selection from <i>A Treatise on Civil Government</i> (handout) William Byrd, selection from <i>The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover</i> , (Norton 1: 391-96) Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (Norton 1: 430-41) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 10-16
	Sep 4	Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth," (Norton 1: 463); Thomas Paine, from <i>The Age of Reason</i> (Norton 1: 653-59); Thomas Jefferson, from <i>The Autobiography of Thomas Jefferson</i> (Norton 1: 661-67) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 17-21

	Sep 9	Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (Norton 2: 243-56) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 22-34	
	Sep 11	Emerson, <i>Nature</i> (Norton 2: 214-43) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chap. 35	
	Sep 16	Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (Norton 2: 269-86) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chap. 36	
	Sep 18	Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" (Norton 2: 386-950) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 37-43	
	Sep 23	Hawthorne, "The Birth-Mark" and "Wakefield" (Norton 2: 418-29; 396-401; <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 44-47	
	Sep 25	Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven" <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 48-54	
	Sep 30	I'll be at Western Carolina University; class met by Professor Francine McGregor in Sands 235 <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 55-73	
	Oct 2	Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado" (Norton 691-95, 714-19 "Hop-Frog" (handout) <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 74-80	
	Oct 7	Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" <i>Moby-Dick</i> , chaps. 81-86	
	Oct 9	<i>Moby-Dick</i> chaps 86-135, Epilogue Essay 1 due beginning of class	C4
	Oct 14	No class meeting Fall Break	
	Oct 16	Exam 1 in Sands 235	
2. Every Atom Belonging to Me As Good Belongs To You	Oct 21	Walt Whitman, cantos 1-13 of <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (Norton 2: 1330-38)	
	Oct 23	Thoreau, chap 1 from <i>Walden</i> (Norton 2: 981-1023) <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 14-20	
	Oct 28	Herman Melville, <i>Bartleby the Scrivener</i> (Norton 2: 1483-1509) <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 21-26	

Oct 30	Frederick Douglass, <i>The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> Preface and chaps 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 (Norton 2: 1174-85, 1193-1201, 1204-27) <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 27-33	
Nov 4	Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” “The Dred Scott Decision” (available on our course page on MyASU)	
Nov 6	Margaret Fuller, “The Great Lawsuit” (Norton 2: 743-777) <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 34-40	
Nov 11	No class meeting Veteran’s Day	
Nov 13	No class meeting I’ll be attending the conference of the Midwest Modern Language Association	
Nov 18	Emily Dickinson, read all of the poems in the anthology <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 41-46	
Nov 20	Continue Dickinson discussion <i>Leaves of Grass</i> cantos 46-52 Final paper proposal due	C4
Nov 25	Whitman, “Out of the Cradle, Endlessly Rocking” (Norton 2: 1387-92)	
Nov 27	No class meeting Thanksgiving	
Dec 2	Whitman, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” (Norton 2: 1402-1408)	
Dec 4	Final essay due beginning of class	C4

Final examination time and location TBA

Close Reading Essay Assignment: *Moby-Dick* and Early American Literature

ENG 241: American Literature to 1865

Due: 9 October 2014

Length: 5 pages or approx. 1250 words

This first essay assignment requires you to place Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* into conversation with a text written by one of the writers we've read up until the essay's due date, 9 October.

Imagine, in other words, choosing a moment from *Moby-Dick* (and by "moment," I mean an image, a metaphor, a turn of phrase, an historical or literary reference ... I would say nothing longer than a few sentences) and then "unpacking" that moment by moving to *another* moment (again, that's a brief, very focused passage) from one of Emerson's essays, or Thoreau's "Disobedience to Civil Government," or a work by Anne Bradstreet, Mary Rowlandson, Washington Irving, Jonathan Edwards, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, John Winthrop, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, or another of our cast of writers in order to develop a statement about how these two passages speak to each other.

Many of these texts *were* in conversation, remember. Melville read all of these authors, but many were also his contemporaries—he breathed the same air as they. That is, they emerged out of the same culture and responded to many of the same currents within that culture. In the process, of course, they were creating another culture, a U.S. literary culture we now regard as entwined with the genome of American national culture. But *Moby-Dick* also stands in relation to its predecessors.

This essay does not require you to use any secondary sources. It is possible, however, that some of you may find yourselves dealing with historical references that make you want to learn more about the history of the period than I have taught you by this point. And so I want to encourage you to follow up on those impulses, to learn more about what was happening during this tumultuous period in order to help your reader get in on the nuances of what's going on in the texts you choose.

Here's what I'll be looking for: Two things, mostly. First, your ability to examine the language of the passages you quote, to take seriously the dictum that form is not a mere container for meaning, that it helps to *create* meaning. Second, I'll be judging your essays as arguments. That is, I want to see you working throughout the essay and in a more or less deliberate way, to convince me of a particular statement that you're making about the text(s). And of course, I'll be looking to see that you know what you're talking about and that you've polished your prose until it shimmers.

Lastly, remember the maxims I keep repeating in class: (1) Don't talk about *what* a passage means before you talk about *how* it means (that means: pay attention to form as you meditate on content); (2) don't try to make your passage easy—instead, try to make it *harder*. Show your reader that the text is not transparent—that it constitutes a real problem and that dealing with that problem is intellectually rich.

Final Essay: *Leaves of Grass* and Antebellum America

ENG 241: American Literature to 1865

Due: 4 December 2014

Length: 7 pages or approx. 1750 words

Something like the last essay assignment, this second rendition requires you to place Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* into conversation with a text written by one of the writers we've read since the midterm. But unlike the last essay assignment, this time I'm also going to require you to bring your discussion of these texts into dialogue with at least two other contemporary readers of antebellum U.S. literature. We'll talk about how to find such sources of Americanist criticism, and I'm sure your first-year composition experience has prepared you to for that facet of academic writing that requires us to engage with the published work of others. But in general, you should be using the perceptions of these other readers to sharpen and otherwise define your own insights. This could occur through disagreement of concurrence, or more likely, some position in between.

Whitman, of course, maintains that he "contain[s] multitudes," so it should be hard for you to find ways to make him a part of a discussion including someone else from our syllabus. And the nature of the exchange can take any number of configurations: How does Whitman's imaginings of fugitive slavehood sit alongside of first-hand accounts by writers such as Frederick Douglass? When read alongside the writings of Margaret Fuller, does Whitman's proclamation that he is "the poet of men as well as women" seem substantive or credible? How much does his perambulatory contemplation of leaves of grass owe to the transcendentalism of Emerson or Thoreau? To what extent does it strike forth on its own?

As with the last essay, it is possible that some of you may find yourselves dealing with historical references that require you to learn more about the history of the period. And as with the last essay, you should follow up on your impulses to learn more to whatever extent permits you to craft a learned, authoritative writing style.

And as with the last essay, I'll be assessing your essays as arguments, claims about the texts that can be measured alongside the evidence you point up and provide. So as you develop this essay, always be thinking about what that claim is. You don't have to have it in hand as you start to draft—in fact, you probably *shouldn't* have it hand at that point—but somewhere along the way, it should occur to you what point you're trying to make. That realization should guide your revision of the essay.

VOLUME A

BEGINNINGS TO 1700

Introduction

Timeline

Stories of the Beginning of the World

The Iroquois Creation Story

*The Navajo Creation Story

IRVIN MORRIS: *Hajííneí*
(The Emergence)

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- 112 [67] [Success is counted sweetest]
- 122 [130] [These are the days when Birds
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- 123 [131] [Besides the Autumn poets
sing]
- 124 [216] [Safe in their Alabaster
Chambers -]
- 146 [148] [All overgrown by cunning
moss]
- 194 [1072] [Title divine, is mine!]
- 202 [185] [“Faith” is a fine invention]
- 207 [214] [I taste a liquor never brewed -]
- 225 [199] [I’m “wife” - I’ve finished that -]
- 236 [324] [Some keep the Sabbath going
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- 256 [285] [The Robin’s my Criterion for
Tune -]
- 259 [287] [A Clock stopped -]
- 260 [288] [I’m Nobody! Who are you?]
- 269 [249] [Wild Nights - Wild Nights!]
- 279 [664] [Of all the Souls that stand
create -]
- 320 [258] [There’s a certain Slant of light]
- 339 [241] [I like a look of Agony]
- 340 [280] [I felt a Funeral, in my Brain]
- 347 [348] [I dreaded that first Robin, so]
- 348 [505] [I would not paint - a picture -]
- * 353 [508] [I’m ceded - I’ve stopped
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- 355 [510] [It was not Death, for I stood up]
- 359 [328] [A Bird came down the Walk -]
- 365 [338] [I know that He exists]
- 372 [341] [After great pain, a formal
feeling comes -]
- 373 [501] [This World is not conclusion]

- 381 [326] [I cannot dance upon my
Toes -]
- 395 [336] [The face I carry with
me - last -]
- 407 [670] [One need not be a Chamber -
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- 409 [303] [The Soul selects her own
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- 411 [528] [Mine - by the Right of the
White Election!]
- 446 [448] [This was a Poet -]
- 448 [449] [I died for Beauty - but was
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- 466 [657] [I dwell in Possibility -]
- 475 [488] [Myself was formed - a
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- 477 [315] [He fumbles at your Soul]
- 479 [712] [Because I could not stop for
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- 519 [441] [This is my letter to the World]
- 576 [305] [The difference between
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- 591 [465] [I heard a Fly buzz - when I
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- 598 [632] [The Brain - is wider than the
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- 620 [435] [Much Madness is divinest
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- 627 [593] [I think I was enchanted]
- 648 [547] [I’ve seen a Dying Eye]
- 656 [520] [I started Early - Took my
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- 675 [401] [What Soft - Cherubic
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- * 706 [640] [I cannot live without
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- 764 [754] [My Life had stood - a Loaded
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- 788 [709] [Publication - is the Auction]
- 817 [822] [This Consciousness that is
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- 857 [732] [She rose to His Requirement -
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- 1353 [1247] [To pile like Thunder to it’s
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- 1454 [1397] [It sounded as if the Streets
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- 1577 [1545] [The Bible is an antique
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- 1593 [1587] [He ate and drank the
precious Words -]
- 1665 [1581] [The farthest Thunder that
I heard]
- 1668 [1624] [Apparently with no surprise]
- 1675 [1601] [Of God we ask one favor,
that we may be forgiven -]
- 1715 [1651] [A word made Flesh is
seldom]
- 1773 [1732] [My life closed twice before
it’s close]
- Letter Exchange with Susan Gilbert
Dickinson on Poem 124 [216]
- * Letters to T. W. Higginson
April 15, 1862
April 25, 1862

* REBECCA HARDING DAVIS (1831–1910)

- ◆ Life in the Iron-Mills

* LOUISA MAY ALCOTT (1832–1888)

- * My Contraband
- * From Little Women
Literary Lessons