



RANGER COLLEGE  
STEPHENVILLE, TEXAS

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**COURSE SYLLABUS  
AND  
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**AMERICAN LITERATURE  
English 2327**

**3 credit hours**

**INSTRUCTOR:  
Dr. Roger Jones**

AMERICAN LITERATURE I  
ENGL 2327

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**Instructor:** Dr. Roger Jones                      **E-mail:** rjones@rangercollege.edu  
**Office 1:** Jameson Hall, Office 1                **Office Phone:** TBA  
**Office Hours:** TBA

**Course Description**

This course presents a one-semester survey of American literature from the period of exploration and settlement to the Civil War. Students will study works of prose, poetry, drama, and fiction in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. Texts will be selected from among a diverse group of authors for what they reflect and reveal about the evolving American experience and character.

**Texas Core Curriculum Statement of Purpose**

Students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.

**Required Background or Prerequisites**

Students in English 2327 must have either 1) previously taken and passed English 1302, or 2) been exempted from English 1302 (e.g., by ACT or SAT scores).

**Required Text & Materials**

Title: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Eighth Shorter Edition  
Editor: Nina Baym  
Publisher: W. W. Norton and Company, 2013 ISBN: 978-0-393-91885-4

**Core Objectives**

This course directly meets the following of the six Core Objectives:

- Critical Thinking Skills:** To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- Communication Skills:** To include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills:** To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- Teamwork:** To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- Personal Responsibility:** To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
- Social Responsibility:** To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

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**Methods of Instruction**

This is a multimedia class, and as such may include lectures, assigned readings, discussions, group projects, videos, electronic documents, PowerPoints, and more. It also features regular class presentations by students about authors and works that are outside the

**Methods of Assessment**

In this class we will read, study, evaluate, and discuss many works of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Based on this, students will complete the following assignments to facilitate and assess their learning. Each of these assessments addresses one or more of the Core Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills (**CT**), Communication Skills (**COM**), Empirical and Quantitative Skills (**EQS**), Teamwork (**TW**), Personal Responsibility (**PR**), Social Responsibility (**SR**).

- **Research Paper (CT, COM):** Students will write one research paper and will participate in related activities as prescribed by the instructor. This paper will be evaluated by the student's ability to develop a thesis statement in the introduction, support the thesis statement in the body, and demonstrate unity and focus while writing meaningfully about a chosen work or works of American literature. It will also demonstrate the student's proper use of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling. The research paper will require proper use of MLA format, including documentation of sources.
- **Literature Presentation (COM, SR):** Students will prepare and present a 10-minute talk, with accompanying visual presentation and written component, about a selected author and his or her contribution to and significance for American literature.
- **Quizzes (CT):** 14 quizzes will assess students' completion and understanding of the assigned readings.
- **Reading and homework (PR):** Students are expected to complete all of the assigned readings. These readings may come from the official course textbook or from other sources chosen by the instructor.
- **Midterm Exam and Final Exam (CT, COM, PR, SR):** Students will take a Midterm and a Final.

**Grading**

To pass the class, students must achieve at least a 60% overall grade *and* pass the final exam.

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-70%
- F Below 60%

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Each student's total grade will consist of the following:

· Research Paper	100 points
· Literature Presentation	100 points
· 14 Quizzes	150 points
· Midterm Exam	100 points
· Final Exam	150 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>600 points</b>

PAPER GRADING CRITERIA

- An **A paper (90-100%)** is excellent in nearly all respects. It shows originality of thought that goes beyond material presented in class. It is well argued and well organized with a clear, specific, and ambitious thesis or exploratory question. It is well developed with content that is specific, interesting, appropriate, and convincing. It has logical and artful transitions and is marked by stylistic finesse and varied sentence structures. It demonstrates command of mature diction and has few, if any, mechanical, grammatical, spelling, or diction errors. It correctly uses MLA format and conventions.
- A **B paper (80-89%)** is excellent in many respects, but it has a less sophisticated thesis or exploratory question, a less distinguished style, and a minor lapse or two in organization and development. It has a few ineffective and/or incorrect sentence structures. It contains minor instances of awkward or ineffective wording and phrasing. It has some minor mechanical, grammatical, spelling, and/or diction problems. It contains one or two minor errors in MLA format.
- A **C paper (70-79%)** is generally competent, but compared to a B paper it has a weaker thesis or exploratory question and less effective style and development. It contains some lapses in organization, poor or awkward transitions, and less varied sentence structures that tend toward chopiness or monotony. In some places the wording and phrasing is substantially awkward, ineffective, and/or confusing. It contains some significant errors in grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, spelling, and/or diction. It contains several significant errors in MLA format.
- A **D paper (60-69%)** is below average and generally deficient. It presents a thesis or exploratory question that is too vague, unfocused, or obvious to be developed effectively. It generally exhibits problems with organization, support, transitions, sentence structure, mechanics, grammar, spelling, and diction that impede the reader's understanding. It strays from the appropriate topic and/or focus. Its use of MLA format is generally deficient.
- An **F paper (59% and below)** is far below average. It has no clear thesis or central topic. It displays a lack of organization, support, and development. It contains major and repeated problems with mechanics, grammar, spelling, and/or diction, to the point of rendering the text incoherent. It fails to fulfill the assignment and/or is unacceptably brief. It is not presented in MLA format.

**SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM:** Papers that are partly or wholly plagiarized will receive an automatic grade of F.

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**Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations**

**Blackboard:** Please familiarize yourself with the Blackboard online course management system (available through Ranger College's Website), since this class will use it for delivering some coursework and maintaining an updated course calendar.

**Email:** At the first class meeting, students will be asked to provide a working email address that I can use for contacting them. Students are responsible for 1) regularly checking their messages at the address they have provided, 2) ensuring that their inbox is not full so that they can receive messages, and 3) ensuring that any spam filters associated with their email service providers are not catching the messages sent from my address.

**Course Outline and Schedule**

- Week 1 Introduction to class. Two primal (and clashing) visions of America: The “city on a hill” vs. the “land of opportunity.”
- Weeks 2-3 **“Beginnings to 1700,”**  
John Winthrop, Benjamin Franklin  
READING RATE: 5 pages per day
- Weeks 4-5 **“American Literature: 1700 to 1820,”**  
Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson  
READING RATE: 5 pages per day
- Weeks 6-7 **“American Literature: 1820-1865,” 445-63**  
Washington Irving  
READING RATE: 5 pages per day  
★ Begin student literature presentations. 3 per week for remainder of semester.
- Weeks 8-9 Ralph Waldo Emerson  
READING RATE: 5 pages per day  
★ Research paper topics due
- Weeks 10-11 Nathaniel Hawthorne  
READING RATE: 6 pages per day
- Week 12-13 Edgar Allan Poe  
READING RATE: 7 pages per day  
★ Research paper outline due
- Weeks 14-15 Henry David Thoreau  
READING RATE: 5 pages per day
- Week 16 **FINAL EXAM**

### **ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR LITERATURE PRESENTATION:**

The following authors and works will be the subject of the student literature presentations throughout the semester. They will be presented in the exact order given here. You will be required to sign up for ONE of these items. Presentations will begin on Week 4, with two or three presentations per class period to be delivered for the remainder of the semester. Full details about the requirements of this assignment, including the dates for each presentation, will be given in class.

1. William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*
2. Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*
3. Jonathan Edwards: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"
4. Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*
5. Washington Irving: "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"
6. James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*
7. William Cullen Bryant, "Thanatopsis," "To a Waterfowl," and "The Prairies"
8. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" and "Self-Reliance"
9. Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Minister's Black Veil" and "The Birthmark"
10. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Black Cat," and "The Philosophy of Composition"
11. Margaret Fuller, *The Great Lawsuit*

### **Classroom Policies**

1. **Absences:** If a student has the equivalence of three weeks of unofficial absences in a course in which he/she is currently enrolled, *the instructor may drop the student with a grade of "F."* Unofficial absences are counted from the first day of class as listed in the College Calendar, regardless of the date of the student's registration. The only official absence is an authorized College activity. All work and/or assignments missed because of an official absence must be completed within two weeks, or the official absence will count as unofficial.
2. **Late work:** Any late work, including daily work and papers, will receive a grade of zero.
3. **Class preparation and participation:** Students are expected to participate in class discussions and come to class having completed the assigned readings.
4. **Cheating and academic dishonesty:** Any assignment reflecting cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero. A second instance of plagiarism results in automatic failure of the class.
5. **Personal conduct:** Adult behavior is expected of all students at all times. Misconduct, including sleeping in class, will be punishable by immediate dismissal from class. Students are expected to maintain classroom decorum that includes respect for other students and the instructor, as well as an attitude that seeks to take full advantage of the education opportunity represented by enrollment in this class and Ranger College.
6. **Tutoring:** Tutoring for this class is available upon request.
7. **ADA Statement:** Ranger College provides a variety of services for students with learning and/or physical disabilities. Students are responsible for making the initial contact with the Ranger College Counselor. It is advisable to make this contact before or immediately after the semester begins.

8. **Phones and electronic devices:** While class is in session, students should not text, use phones, access social media, or browse the Internet for non-class reasons.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

ADMISSIONS, EMPLOYMENT, AND PROGRAM POLICIES OF RANGER COLLEGE ARE NONDISCRIMINATORY IN REGARD TO RACE, CREED, COLOR, SEX, AGE, DISABILITY, AND NATIONAL ORIGIN.