

Special Topics: The Transatlantic Novel (42.395.202)
Fall 2015 Syllabus
Dr. Bridget Marshall
University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Class Meetings: Fridays 1 – 3:50

Office Hours & Location: Fridays 11:50 – 1 pm and by appointment in O’Leary 469

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What makes American literature “American,” or British literature “British”? What happens if we start to question that distinction? We’ll look at how the Atlantic ocean has both divided and connected cultures of Europe, Africa, and America, and through reading novels we’ll consider how cultural productions reflect and engage relationships of trade, colonization, and slavery. And as long as we’re questioning the terms “American” and “British,” we might as well also ask some question about genre: just what makes a “novel” a novel? Our course will focus on close reading of individual texts as well as how to read those texts in their larger literary, historical, and global contexts. Through short response papers, longer formal papers, and a final project, we’ll work on finding ways to develop and express our developing ideas about the literature of the Atlantic world prior to 1900. This course fulfills the 1500 – 1800 period requirement for English Literature concentrators, and the Literature elective for English majors of all concentrations.

Course Goals:

- To become familiar with the history of the novel, in particular its circulation across the Atlantic Ocean, from the late seventeenth century through the nineteenth century.
- To make connections between and among a range of texts from different periods and backgrounds.
- To evaluate how categories of race, class, and gender (of the author and of characters) are represented, questioned, and mediated through works of fiction (and the marketing of that fiction).
- To develop skills of close and careful reading.
- To enhance discussion skills by participating in classroom discussion.
- To develop research skills through several small-scale research projects and a final project.
- To improve presentation skills with recurrent small-scale presentations and a final presentation.

Your Course Goals:

This course relies upon a participatory, collaborative learning experience. While I have many goals for the course (specified above), hopefully you also have your own goals for this course, whether that’s focused on what you learn about the topic, what you do in the classroom, or what work you do outside the classroom. Take a moment right here at the beginning of the semester to write down **at least 3 goals you have for yourself in this course:**

1.

2.

3.

Required Texts: Available at the South campus bookstore

In most cases, other editions are acceptable; however, please check with me to make sure that any alternate edition will work.

Oroonoko by Aphra Behn
ISBN: 0140439889 / 978-0140439885

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
ISBN: 0486282112 / ISBN-13: 978-0486282114

The Female American by: Unca Eliza Winkfield
(Second edition)
ISBN: 9781554810963 / 1554810965

Daisy Miller by Henry Miller
ISBN: 0486287734 / 978-0486287737

Charlotte Temple by Susanna Rowson; Edited by
Pattie Cowell
ISBN: 0312596804 / 9780312596804

Additional texts will be required; however, they will be provided in PDF form. You may choose to print out the PDFs on your own or use whatever reader/device for PDFs you choose.

Whether in print or electronically, you must have these texts in class.

Instructional Resources

The Writing Center, located on the third floor of O'Leary Library, offers free writing tutoring. You can meet with a tutor about any writing assignment in any class: <http://www.uml.edu/Writing-Center/>. The Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services provide many tutoring resources <http://class.uml.edu/>. I encourage you to seek assistance if you are struggling in this or any class here at UML. Their services are free to use (and paid for by your student fees!).

Disability Accommodations:

In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will provide accommodation for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. Their office is at University Crossing, 220 Pawtucket Street, Suite #300, phone: 978-934-4574, e-mail: Disability@uml.edu. This documentation is confidential.

A note on classroom conduct:

In this class, and in all classes at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, students are expected to exhibit professional and respectful behavior that is conducive to a mutually beneficial learning environment in the classroom. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: text messaging, listening to music, cell phone use (other than the campus alert system), late arrivals, early departures, use of laptops for other than class purposes, disrespectful comments or behavior, intentional disruptions, failure to follow faculty directives. Students in violation of these standards may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

University Cancellation Information: 978-934-2121, or check uml.edu. If the University closes, upon return to class, the items for both the missed class and the day of return class are due. In the case of an assignment due on a day the University closes, the assignment is due on the day we return to class.

Course Requirements:

- This is a 3 credit course, as defined by federal regulation (I'm not kidding). You should expect to complete 6 hours of out of class work each week for approximately 15 weeks, for a total of 90 hours of outside-of-class work.

- Attendance is required. We only meet once a week, so it's really important that you come to class every week. You should also arrive on time and stay for the entire class meeting. This is not a correspondence course. You can fail the course for not attending class. You have two (2) "free" absences to use as you need. For every class beyond those two that you miss, your final grade for the class will be lowered one grade step. (I.e., if you have a "B" for the class, but have missed 4 classes, you will receive a "C+" for your final grade.) Excessive or habitual lateness can also count as an absence.
- Good classroom citizenship is required. Good classroom citizenship goes beyond just "participation" in the sense of raising your hand a lot. It includes sharing your thoughts and actively listening to the thoughts and comments of your peers. To be an active class participant, you need to do more than just raise your hand and talk about what you liked. Engage with your peers. Ask questions. Listen to the insights that others have, and engage with the arguments going on around you. Class discussions should be a conversation among the class members, not a series of individual monologues. Please be considerate of your classmates and make the classroom a space where everyone can speak their mind. We will have both full-class discussions and small group work. If you are not particularly comfortable speaking in the full-class discussion, be sure you are making up for it in the smaller group discussions. Also, as a courtesy to everyone in the room, please turn off your cell phone before class begins. If you must eat or drink during class, please be respectful of those around you, and of those who come after you by cleaning up after yourself.
- There is a (sometimes quite long) reading assignment due every day. You must keep up with the reading (and writing) assignments. I reserve the right to give reading quizzes as necessary to prod your reading, though I would rather not resort to such ploys.

Major Assignments & Graded Materials:

- Five Discussion Starter assignments. This is a brief (one page) write up that you will turn in at the beginning of class on your assigned days. You will be assigned to a group, but you do not need to work with the group – this is just a notation so that you know which day your individual assignment is due. See the handout for more details on the requirements for these assignments.
- First Short Paper: Visual Culture and the Novel, 4 – 5 pages. More details on forthcoming handout.
- Second Short Paper: Mapping the Novel, 4 – 5 pages. More details on forthcoming handout.
- Final Paper, details TBD, likely 10 – 12 pages. More details on forthcoming handout.
- Presentation on Final paper during last class meeting.

Evaluation and Grading:

Grading is my least favorite aspect of the course; however, grades are necessary, not only to the University, but also in many cases in order to motivate students.

Please keep in mind the attendance policy (already detailed in the "Requirements" section above).

Absenteeism is the leading cause of poor grades in my courses. Excellent attendance and participation will have a positive effect on your grade, particularly if you end up on a "borderline" between two grades.

You are responsible for completing all readings on the date they are due. It's fairly easy to see who has and who hasn't done the reading assignments (whether through quiz performance or by observing class participation). Completing the readings is part of your job as a member of our class. Your completion of the reading assignments, scores on any quizzes, short take-home assignments, and in-class writing assignments, along with my evaluation of your participation in classroom discussion and activities, will be included in the "Classroom Citizenship" portion of your grade.

Breakdown of points for the final grade:

Classroom Citizenship: 20%
Discussion Starters (5): 15%
Paper 1 (Visual Culture): 15%
Paper 2 (Mapping): 20%
Final Project paper: 25%
Final Project presentation: 5%

Final grade ranges:

A: 94 – 100
A-: 90 – 93
B+: 87 – 89
B: 83 – 86
B-: 80 – 82
C+: 77 – 79
C: 73 - 76
C-: 70 - 72
D: 61 – 69.....F: 60 & below

When I return papers, they will indicate a number (points you earned out of total points possible for the assignment), which you can translate into a percentage and/or a grade. I record only the number in my book until the final grade tabulation. I also look favorably on improvement over the course of the semester.

If you have a concern about a grade or your standing in the class, I am quite happy to talk with you. This type of conversation is best suited to an individual conference. Please e-mail me to schedule an appointment.

Academic Integrity

Please review the Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx>

If you plagiarize or cheat on an assignment in this course, you will receive an “F” for this course, and you are subject to other discipline (including expulsion from the University) at the discretion of the instructor and the University. Keep in mind that even if you write some part or even “most” of the paper, if some portion of the paper is copied from another source without proper attribution, (i.e., if you “only plagiarize a little”) you will still get an “F” for the course. Don’t plagiarize at all.

Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism. You must cite all sources that you use, including online sources. Also, remember that “using” a source includes directly quoting, paraphrasing, and using ideas from any source. There is nothing wrong with “getting help” from other writers, just be sure to acknowledge it by using quotation marks and author/page citation appropriately. Please take the time to give proper credit to the work of other authors. It is a matter of respect – for yourself, for other authors, for your classmates, and for me. Don’t waste your time or mine by plagiarizing a paper. If you’re having difficulty with a writing assignment, talk to me before the day it is due.

Semester Schedule

Please come to class having completed the assigned reading and/or for the day. We need everyone to be prepared and ready to join the discussion.

DATE	DUE IN CLASS ON THIS DATE
Friday 4 September	First day Introductions & hand-outs
Friday 11 September	Aphra Behn: <i>Oroonoko</i> (1688) Team Green: Discussion Starter
Friday 18 September	Excerpts from <i>The Interesting Narrative of Olandah Equiano</i> (1789) (PDF provided) Team Purple: Discussion Starter
Friday 25 September	<i>The Female American; or, The Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield</i> (1767) Read Volume I of the novel itself (pages 41 – 105) and Introduction (pages 9 – 32) Team Green: Discussion Starter
Friday 2 October	<i>The Female American; or, The Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield</i> (1767) Read Volume II of the novel itself (pages 109 – 162) and read at least one Appendix (as assigned/chosen in class) Team Purple: Discussion Starter
Friday 9 October	First Paper due (Visual Culture & the Novel): You must have your paper in class at the start of class today to participate in the classroom activity.
Friday 16 October	<i>Amelia or the Faithless Briton</i> (1789) (PDF provided) Team Green: Discussion Starter
Friday 23 October	<i>The Story of Constantius and Pulchra</i> (1789) (PDF provided) Team Purple: Discussion Starter
Friday 30 October	Susana Rowson: <i>Charlotte Temple</i> (1791/4) (pages TBD) Team Green: Discussion Starter
Friday 6 November	Susana Rowson: <i>Charlotte Temple</i> (1791/4) (pages TBD) Team Purple: Discussion Starter
Friday 13 November	Second Paper due (Mapping the Novel): You must have your paper in class at the start of class today to participate in the classroom activity.
Friday 20 November	<i>Frankenstein</i> (1818/31) Team Green: Discussion Starter
Friday 27 November	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving break
Friday 4 December	<i>Daisy Miller</i> (1878) Team Purple: Discussion Starter
Final exam Date (TBD by registrar)	Final Project due

General Advice & Information:

Come to class prepared to work. This means several things:

- 1) You should have completed the assigned readings, and any associated writing. You might even have notes in your book, underlining of passages, or page markers for interesting spots in the reading.
- 2) You should be prepared to listen and talk in discussion. This means you shouldn't come to our class and take a nap, or sit sullenly, or play Words with Friends, or complete your calculus homework.
- 3) You should avoid distractions during class. Distractions include things like small pets, cell phones and text messaging devices, notes to classmates, i-pods, personal robot assistants, or any other gadget that will engage your brain in something other than the academic discussion in the classroom. While you may think I don't notice, I do, and so do your classmates. It's distracting for you, but also for those around you.

When you don't come to class (for whatever reason) it is your responsibility to find out the work that you missed, including any handouts, in-class activities, or changes to the syllabus. If you can do this via e-mail before the next class meeting, that's great. If you can't, you should definitely come speak with me before class, after class, or in my office hours. In any case, don't try to avoid me, hoping that I didn't notice you were absent. I definitely noticed.

If you need extra time for an assignment, for whatever reason, it is better to ask early. I do not automatically give extensions; however, I am a reasonable person, and you should ask for help or time if you need it. An "extension" is something you ask for BEFORE a paper is due. When you ask for extra time on the day a paper is due (or in the days after it was due), that is called "late." Late papers are subject to a grade reduction at my discretion, and I do not provide comments on late papers.