



Course Description and Syllabus: A Survey of American Literature I

ENGL 2613x10
Fall 2025

Contact Information

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Course Description

The course's primary goal: English 2613 is a literature course that introduces the student to American literary works produced prior to 1865, encompassing what are generally known as the Colonial, Neo-Classical, and Romantic periods. The class will emphasize the characteristics of these periods and representational (and occasionally non-representational) traits of the canonical authors.

Secondary objectives: Students will examine ways of knowing in the humanities and ways of approaching literature as a means of understanding life and of interpreting human experience. In particular, this class should also reveal to students the various threads that make up the fabric of our American culture and the impact these texts have on contemporary America and the collective consciousness of our country.

Assessment of THECB core objectives for LANGUAGE, PHILOSOPHY & CULTURE Final Essay Exam

Each student will compose an end-of-semester Final Essay Exam exploring what they have learned throughout the semester about American literature and culture that will demonstrate the four core objectives listed below.

- **Critical Thinking Skills**—creative thinking; innovation; inquiry; and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
 - To assess the student's critical thinking skills, the Final Essay Exam rubric will be applied to the Final Essay Exam.
- **Communication Skills**—effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
 - To assess the student's written communication skills, the Final Essay Exam rubric will be applied to the Final Essay Exam.
- **Social Responsibility**—intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

- To evaluate social responsibility, the Final Essay Exam rubric will be applied to the Final Essay Exam.
- **Personal Responsibility**—ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
 - To assess ethical use of sources as a measure of personal responsibility, the Final Essay Exam rubric will be applied to the Final Essay Exam.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Textbooks: *Heath Anthology of American Literature, Vols. A&B, 7th edition* and *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography*, Norton Critical Edition

Student Handbook

Refer to: Student Handbook https://msutexas.edu/student-life/_assets/files/handbook

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Incidences of academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment. Furthermore, I will follow university policy and report the violation. A second violation will result in the student being dropped from the class. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

Chat GPT and AI

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism. (By the way, Grammarly is also AI; this point is clearly stated on its website.)

Grading

In this class, the following numerical equivalents for final grades are used: A = 100-90%; B = 89-80%; C = 79-70%; D = 69-60%; F = 59-0%.

Assignments

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| ● Three major exams: | 60% |
| ● One final essay exam | 20% |
| ● Class participation via Discussions | 20% |

Writing Expectations

This class is writing intensive. Not only is 20% of your grade based on your essay exam final, but also a significant percentage of your tests are essay questions. And to clarify, by writing, I mean *academic* writing. On both the final essay and tests, you will be expected to formulate an analytical thesis statement (based on a question that I will ask you regarding a text) and support your position with well-organized paragraphs. So in grading your essays, I will assume that you have learned the basics of academic writing in that important foundational class.

For these reasons, I recommend that for those who have not had an English class recently, you might want to purchase and read John Trimble's *Writing with Style*, a book that I revere and have used in my composition classes for nearly thirty years.

Here's a problem with an internet class: many of you can't come to my office for one-on-one help if you have specific writing deficiencies. Of course, I will provide feedback on your essays, and I will post numerous examples of successful essays from previous classes. However, the "distance" aspect of this class makes improving your compositional skills challenging.

Many students sign up for internet courses thinking that they will be "easier" than a typical lecture course. That will not be the case with this class. I cover the same material in this internet class as I do in my lecture class, so this class requires just as much work. I am not trying to scare anyone off, but I also want each of you to understand what to expect.

Drop Date

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Nov. 24, 2025.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a significant source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be

returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should apply for assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to <http://www.mwsu.edu/student-life/disability>.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

English 2613 (American Lit I): Fall 202 Schedule

(Heath Anthology of American Literature, Vols. A&B, 7th edition)

Week		Pages
1 (Aug. 25-29)	“Colonial Period to 1700” “Indigenous Literary Traditions” “Changing Woman and the Hero Twins (Navajo)”	1-17 18-26 42-54
2 (Sept. 1-5)	“New Spain” Columbus “Cluster: Aesthetics” Cabeza de Vaca	116-22 122-35 136-46 147-61
3 (Sept. 8-12)	“Chesapeake” Smith	294-96 315-29
4 (Sept. 15-19)	“New England” Bradford	359-64 397-421
5 (Sept. 22-26)	Bradstreet	437-55
Oct. 1-8	Exam #1	
6 (Sept.29-Oct.3)	“Eighteenth Century” “Cluster: Religion and Spirituality” Edwards	613-31 688-99 700-02 711-35
7 (Oct. 6-10)	“Voices of Revolution and Nationalism” Franklin	907-09 910-912 935-83
8 (Oct. 13-17)	Paine	1045-65
9 (Oct. 20-24)	“Early Nineteenth Century: 1800-1865” Emerson	1539-74 1822-54
10 (Oct.27-31)	Thoreau	1976-2034
Nov. (5-10)	Exam #2	
11 (Nov 3-7)	Douglass	2163-234
12 (Nov. 10-14)	Hawthorne	2603-31

13 (Nov. 17-19)	Whitman	3218-22 3238-86
14 (Nov. 24-25)	Poe	2691-93 2745-54 2764-67 2706-20
15 (Dec. 1-5)	Dickinson “I never lost . . .” “There’s a certain . . .” “The Soul selects . . .” “Some keep . . .” “Much Madness . . .” “I heard a Fly . . .” “Because I could not stop . . .” “A narrow Fellow . . .” “Tell all the Truth . . .”	3343-47 3349 3351 3353 3354 3358 3359 3368 3371 3372
Dec. 6-10	Exam #3 and Final Essay Exam	