

Course Information

ENGL 3364 – Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Instructor: James Finley – james.finley@tamusa.edu

Meeting: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00 am – 12:15 pm, Hall 221

Student hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:15 pm – 1:15 pm, Hall 328, and by appointment (phone, Zoom, or in person). To schedule a meeting with me, please send me an email.

Course Description and Objectives

This course surveys American Literature in the nineteenth century. Although the eras we will cover are distant from our present moment, the issues this literature addresses are highly relevant. Not only did some of this literature shape the worlds in which we now live, but this literature also can help us to make sense of our present moment and can provide material and ideas for shaping the future. During this period, the United States dramatically expanded and then abolished slavery, became a global empire through invasion and expropriation of Native land, embraced capitalism, and experimented with multi-racial democracy. Literature was central to both advancing and critiquing these developments.

The assigned texts range across issues such as colonialism, freedom, the environment, and religion. They focus extensively on power and identity. And they demonstrate how forces such as imperialism, creativity, violence, solidarity, racism, and the supernatural shape lives and expressions. We will focus in particular on both the role that literature plays in people's understandings of such forces and how writers (both powerful and marginalized) engaged with those forces across a range of genres and distinct forms of expression.

The work we will do this semester will ask you to consider texts, issues, and eras not in isolation but rather as part of contested, and often rowdy, debates about what is America? Who is an American? And what makes up its literature? The course, therefore, provides students with the contexts and documents necessary to understand the aesthetic, cultural, and political debates that shaped nineteenth-century American culture, many of which still resonate today.

So as to consider how literature shapes debates about the past, present, and future of America, as an idea, place, nation, collection of cultures, and site of struggle, I will ask you to focus on a "keyword" of your choosing and trace how its meaning appears and changes across the semester. We will work on a range of exercises and activities that will build toward a final project about your keyword.

Course Expectations. Please do your best (and let me know how I can help you) to:

1. thoroughly complete all assignments;
2. attend class and participate constructively and thoughtfully;
3. communicate with me via email or in student hours (in person or by phone) about your ideas, questions, and concerns;
4. demonstrate in reading notes, reflections, presentations, and the semester project your engagement with the readings and material covered;
5. treat our class as an intellectual community, where all feel welcome to share their reactions, think out loud, change their minds, ask questions, and have an academically engaging experience.

Course Objectives:

1. become familiar with some important works, genres, forms, and concerns of nineteenth-century American literature;
2. learn about the cultural contexts in which nineteenth-century American literature was written and received;
3. develop your ability to analyze literature;
4. develop your written communication skills;
5. develop your own arguments about how and why nineteenth-century American literature matters.

Assignments and Assessment Methods:

Reading Notes - Prior to each class with a reading assignment, please upload a document that includes quotations of sentences or passages where your keyword appears and where you draft and revise (at least) two paragraphs in response, one of analysis and one of synthesis. Please use [this template](#). Please be prepared to share your responses in class and please save your notes for use in subsequent reflections and the final project. Notes will be graded out of five points: one for quotations and two for each response section.

Reflections - At various points in the semester, I will ask you to draft and revise a reflection, roughly 1 – 2 pages, that will provide an opportunity to push your thinking forward on your final project and to receive feedback. Detailed prompts for each reflection are available [here](#) and on Blackboard.

Keywords Project - After keeping track of and reflecting upon examples of your keyword in the semester's readings, please draft and revise an essay that answers the questions: *what did your keyword mean in the nineteenth century and how was it used in the literature we read this semester?* Your essay should be between five and seven pages, with quotations and analysis, and a multi-part thesis that accounts for various usages, forms, contexts, etc. Further details can be found here and on Blackboard.

Class Schedule (subject to change)

DATE	TOPICS / READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Week 1 M 08/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the class and the keywords project. • Slides: Keywords <i>No reading or assignments due</i>
W 08/27	DUE: Reflection 1
Week 2 M 09/01	<i>No class</i>
W 09/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" DUE: Reading Notes
Week 3 M 09/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" DUE: Reading Notes
W 09/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "The Slave Mother," "The Tennessee Hero," and "Free Labor" DUE: Reading Notes

Week 4 M 09/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: David Walker, from <i>Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World</i> DUE: Reading Notes
W 9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Harriet Jacobs, from <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> DUE: Reading Notes
F 9/19	DUE: Reflection 2
Week 5 M 09/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: William Apess (Pequot), “An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man” DUE: Reading Notes
W 09/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwe), “To the Pine Tree,” “Lines Written at Castle Island, Lake Superior,” and “Invocation” DUE: Reading Notes
Week 6 M 09/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: <i>Memoirs of Juan Seguin</i> DUE: Reading Notes
W 10/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: José María Tornel, “Relations Between Texas, the United States of America, and the Mexican Republic” DUE: Reading Notes
F 10/03	DUE: Reflection 3
Week 7 M 10/06	<i>No class - conferences</i>
W 10/08	<i>No class - conferences</i>
F 10/10	DUE: Reflection 4
Week 8 M 10/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Henry David Thoreau, “Where I Lived and What I Lived For” DUE: Reading Notes
W 10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Margaret Fuller, “The Great Lawsuit” DUE: Reading Notes
Week 9 M 10/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” DUE: Reading Notes
W 10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Emily Dickinson, poems DUE: Reading Notes
Week 10 M 10/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener” DUE: Reading Notes
W 10/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Pauline Hopkins, “Talma Gordon” DUE: Reading Notes
F 10/31	DUE: Reflection 5
Week 11 M 11/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Charles Chesnut, “The Passing of Grandison” DUE: Reading Notes
W 11/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Anna Julia Cooper, “Woman Versus the Indian” DUE: Reading Notes
Week 12 M 11/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: María Amparo Ruiz de Burton, <i>The Squatter and the Don</i>, chapter 5 DUE: Reading Notes

W 11/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: José Martí, "Our América" DUE: Reading Notes
Week 13 M 11/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Zitkala-Sa, "The School Days of an Indian Girl" DUE: Reading Notes
W 11/19	<i>No reading due - beginning work on final project</i> DUE: Reflection 6
Week 14 M 11/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project workshop DUE: Draft 1
W 11/29	<i>No Class</i>
Week 15	
M 12/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final project - Presentations
W 12/03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final project - Presentations
F 12/05	DUE: Draft 2
Exam week	<i>Individual Conferences</i>
W 12/10	DUE: Final Project and Reflection 7

CLASS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Student (Office) Hours: If you would like assistance with an assignment, if you have questions about a reading or something we covered in class, or if you have concerns about anything related to this class, I encourage you to visit my office before class or to schedule another time to meet. These meetings are not only for instances when you are struggling with the class, though I will certainly do my best to help you in those instances. More broadly, I welcome the chance to talk more about something we covered, or to hear about how you are thinking about something from our class connecting to another class, or anything where I may be of assistance.

Late Work: Although the sequence of assignments is set up so as to help you do your best work toward the final project, I recognize that circumstances come up, and I'd much rather you submit assignments late than not do them at all. Please email me at least 24 hours in advance of a deadline to request an extension. Without an extension, late reflections and reading notes will lose one point, and other assignments will be docked 10% of the total points.

Inclusivity: I value each and every student in this class and am grateful for your commitment to this subject and to your education more generally. Your experiences, personal history, and identity categories are important and I hope that you will share from these as is relevant. Please note that no student is expected or believed to be a spokesperson for an entire group. You have the right to your own identity, which includes the right to be called by whatever name you wish and for that name to be pronounced properly. You have the right to be referred to by the proper pronouns. And you have the right to change these elements at any point in your education. Finally, because we all learn differently, I am committed to developing strategies that help you succeed. Please see the University policy about disabilities and accommodations, below. If anything related to the instruction, course content, or classroom environment presents a barrier to your inclusion, please let me know privately without fear of reprisal.

Communication: Please call me Dr. or Professor Finley. My pronouns are he/they. I will occasionally send messages to you via email, so please check your University email at least once a day. (And please check that messages from Blackboard aren't flagged as spam.) I will do my best to respond to your emails quickly. You can leave messages on my office phone, but the best way to contact me is through email. If you are having trouble accessing your email, please contact the help desk at sahelp@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-4357.

Success Tips: This class asks a lot of you. There's a substantial amount of reading and writing assigned, and the work we do is intellectually demanding. Here are some suggestions:

- Thoroughly and carefully read all the assignments. Find a quiet place and minimize distractions (music, internet, phone, etc.). The sort of critical thinking that writing about literature requires cannot be accomplished if you aren't fully focused on your reading. This is not a class that rewards multi-tasking.
- Please annotate your text, underlining or highlighting important passages, listing what you notice in the margins, and jotting down ideas at the top or bottom of the page or in a notebook. It takes a little more time to take notes and annotate, but it is time well spent, as it both makes the writing process more efficient and makes it easier to find personal meaning in the material.
- Ask questions. Please let me know whenever something is confusing or unclear. Please also let me know how I might be able to better assist you.

Please note: I ask that you not use generative AI to either read or write in this class. For reasons that I will detail in class, such tools undermine the skill building and knowledge production that we're doing this semester. If you ever find yourself struggling with the material, assignments, or deadlines, please email or talk with me.

Course Material, Academic Freedom, and Students' Rights. The materials and activities in this class were developed based on my subject-matter expertise and align with norms and best-practices in the discipline you are learning. As the Student Handbook states, "students will be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views in any course of study and to withhold judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled." As an instructor, I will respect the rights enumerated in the handbook, including "respect for personal feelings; freedom from indignity of any type, freedom from control by any person except as may be in accord with Texas A&M University-San Antonio, and conditions allowing them to make the best use of their time and talents toward the objectives which brought them to this University." I ask that you respect the rights of your classmates to learn and have a positive experience in this class. I ask that you, further, respect my intellectual property and not share materials from our class with those outside of the university community and that you respect academic freedom, which presumes that "teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject." Should you have a problem with any of the materials in this course, please reach out to me for an explanation of why these materials are disciplinarily legitimate and to discuss strategies for completing the work in a manner that is acceptable to you and that meets course objectives. I ask that you do so before or after class and not disrupt the learning experiences of others if you have any objections.

Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, [visit us](#) or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120. All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit <http://tamusa.edu/studentcounseling> Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331. Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com> More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/> Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds

are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (the first week of class) will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our [website](#).

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a [CARE referral](#) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots’ Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided with an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A

non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University's Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamusa.edu. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking based on sex, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable modifications to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused

absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K). Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources. Young Jaguars: can support parenting students with daycare who meet this criteria: Must be enrolled in classes at TAMUSA in the current semester. Must be Pell eligible or a single parent. They serve children ages 3 to 12-years-old. Children must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. youngjaguars@tamusa.edu (210) 784-2636

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights:

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university students' rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities:

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find

themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) or visit the OSRR [website](#).