

# DAN TRIPP ONLINE

My Teaching: English 25

Department of English, West Virginia University

## English 25, American Literature, 1865 to the Present

Instructor: Daniel Tripp  
English 25, Spring 2000  
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### Overview:

Remaining true to the concept of a "survey," this course provides an introductory overview to American literature from the Civil War to the end of the millennium. We will examine how notions of aesthetics and literary forms have evolved over the past century and a half, and we will consider how such concepts as ethnicity, age, class, race, gender, nature, region, science, and technology have been represented and revised over the years by American writers. Through course readings, classroom discussion, exams, and critical papers, we will engage such questions as:

- What is American literature? What is American about it?
- What can literature tell us about American history? What can it tell us about our present?
- How does literature participate in the production of culture?
- What is literature? What is a novel? What is a poem?
- What makes a text authentic?
- How do surface meanings of texts differ from ones below the surface?
- What impact do emergent media--e.g. television, film, the internet--have upon American literature?

**Course Resource Pages:** W.W. Norton's Websource: <http://www.wwnorton.com/naal>

### Required Materials:

Baym, Nina. The Norton Anthology of American Literature, vol 2. 5th ed. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co, 1998.

Dickinson, Emily. Selected Poems. New York: Dover Publications, 1990.

Whitman, Walt. Selected Poems. New York: Dover Publications, 1991.

### Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. You will be allowed three absences; each absence after that will lower your final grade point total by two points. If a situation arises which will cause excessive absences, you might want to consider dropping the class and taking it again at a later date.

### Tardiness:

Most people are late to class because they decide to be late. They choose to talk to a professor, or to print out a paper right before class, etc. In other words, there is something they decide they "have to do" that makes them late for class. If tardiness becomes a problem for you, I will mark you absent once the class begins, regardless if you show up or not.

### Late Work:

I do not accept late work. Your work is due in class on the given day. If I do not have your assignment when I leave class, you will not receive credit for it. If an emergency arises, you must contact me ahead of time to be granted an extension. I reserve the right, however, to deny extensions.

#### **Participation:**

The quality of this class rests largely on your participation, so it will be factored into your final grade. I ask that you come to class prepared. Completing all assignments will ensure your understanding of class discussions and workshops. If you have any problems with an assignment, I'll be glad to answer your questions either during my office hours or by email. I may give surprises quizzes from time to time to make sure everyone is keeping up with the reading.

#### **Writing Assignments:**

Each writing component is designed to help you engage the materials of the course, and to promote critical thinking, reading, and writing. You will be assigned two papers, a mid-term exam, and a final exam. The first paper will be 3-4 pages long and it will most likely entail a short explication of a text. The second paper will be a 5-6 page argumentative analysis and it will most likely require you to make use of one or more of the critical approaches covered in the class. Both exams will be composed of short answer questions.

#### **Grading:**

First Paper, (3-4 pages) 15%  
Mid-term Exam, 20%  
Second Paper, (5-6 pages) 25%  
Final Exam, 30%  
Participation, 10%  
100 pts

Any more than **10 errors** in mechanics on a paper (spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage, citing sources, etc.) will result in an **automatic D**, so please accept responsibility for editing and proofreading your final drafts.

Final grades will be awarded according to the following measures:

A+ (97-100) A (93-96.99) A- (90-92.99) B+ (87-89.99) B (83-86.99) B- (80-82.99)  
C+ (77-79.99) C (73-76.99) C- (70-72.99) D+ (67-69.99) D (63-66.99) D- (60-62.99)  
F (below 60)

#### **Honor Code:**

Please familiarize yourself with the University's policies on academic dishonesty. Plagiarism and any other form of cheating will be punished, at the instructor's discretion, with either an unforgivable F or a failing grade for the course. If you have any questions or concerns about proper citation, please consult me in advance. Retain notes, copies of resource materials, drafts, and any other relevant materials for writing assignments. You may be required to submit these on request.

It is assumed that you are familiar with standard written English, and that all written work will illustrate college-level proficiency with respect to writing mechanics--grammar, punctuation, syntax, and so on. If you have trouble with these issues, consult a grammar handbook (Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, for example), a grammar website (check out some of the sites listed on my course resource page), or the WVU Writing Center (in Stansbury Hall).

#### **Learning Environment:**

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I support that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. WVU does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. Any suggestions concerning ways to further a positive and open environment in this class will be welcomed.

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