



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
הפקולטה למדעי הרוח והחברה

המחלקה לספרויות זרות ובלשנות, תשפ"א 2020-21

Name of the course: Survey of American Literature to 1865

Lecturer name: Yael Ben-zvi

Course number: 132-1-1391

Office hours: by appointment

Short course description (5-10 lines) with key words at the end of the paragraph

This class will introduce you to some of the prominent texts, writers, and themes that have shaped American literature by 1865. Our exploration of this field will be guided by recognition of the complex relations between the noun “literature” and the diverse forms of writing that we will study on the one hand, and between U.S. culture and the adjective “American” on the other. Since some of the writers whose works we will read hoped to create a national literature, we will consider this concept in relation to the ideological, political, cultural, and historical phenomena that shaped these texts. Major foci include Puritanism, the revolution, slavery, liberty, and transcendentalism. We will read works in multiple styles and genres and move rapidly from one text to the next. This pace may feel confusing, but it will enable you to become acquainted with the complexity of this literary tradition and the relations among some of the writers and works that comprise it.

Key words: American literature, Puritanism, Revolution, Slavery, Liberty, Transcendentalism

Course requirements:

If the course is taught in class:

Attendance required	yes
1. Active participation	10%
2. 6 brief questions/discussions	10%
3. Exercise	20%
4. Final Paper	60%

If the course is taught online:

Attendance required	yes
1. 6 brief questions/discussions	15%
3. Exercise	25%
4. Final Paper	60%

סילבוס מפורט של הקורס (נושאים, לוח זמנים, ספרות חובה/בחירה וכדומה)

- Christopher Columbus, from “Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage”
- John Winthrop, from “The Journal of John Winthrop”
- Anne Bradstreet, various poems
- Mary Rowlandson, from *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*
- Phillis Wheatley, various poems
- Thomas Jefferson, *The Declaration of Independence*, and from *Notes on the State of Virginia*
- Benjamin Franklin, from *The Autobiography*
- Washington Irving, “Rip Van-Winkle”

- William Apess, “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man”
- William Cullen Bryant, “Sonnet—To an American Painter Departing for Europe”
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, from *Nature*
- Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden, or Life in the Woods*
- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin; or, Life among the Lowly*
- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*
- Herman Melville, “The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids”
- Walt Whitman, various poems
- Emily Dickinson, various poems
- Rebecca Harding Davis, “Life in the Iron Mills”