

Academic year 2023-24 (תשפ"ג)

**Course title (English): Survey of American Literature to 1865**

**Course title (Hebrew): סקירת הספרות האמריקאית עד 1865**

**Course number: 132-1-1391**

**Course slot (semester/s, weekday/s, hours): Spring semester, Monday and Thursday, 14-16**

**Lecturer: Dr. Yael Ben-zvi**

**Lecturer's conference hour and contact details: [yaelbz@bgu.ac.il](mailto:yaelbz@bgu.ac.il), office hours by appointment**

**Course description & objectives:**

This course introduces students to some of the prominent texts, writers, and themes that have shaped American literature. 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, territorial expansion, transcendentalism, and slavery. We will read works in multiple styles and genres in order to acquaint students with the complexity of this literary tradition and the relations among some of the writers and works that comprise it.

**Course requirements:**

- Regular attendance
- Active participation in class (10%)
- 5 Questions and Discussions (one paragraph each, pass/no pass; 7% each; 35% total)
- Final paper (4-5 pages; 55%)

**Topics & bibliography**

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Text: *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Volumes A (Literature to 1820), and B (1820-1865). Ed. Robert S. Levine. 9th edition. W. W. Norton, 2017.