

WESTERN UNIVERSITY**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH****PhD FIELD EXAMINATION READING LIST****AMERICAN LITERATURE**

To develop a wide-ranging competency in teaching and research in the field of American literature, candidates will prepare a reading list according to the instructions and requirements below.

1. Instructions

The American Literature list covers a time period from the contact era through to the present day. As a result of this expansive range of time, the list is divided into two periods, American Literature I and American Literature II. Particular texts and time periods listed are intended to be suggestive rather than prescriptive: candidates may substitute authors and texts not on the list in consultation with the Examining Committee. The candidate's list must include representative prose, poetry, and drama.

Students can choose to specialize in the earlier (American I), the later period (American II), or they can choose to cover each period equally. If they opt to specialize in the earlier or later period, they must choose 50 texts from either the American I or American II list, 20 texts from the other period list, plus an additional 10 texts of their choice. Alternatively, they can select an equal number of texts—35 texts from each period—plus an additional 10 texts of their choice.

Students are expected to reinforce their comprehension of each primary text on the list by reading appropriate introductory and/or critical material. Please consult with committee members to receive guidance on scholarly editions that will provide this supplementary material.

Exam	Requirement 1	Requirement 2	Additions	Max # of texts
American I	50 texts in American I list	20 texts in American II list	10 texts; may include theory and criticism	80
American II	50 texts in American I list	20 texts in American II list	10 texts; may include theory and criticism	80
Entire list	35 texts in American I list	35 texts in American II list	10 texts; may include theory and criticism	80

Selection Guidelines

In selecting the additional 10 texts required, students are encouraged to choose influential works of theory and criticism that help them contextualize and draw throughlines among readings, articulate key concepts and paradigm shifts in American literary studies, and speak to their intended area(s) of focus in the field. Students may draw from the list of suggested sources included on the **American Studies Theory and Literary Criticism** list below. They are also free to select alternate literary and/or critical sources in consultation with the committee. Students are encouraged to focus on selected chapters of the monographs and/or edited volumes they choose rather than the entire text, but they must be able to explain the trajectory and cultural importance of the work's argument.

For selection purposes, please consider one poet (not a poem) as one “text.”

Core titles are bolded below and should be given special weight in selecting and compiling lists.

***For texts marked with an asterisk below, students are invited to read the selections from the 5-volume *Norton Anthology of American Literature*.**

2. Exam Structure

The exam consists of three parts, covering (1) the pre-1865 period, (2) post-1865 period, and (3) general themes. Students are required to answer one question from each of the three parts. Students must not discuss the same text more than once.

American Literature I: origins-1865

PROSE – 16th-17th Centuries

Bartolomé de las Casas	“An Account of the Destruction of the Indies” (1552)*
Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca	<i>The Relaccion</i> (1542)*
John Smith	<i>General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles</i> (1624)*
Thomas Morton	<i>New English Canaan</i> (1637)*
William Bradford	<i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i> (1647)*
John Winthrop	“A Model of Christian Charity” (1629-30) <i>Journal of John Winthrop</i>
Anne Hutchinson	“The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson” (1637), “Transcript of the Trial of Anne Hutchinson,” (1637) in Thomas Hutchinson, <i>History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts</i>

Roger Williams	“The Bloody Tenent of Persecution” (1644)
John Cotton (1635)	<i>A Key into the Language of America</i> (1643)* “Sixteene Questions of Necessary and Serious Consequence”
Mary Rowlandson	“A Treatise of the Covenant of Grace” (1659)
Cotton Mather	<i>The Sovereignty and Goodness of God</i> (1682)*
Native American	<i>Wonders of the Invisible World</i> (1692)* Creation Stories, Trickster Tales, and Oratory, from “Native American Oral Literature,” Volume A of the 5-volume <i>Norton Anthology of American Literature</i>

PROSE – 18th Century

Sarah Kemble Knight (1704)*	“The Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York”
Jonathan Edwards	“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741) “Divine and Supernatural Light” (1734) “Speech at Detroit” (1763)
Pontiac	“Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes” (1762)
John Woolman	<i>Autobiography</i> (1793)*
Benjamin Franklin	<i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> (1782)
J. Hector Crèvecoeur	<i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> (1787)*
Thomas Jefferson	“Declaration of Independence” (1776) <i>Charlotte Temple</i> (1791) <i>The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano</i> (1789) <i>A Short Narrative of My Life</i> (1768) “On the Equality of the Sexes” (1790) <i>The Coquette</i> (1797) <i>Wieland</i> (1798)
Susannah Rowson	
Olaudah Equiano	
Samson Occom	
Judith Sargent Murray	
Hannah Foster	
Charles Brockden Brown	

PROSE AND DRAMA – 1800-1864

Tecumseh	“Speech to the Osages” (1811)
Washington Irving	“Rip van Winkle” (1819) or “Legend of Sleepy Hollow” (1820)
James Fenimore Cooper	<i>Last of the Mohicans</i> (1826)
Catherine Sedgwick	<i>Hope Leslie</i> (1827)
David Walker	<i>Appeal</i> (1829)
William Apess	“An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man” (1833)
Ralph Waldo Emerson	Choose at least 2 of: <i>Nature</i> (1836)* “The American Scholar” (1837) “Divinity School Address” (1838)

Margaret Fuller
Edgar Allan Poe

“Self-Reliance” (1841)
 “The Poet” (1844)
 “The Great Lawsuit” (1843)
 Choose at least 2 of:
The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (1838)
 “Berenice” (1835)
 “Fall of the House of Usher” (1839)
 “The Man of the Crowd” (1840)
 “Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841)
 “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843)
 “The Purloined Letter” (1844)
 “Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841)

Frederick Douglass

William Wells Brown

Henry David Thoreau

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845)
 “What to the Slave is the 4th of July?” (1852)
Clotel (1852)
Walden (1854)
 Choose at least 1 novel and 1 short story:
 “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (1832)
 “Young Goodman Brown” (1835)
 “Rappaccini’s Daughter” (1844)
The Scarlet Letter (1850)
The House of the Seven Gables (1851)
The Blithedale Romance (1852)
Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1852)

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Sojourner Truth
 1851”

Herman Melville

Moby-Dick (1851)
 Choose at least 2 of:
Typee (1846)
Pierre, or, the Ambiguities (1852)
 “Bartleby, the Scrivener” (1853)
 “Benito Cereno” (1855)
 “The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids” (1855)
Billy Budd [1891] (1926)
Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861)
Life in the Iron Mills (1861)

Harriet Jacobs

Rebecca Harding Davis

POETRY– 1600-1865

Native American poetry

Poetry selections from “Native American Oral Literature,” Volume A of the 5-volume *Norton Anthology of American Literature*

Anne Bradstreet	<i>The Tenth Muse</i> (1650)
	“The Author to Her Book” (1678)
	“Some Lines Written on the Burning of My House” (1666)
	“To My Dear and Loving Husband” (1678)
Edward Taylor	“Upon a Spider Catching a Fly” (c. 1682)
Phillis Wheatley	<i>Poems Occasional and Moral</i> (1773)
Edgar Allan Poe	“The Raven” (1845)
Walt Whitman	<i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1855)*
	<i>Democratic Vistas</i> (1871)*
Emily Dickinson	<i>Poems of Emily Dickinson</i> (1858-1890)*

American Literature II: 1865-contemporary

PROSE – 1865-1899

Folktales	from <i>Norton Anthology of African American Literature</i> , Volume 1.
Mark Twain (1894)	<i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (1885) or <i>Pudd'nhead Wilson</i>
José Martí	“Our America” (1891)
Frances Harper	<i>Iola Leroy</i> (1892)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman	“The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892) or <i>Herland</i> (1915)
Henry James	At least 1 short story and 1 novel from the following list: “The Turn of the Screw” (1898) “The Beast in the Jungle” (1903) <i>Daisy Miller</i> (1878) <i>Washington Square</i> (1880) <i>The Portrait of a Lady</i> (1881) <i>The Bostonians</i> (1886) <i>What Maisie Knew</i> (1897) <i>The Wings of the Dove</i> (1902)
Stephen Crane	<i>Maggie</i> (1893) or <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> (1895)
Sarah Orne Jewett	<i>The Country of the Pointed Firs</i> (1896)
Frank Norris	<i>McTeague: A Story of San Francisco</i> (1899)
Kate Chopin	<i>The Awakening</i> (1899)

PROSE – 1900-1950

Zitkala-Ša	<i>Impressions from an Indian Childhood</i> (1900) and <i>The School Days of an Indian Girl</i> (1900)
Theodore Dreiser	<i>Sister Carrie</i> (1900) or <i>An American Tragedy</i> (1925) <i>Up from Slavery</i> (1901)*

Charles Chesnutt	<i>The Marrow of Tradition</i> (1901)
W.E.B. Du Bois	<i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> (1903)
Edith Wharton	<i>The House of Mirth</i> (1905) or <i>The Age of Innocence</i> (1920)
Jack London	1 novel or 2-3 short stories, including “To Build a Fire” (1908)
Gertrude Stein	“Melanctha” (1909) <i>Tender Buttons</i> (1914)* <i>The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas</i> (1933)
Sui Sin Far (Edith Eaton)	“Mrs. Spring Fragrance” (1912)
James Weldon Johnson	<i>The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man</i> (1912)
Willa Cather	<i>My Antonia</i> (1918) or <i>O Pioneers!</i> (1913)
John Dos Passos	<i>Manhattan Transfer</i> (1925)
F. Scott Fitzgerald	<i>The Great Gatsby</i> (1925) or <i>Tender Is the Night</i> (1934)
Ernest Hemingway	5-6 short stories or at least 1 of: <i>In Our Time</i> (1925) <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (1926) <i>Farewell to Arms</i> (1929) <i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i> (1940) <i>Quicksand</i> (1928) or <i>Passing</i> (1929)
Nella Larsen	At least 2 of:
William Faulkner	<i>The Sound and the Fury</i> (1929) <i>As I Lay Dying</i> (1930) <i>Absalom, Absalom</i> (1936) <i>Light in August</i> (1932) <i>Go Down, Moses</i> (1942) <i>Miss Lonelyhearts</i> (1933) or <i>The Day of the Locust</i> (1939) <i>The Surrounded</i> (1936) <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> (1937) <i>Of Mice and Men</i> (1937) or <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (1939)
Nathanael West	At least 3 stories from <i>Collected Stories</i> [1965] or
D’arcy McNickle	
Zora Neale Hurston	
John Steinbeck	
Katherine Anne Porter	
Richard Wright	<i>Pale Horse, Pale Rider</i> (1939) <i>Native Son</i> (1940)
Jean Toomer	<i>Cane</i> (1943)

POETRY – 1865-1950

Please use selections from the 5-volume *Norton Anthology of American Literature* as a starting point and choose substitutions as necessary. Students are recommended to choose approximately 5 poems per poet.

Paul Laurence Dunbar
H. D. (Hilda Doolittle)

Gertrude Stein
T. S. Eliot
Robert Frost
Wallace Stevens
William Carlos Williams
Ezra Pound
Marianne Moore
e.e. cummings
Langston Hughes
Carl Sandburg
Countee Cullen
Muriel Rukeyser
Claude McKay

PROSE – 1950-present

J. D. Salinger	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> (1951) or <i>Nine Stories</i> (1953)
Ralph Ellison	<i>Invisible Man</i> (1952)
James Baldwin	<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (1953) <i>If Beale Street Could Talk</i> (1974) <i>Lolita</i> (1955) or <i>Pale Fire</i> (1962) <i>On the Road</i> (1957)
Vladimir Nabokov	<i>Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> (1965)*
Jack Kerouac	<i>Everything That Rises Must Converge</i> (1965)
Malcolm X and Alex Haley	<i>The Crying of Lot 49</i> (1965) or <i>Gravity's Rainbow</i> (1973)
Flannery O'Connor	<i>House Made of Dawn</i> (1968)
Thomas Pynchon	<i>The Left Hand of Darkness</i> (1969)
N. Scott Momaday	<i>The Woman Warrior</i> (1976)
Ursula K. Le Guin	<i>Ceremony</i> (1977)
Maxine Hong Kingston	<i>Kindred</i> (1979) or <i>Parable of the Sower</i> (1993)
Leslie Marmon Silk	<i>Love Medicine</i> (1984) or <i>Tracks</i> (1987)
Octavia Butler	<i>White Noise</i> (1985) or <i>Underworld</i> (1997)
Louise Erdrich	<i>The Color Purple</i> (1985) or 2-3 short stories
Don DeLillo	<i>The Bluest Eye</i> (1970) or <i>Beloved</i> (1987)
Alice Walker	<i>Fun Home</i> (2006)
Toni Morrison	<i>The Underground Railroad</i> (2016)
Alison Bechdel	
Colson Whitehead	

POETRY – 1950-present

Please use selections included in the *Norton Anthology of Postmodern American Poetry*, 2nd ed. as a starting point and choose substitutions as necessary. Students are recommended to choose approximately 5 poems per poet.

Elizabeth Bishop

Gwendolyn Brooks

Audre Lorde

Allen Ginsberg

John Ashbery

Frank O'Hara

Amiri Baraka

Adrienne Rich

Sylvia Plath

Maya Angelou

Rita Dove

Claudia Rankine

Juliana Spahr

DRAMA – 1900-PRESENT

Susan Glaspell

Trifles (1916)

Thornton Wilder

Our Town (1938)

Arthur Miller

Death of a Salesman (1949) or *The Crucible* (1953)

Tennessee Williams

(1955)

A Streetcar Named Desire (1947) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

Eugene O'Neill

Long Day's Journey into Night (1956)

Lorraine Hansberry

A Raisin in the Sun (1959)

Edward Albee

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (1963)

Adrienne Kennedy

Funnyhouse of a Negro (1964)

David Mamet

Glengarry Glen Ross (1984)

August Wilson

Fences (1985)

David Henry Hwang

M. Butterfly (1988)

Tony Kushner

Angels in America (1991)

Paula Vogel

How I Learned to Drive (1997)

Lin-Manuel Miranda

Hamilton (2015)

Annie Baker

The Flick (2013)

American Studies Theory and Literary Criticism

See *Selection Guidelines* above.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.

Benn Michaels, Walter. *The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism*.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The American Jeremiad*.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*.

Blackhawk, Ned. *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*.

Brodhead, Richard. *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America*.

Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America*.

Brown, Dee. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*.

Buell, Lawrence. *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*

Burgett, Bruce, and Glenn Hendler, eds. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. 2nd Edition.

Carby, Hazel. *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist*.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas, eds. *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*.

Davidson, Cathy N., and Jessamyn Hatcher, eds. *No More Separate Spheres!: A Next Wave American Studies Reader*.

Davidson, Cathy N. *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*.

Denning, Michael. *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the 20th Century*.

Fiedler, Leslie. *Love and Death in the American Novel*.

Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. *Was Huck Black? Mark Twain and African American Voices*

Gates, Henry Louis. *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*

Genovese, Eugene D. *From Revolution to Rebellion: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World*.

Giles, Paul. *Transatlantic Insurrections: British Culture and the Formation of American Literature, 1730-1860*.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*.

Haraway, Donna. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." *Socialist Review* 80 (1985): 65-108.

Harris, Cheryl. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106 (1993): 1707-91.

Hartman, Saidiya. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*.

Horsman, Reginald. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*.

Hutcheon, Linda. *The Politics of Postmodernism*.

Kaplan, Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*.

Kaplan, Amy, and Donald E. Pease, eds. *Cultures of United States Imperialism*.

Kerber, Linda K. "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment—An American Perspective." *American Quarterly* 28 (1976): 187-205.

Kulick, Bruce. "Myth and Symbol in American Studies." *American Quarterly* 24 (1972): 435-50.

Leitch, Vincent B. *American Literary Criticism Since the 1930s*.

Lepore, Jill. *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*.

Lewis, R. W. B. *The American Adam: Innocence, Tradition, and Tragedy in the Nineteenth Century*.

Lott, Eric. *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*.

Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*.

McGill, Meredith L. *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*.

Merrell, James H. "Second Thoughts on Colonial Historians and American Indians," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69 (July 2012): 451-512

Merish, Lori. *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature*.

Miller, Perry. *Errand into the Wilderness*.

Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness in the Literary Imagination*.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "On the Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race." *Asian American Studies: A Reader*. Eds. Jean Yu-Wu Shen and Min Song. Rutgers UP, 2000. 199-208.

Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*.

Radway, Janice. "What's in a Name?" *The Futures of American Studies*. Eds. Donald Pease and Robyn Wiegman. Duke UP, 2002. 45-75.

Richter, Daniel. *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*.

Romero, Lora. *Home Fronts: Domesticity and Its Critics in the Antebellum United States*.

Saldívar, José David. *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies*.

Sayre, Gordon. *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh*.

Shanley, Kathryn W. "The Indians America Loves to Love and Read: American Indian Identity and Cultural Appropriation." *American Indian Quarterly* 21.4 (1997): 675-702.

Slotkin, Richard. *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*.

Spillers, Hortense. "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." *Diacritics* Vol. 17, No. 2, (Summer, 1987), pp. 65-81

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Frontier in American History*.

Warren, Joyce W. "Performativity and the Repositioning of American Literary Realism." *Challenging Boundaries: Gender and Periodization*. Eds. Joyce W. Warren and Margaret Dickie. Athens, GA: U of Georgia P, 2000. 3-25.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*.

Yu, Henry. *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America*.

Zamir, Shamoon. *Dark Voices: W.E.B. Du Bois and American Thought 1888-1903*.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*.

Departmental regulations regarding PhD qualifying exams can be found @ the following site: https://uwo.ca/english/graduate/programs/phd_program/phd_regulations.html