

## Midterm Examination Review

The midterm is worth 10% of your final grade for the semester. Please bring a blank blue book or blank loose-leaf paper for your answers. You may not use your books or notes. There will be four parts to the exam.

Part 1. Identifications. This section will be worth fifteen (15) points. I will give you seven quotations from texts we've read this semester. You will need to identify five of them by providing the name of the author, the title, and an explanation of the quotation's significance.

Part 2. Short Answer. This section will be worth ten (10) points. It will have some short answer questions.

Part 3. Design Your Own Course. This section will be worth thirty-five (35) points. You may choose either of the questions below. This section (and this section only) has a take-home option: you may type up your response to the question of your choice and bring it to class with you to include with the rest of your examination. Or you may write it in class.

1. Imagine that *you* have been asked to teach a one-credit college course on the highlights of Early American Literature. You will meet just ten times. How will you organize your reading schedule? Which authors and texts will it include? Draw up your reading schedule, week one through ten. Then write an explanation of your selections and overall design.

2. Imagine that you have been asked to teach a high school English course in American Literature from its beginnings to the present. You decide that you want to spend only about three weeks on American literature before 1800. What are you going to teach? Why? Discuss your reading schedule.

Part 4. Essay Question. This section will be worth forty (40) points. I will provide you with two or three of the following questions. You will write an essay in response to one of them. Please make your answer as specific as possible.

1. Describe what you think are the main features of Puritan theology or thinking. Use references to the Puritan texts that we've studied this semester to illustrate this Puritan worldview. Then, discuss some of the major seventeenth-century challenges to Puritan thinking.

2. Compare the rhetorical strategies of Benjamin Franklin to either Jonathan Edwards or Thomas Paine. How would you describe their rhetorical strategies and rhetorical styles? What are the chief characteristics of the rhetoric used by each? In what ways are each effective? What are the limitations of each?

3. Identify and define three of the kinds of literary forms available to early American writers. What circumstances shaped the choice of form in each case? How did these writers invent within these forms or change these forms? What forms would survive for later writers?

4. Explain what unites or connects the writing of three of the following (all writers from what we now conceive as the American "South": Smith, Rolfe, Frethorne, Fitzhugh, Clayton, Ward, Grainger, Byrd, and Jefferson. How are they and/or their writings similar, if at all? How are they different from the English settlers and writers from New England, especially the Puritans?

5. Write a brief essay about the social functions of religion in America before 1800. According to the primary documents you've read, what does religion do or attempt to do in this era?

Note: You will not have time to write about all of the social uses of religion, so focus your attention on its two or three most important functions. Do not attempt to write this essay without a clear thesis in mind. Make sure the texts you cite will support or illustrate your thesis.

6. To what extent does awareness of racial or ethnic difference constitute one's sense of self in early America? Using examples from three of the following authors of personal narratives or texts—Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, Bradford, Rowlandson, Marrant, Equiano, Hammon, Wheatley, Crèvecoeur, Jefferson, Ashbridge—discuss the degree to which the awareness of racial difference shaped his or her sense of self. Be specific.

7. Compare the poetic work Anne Bradstreet to the poetry of either Phillis Wheatley or Edward Taylor. How would you describe the poetic form or style of each author? What are the most interesting similarities? What are the most important differences? What is significant about these similarities and differences?