ENG228

AMERICAN LITERATURE: BEFORE 1865

3 Credit Hours

Prepared by:
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By John Pleimann

Arts & Science Education
Dr. Mindy Selsor, Dean
ENG228 American Literature: Before 1865

I. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

A. Prerequisite: none

B. 3 semester credit hours

C. American Literature: Before 1865 examines American writers from pre-colonial and Puritan times through the Civil War era. Students will study the historical, philosophical, and cultural influences on American writers from our early explorers to Whitman. American Literature: Before 1865 will partially fulfill the humanities requirement for the associate degree. (F)

II. EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES/ASSESSMENT MEASURES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Students will analyze a focused aspect of a literary work.</th>
<th>Essay</th>
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<td>Students will evaluate and defend the quality of a literary work.</td>
<td>Debates</td>
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<td>Students will identify the historical, philosophical, social and political influences which shaped American literature.</td>
<td>Tests</td>
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<td>Tests</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<td>Students will compare and contrast ideas, writers and styles to better understand the overall pattern of literary thought from the Colonial era to the Romantic era.</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<td>Students will develop a vocabulary for discussing literary works.</td>
<td>Multiple-choice quizzes</td>
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<td>Students will distinguish between summary and analysis of literary work.</td>
<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
<td>Analytical essay</td>
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<td>Students will develop an appreciation of the nature, limits and possibilities of literary expression.</td>
<td>Journal responses</td>
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<td>Journal responses</td>
<td>Three thoughtful questions</td>
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III. OUTLINE OF TOPICS


1. become familiar with the literature of settlement and colonization.
2. examine and compare/contrast the purposes and strategies of the theological rhetoric and the pragmatic rhetoric of colonial America.
3. define the genre of settlement histories and examine their purposes and intended audiences.
4. explore the literary expression of Puritan New England, examining the common experiences and perspectives that connect and differentiate Puritan writers.
5. reflect on the role of religion in colonial America as it compares to the role of religion in contemporary American society.
6. become familiar with the nature of doctrinal controversies and political controversies of colonial America.
7. examine the use of satire, hyperbole, allegory and other literary devices in the context of writing histories.
8. develop an understanding of the differences between utilitarian writing and aesthetic writing, the unclear boundaries between the two in Puritan writing, and the value of making such a distinction in interpreting texts.
9. examine how earlier colonial writers were closely tied to the larger British culture.
10. become familiar with the narrative (captivity, travel and discovery) as a popular and influential genre of the eighteenth century and compare this genre to our post-Enlightenment conception of narrative.
11. examine the psychological strategies and literary techniques of emotional persuasion in colonial America writing and compare to present-day American writing.
12. consider examples of Native American literary expression as a coherent body of material, the product of a diverse but related culture.
13. examine the use of figurative language, symbolism and metaphor in Native American literature in various literary forms: myth, ritual poetry, history, song and oratory.

1. contrast their expectations and knowledge about authors with primary texts, examining similarities and differences between the text and the legends; the text and historical realities.
2. discuss autobiography as a literary form, its fictionality and veracity.
3. compare the contemporary ideas that surround the revolution as our national myth of origin to the reality behind the myth.
4. examine the roots of American ideologies of freedom, independence and national identity as revealed in the writings of the time.
5. examine perspectives of people other than white forefathers to understand the diversity of experience and belief in eighteenth century America.
6. analyze how religion is conceived differently in pre- and post-Revolutionary writing.
7. examine the connection between literary style and political and social change.
8. increase awareness of the relationship between English and American literary culture.
9. become familiar with and analyze the themes and concerns of late eighteenth century writers: political independence, social unity and cultural identity, education and self improvement, gender identity.
10. discuss ways we read private correspondence (letters) compared to the way we read deliberately rhetorical, political and aesthetic texts.
11. examine the role that journalism and the popular press played in the Revolution.
12. compare the rhetoric of revolutionary America with current political language.
13. analyze poetry of eighteenth century America and examine its similarity in formal conventions to its English counterpart and ties to neoclassic tradition.
14. examine the relationship between art and politics and determine whether it works to cast political or ideological issues into aesthetic form.
15. examine the structure and purpose of the African-American slave narrative.

1. become familiar with the themes of early to middle nineteenth century America: the nature of political life and human rights in the new republic; the relationship between people and nature in an increasingly secularized and increasingly technological world; the role of home and family; the place and use of literature; the character and values of a newly emerging culture.
2. become aware that the fiction of the period makes use of and defines itself in relation to American character and values (even as it remains tied to English forms).
3. examine how American fiction writers of the time seemed compelled to invent new forms to contain their subjects.
4. examine the tensions in the conception of the American experience: social vs. psychological or spiritual; real vs. imaginary; useful vs. entertaining; comic vs. serious; foreign vs. native, etc.
5. compare/contrast explorations of universal truths about human nature in writings of this period.
6. compare abolitionist writings and examine context, audience and purpose.
7. examine connections between the economic and moral life of the culture and the writing of this period.
8. become familiar with the themes and concerns of Transcendentalist writers: the meaning and power of the natural world; the relationship between nature, God and human beings; human potentiality and the victory of good over evil; the centrality of the individual; the intuitive within individuals.
9. examine why we tend today to denigrate sentimentalism as an inferior mode and analyze the role of sentimental conventions in American literature.

D. Native American Literature--Myths and Tales: Seneca, Cherokee, Yakima, and Ogala Sioux tribes.
1. explore the nature of an oral vs. a written literature.
2. learn the various themes of Native Americans' myths and tales.
3. explore similarities between Native Americans' myths and tales and those of Judaeo-Christian culture.
4. discuss the role of myth and tale in Native Americans' religious/spiritual life.
5. identify and discuss the roles of various recurring characters in Native Americans' myths and tales.

1. explore Native American viewpoint of their interaction with White culture.
2. compare and contrast oratory styles of Native Americans versus those of White culture.
3. discuss the nature of Native American poetry.
4. discuss what is lost and/or gained by putting Native American literature into the written words of the White culture.

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

A. Lecture/Discussion

B. Reading of Text and Outside Readings

C. Assigned Writing Responses

D. Student Presentations

E. Small Group Discussions/Analyses

F. Research

V. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS (with publication information)

VI. REQUIRED MATERIAL

Textbook
Three-Ring Binder

VII. SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES

Library's collection of American literature
Library's collection of American literary criticism
Periodicals and Journals
Videos
Audio Cassettes

VIII. METHODS OF EVALUATION

A. Quizzes and tests
B. Class participation
C. Assigned reading responses
D. Analytical Paper
E. Final exam
F. The grading scale is as follows:
   90-100 = A
   80-89 = B
   70-79 = C
   60-69 = D
   Below 60 = F

IX. ADA STATEMENT

Any statement requiring special accommodations should inform the instructor and the Coordinator of Disability Support Services (Library; phone 636-797-3000, ext. 169).

X. ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

All students are responsible for complying with campus policies as stated in the Student Handbook (see College website).