



Course Outline

2026-2027 Catalog

ENGL 14 - U.S. Literature I

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Prerequisite: Eligibility to enroll in a transferable English composition course

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course is a study of influential works of U. S. Literature from the colonial beginnings through the second half of the nineteenth century. It will include the influence of European and other traditions and cultural backgrounds, as well as various political, social, economic, ecological, and geographical influences and implications that have sustained, shaped, and inspired Americans. Materials will come from a variety of genres. Graded only. (C-ID ENGL 130).

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Interpret literary works through different lenses that may include political, socioeconomic, geographical, ethnic, cultural, ecological, psychoanalytical, historical, gender, sexuality, or genre development.
2. Demonstrate familiarity with important authors, works, genres, and themes of the period.
3. Analyze and interpret themes found in the literature and intellectual movements of the period.
4. Demonstrate understanding of appropriate academic discourse and the conventions of critical literary analysis.
5. Relate the literary works to their historical, philosophical, social, political, regional, and/or aesthetic contexts.
6. Demonstrate comprehension of the above through class discussion, written exams, and essays using appropriate citation form.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic	
Lecture	
Topics	Lec Hrs
Introduction to Course and Literary Study	3.00
A. Literary terms	
B. Themes and context	
C. Chronological and thematic development of literature	
Settlement and Colonization	12.00
A. Geography and the New World	
B. Colonial Settlements	
C. Poetry in the New World	
D. Interactions with Native Americans and Puritan Captivity Narratives	
E. Questions of Religion and Early American Sermons	
Read: Lemuel Haynes "Liberty Extended; or, on the Illegality of Slavekeeping," John Winthrop "City on a Hill," Jonathan Edwards "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," and excerpts from John Smith The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer-Isles, William Bradford Of Plimoth Plantation, Anne Bradstreet The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America, and Mary Rowlandson The Sovereignty and Goodness of God.	
The Enlightenment in America	12.00
A. The Revolutionary Spirit and Emerging Ideas of 'America'	
B. Experiments in Political Freedom	
C. Early American Autobiography	
D. The Impact of Science and Reason	
E. Writing in the Early American Republic and Calls for a National Literature	
Read: Absalom Jones "Petition of the People of Color," Samson Occom "A Short Narrative of My Life," and excerpts from Thomas Jefferson Notes on the State of Virginia, J. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur Letters from an American Farmer, Thomas Paine Common Sense, Benjamin Franklin The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, James Fenimore Cooper Notions of the Americans, and Phillis Wheatley Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral.	
The American Renaissance	12.00
A. Transcendentalism and Questions of American Identity	
B. American Romanticism	
C. Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny	

Topics

Lec Hrs

- D. Gender and the Cult of True Womanhood
- E. Poetry at Mid-Century

Read: Ralph Waldo Emerson "The American Scholar," William Cullen Bryant "To a Waterfowl" and "The Prairies," Jane Johnston Schoolcraft "To the Pine Tree," Emily Dickinson "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," and excerpts from Henry David Thoreau Walden, Catherine Maria Sedgwick Hope Leslie, Margaret Fuller Woman in the 19th Century, Catherine E. Beecher A Treatise on Domestic Economy, Walt Whitman Leaves of Grass.

The Civil War and Abolition

9.00

- A. Geographic and Social Divisions
- B. The "Peculiar Institution" of Slavery
- C. Antebellum Reform
- D. The Slave Narrative and the Development of the American Novel
- E. Writing and the Civil War

Read: Sojourner Truth "Speech to the Women's Rights Convention," Seneca Falls Women's Convention "Declaration of Sentiments," Abraham Lincoln "Gettysburg Address," and excerpts from David Walker "An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World," William Apess An Indian's Looking-Glass to the White Man, Harriet Jacobs Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, and Frederick Douglass Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave; Written By Himself.

Native American Origin and Creation Stories

3.00

- A. Oral Tradition
- B. Creation Myths and Religious Beliefs
- C. Traditional Songs and Stories

Read: Iroquois Confederacy "A Tale of the Foundation of the Great Island, North America," Cherokee "How the World was Made," and Hupa "The Boy who Grew Up Ta'k'imilding"

Total Hours: 51.00

Methods of Instruction

- A. Collaborative Group Work
- B. Discussion
- C. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- D. Lecture
- E. Multimedia Presentations
- F. Students are expected to write a minimum of 4000 words for this course.

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Oral Presentation
- C. Homework
- D. Class participation
- E. Written Assignments
- F. Class Discussion

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read Frederick Douglas and prepare two to three questions for small group discussion.
2. Analyze a poem by Emily Dickinson for evidence of a theme that has been previously discussed. Bring your notes to class.

Writing Assignments

1. In a two-page response paper, compare how two texts examine the construction of racial identity. Be prepared to discuss in class.
2. Write a three-page dialogue for characters from disparate texts about one of the course's major themes. Discuss your dialogue in class.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Attend a local reading or presentation of a literary work related to the course and write a short critique.
2. Research an important historical event that influenced one or more course texts and present that information in a blog entry on the course's online site.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Baym, Nina (ed). (2022). The Norton Anthology of American Literature Vols. A and B. *W.W. Norton, 10th*. 978-0-393-88442-5.

Kurant, Wendy. (2019). Becoming America: An Exploration of American Literature from Pre-Colonial to Post-Revolution. *University System of Georgia, n/a*. OER.

Good, Abby. (2021). The Open Anthology of Earlier American Literature: A PSU-Based Project. *Plymouth State University, n/a*. OER.

Robbins, Tim. (2020). The Open Anthology of Earlier American Literature. *Rebus Press*, n/a. OER.
Douglas, Frederick. (2023). Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. *Norton*, n/a. 978-0393870817.
Jacobs, Harriet. (2023). Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. *Norton*, n/a. 978-0393870787.
Thoreau, Henry David. (2023). Walden and Other Writings. *Norton*, n/a. 978-0393870701.

Other Learning Materials

Literary works as assigned by the instructor which may include The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass Collected Essays; Ralph Waldo Emerson Leaves of Grass; Walt Whitman The Scarlet Letter; Nathaniel Hawthorne Collected Essays; Margaret Fuller Uncle Tom's Cabin; Harriet Beecher Stowe Poems; Emily Dickinson Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl; Harriet Jacobs; The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America (1650) Anne Bradstreet; The Sovereignty and Goodness of God (1682) Mary Rowlandson; Poems on Various Subjects; Religious and Moral (1773) Phillis Wheatley; The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. (1820) Washington Irving; Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass; An American Slave; Written by Himself (1845) Frederick Douglass; Walden (1854) Henry David Thoreau; Leaves of Grass (1855) Walt Whitman; and/or other appropriate selections.

Films

Minimum Qualifications

English (Masters Required)

Created/Revised by: Emmons, Molly

Date: 05/15/2023