

## University of Houston-Downtown

**Course Prefix, Number, and Title:** ENG 2312, Survey of American Literature: 1865 to Present

**Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours:** 3/3/0

**Foundational Component Area:** Language, Philosophy and Culture

**Prerequisites:** Completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, ENG 1302.

**Co-requisites:** None

**Course Description:** A study of American literature from 1865 to the present.

**Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:**

| Learning Outcome<br>Students will be able to:   | Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome  | Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated   |
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| Describe how ideas, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. | Lecture and lead discussions on texts (including novels, poems, plays, short stories, essays, artwork, and film) that demonstrate changing beliefs about such topics as race, class, gender, religion, ethnicity, expansionism, American exceptionalism, and modernity in the post-bellum United States. Readings will address relationships between socio-political trends and intellectual trends, including Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, Postmodernism, and Multiculturalism. Readings will be addressed in interactive lectures, class discussion, and/or group work developed to teach students to view these ideas within their cultural and historical contexts. | 15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the midterm exam, the final exam, and analytical essays. |
| Analyze fundamental ideas that foster intellectual and aesthetic creation across human cultures.      | Model the use of textual analysis to reveal the ways that politics, beliefs, and aesthetic movements fostered the growth of new literary and artistic genres, shaped existing literary forms, or created new themes in the literature of the United States since 1865. Such analysis will be modeled in lectures, guided class discussions, and written assignment prompts.  | 15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the midterm exam, the final exam, and analytical essays. |
| Evaluate assumptions, concepts, and language to   | Model the use of critical (close) reading of assigned texts to reveal the cultural   | Midterm and final exams.  |

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| <p>develop defensible conclusions based on analysis and interpretation of information relevant to course content.</p>   | <p>assumptions displayed or critiqued by the authors. Examine terminology specific to different literary genres and apply knowledge of concepts in close readings. Close reading will be modeled through lectures, presentations designed to teach students how to read assigned texts from the period, and prompts for assignments.</p>  |  |
| <p>Synthesize and deliver well-constructed analyses and arguments about course content using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats).</p>                     | <p>Model analysis of assigned materials using a variety of methods, including lectures, course notes, and written prompts. Assign argumentative essays (out-of-class and exam essays). Design group assignments that focus on creating arguments about the cultural, aesthetic, and/or historical content and contexts of assigned texts. The instructor will provide direct instruction on how to design and deliver effective presentations that include the purposeful integration of visuals.</p>             | <p>15-20 pages of writing through assignments such as the mid-term exam, the final exam, and analytical essays. Team-based activities such as rubric-assessed oral group projects, group-generated visual presentations, and collaborative analyses.</p> |
| <p>Investigate ethical dimensions of behavior and language use in different cultural contexts.</p>  | <p>Discuss in lectures, course notes, and writing prompts the ethical standards by which characters, narrators, and authors operate and/or are culturally constrained. Compare the ethical standards within texts to other culturally endorsed ethical standards of the period and to current ethical standards.</p>  | <p>Midterm and final examinations.</p>   |
| <p>Connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making through the analysis of ethical dilemmas explored through literary, philosophical, or intercultural texts.</p> | <p>Demonstrate in lectures, course notes, and writing prompts, how authors' representation of characters' choices reflect or protest the cultural norms in the U.S. Also examine how public reception of literary works/artists is impacted by their treatment of ethical issues, and how that reception changes over time. In lectures, course notes, and writing prompts, discuss the ethical standards of American higher education, especially with respect to UHD's Academic Honesty Policy, PS 03.A.19.</p> | <p>Examinations, essays, and group projects; short examination on PS03.A.19.</p>   |

**Additional Course Outcomes:** N/A

**Course Outline:**

**REALISM, REGIONALISM, AND NATURALISM** (Volume C of Norton 8<sup>th</sup>)

*Background reading for the Realism and Naturalism Period: "American Literature 1865-1914," C3-19; "Realism and Naturalism," C902-903. For Weeks 1-6, also see notes on Realism and Naturalism, available in Blackboard.*

M Aug \_

**Course introduction and introduction to Realism and Regionalism (lecture).**

W Aug \_

Joel Chandler Harris, "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story" and "How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox," C518-21. Mary Wilkins Freeman, "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" C652-53, 662-672.

Week 2

M Sept \_

**Labor Day Holiday. No classes at UHD.**

W Sept \_

Charles Chesnutt, "The Goophered Grapevine" and "The Wife of His Youth," C698-714.

Week 3

M Sept \_

Chesnutt, "The Passing of Grandison," C714-26. Mark Twain, "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences," C325-334. Discuss Essay #1 assignment.

W Sept \_ 📅

**Official day of record. Last Day to drop without a grade.** Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery*, Ch. XIV, "The Atlanta Exposition Address," C673-75, 689-97. José Martí, "Our America," C1147-1149.

Week 4

M Sept \_

Henry James, "Daisy Miller: A Study," C417-59. Discuss academic ethics and UHD Academic Honesty Policy (PS 03.A.19, available in Blackboard).

W Sept \_ 📅

**Academic Honesty Exam** (first half of class only). James, "Daisy Miller," concluded. Discuss Team Presentation Assignment

Week 5

M Sept \_ 📅

**Essay #1 due.** Kate Chopin, "Desirée's Baby" and "The Story of an Hour," C550-57.

W Sept \_

**Introduction to Naturalism (lecture).** Stephen Crane, "The Open Boat," C943-46, 990-1006. Selected poems from *War Is Kind*: I: "War is Kind" C1007-1008; XXI: "A Man Said to the Universe," C1009.

Week 6

M Oct \_

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wall-paper" and "Why I Wrote 'The Yellow Wall-paper'" C790-804.

W Oct \_ 📅

Teams #1, #2, and #3 present.

Week 7

M Oct \_ 📅

**Midterm Examination** (covering Realism, Naturalism, and Regionalism)

**MODERNISM** (Start Volume D). *Background reading: "American Literature 1914-1945," D3-22. For Weeks 7-16, see "Notes on Modernism and Contemporary Literature," in Blackboard.*

W Oct \_

**Introduction to Modernism (Lecture).** Frost, "Mending Wall," D230-31, 232. Pound, "In a Station of the Metro," D314-16, D318 and excerpt from "A Retrospect" D341-43. Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow," D302-303, 309.

Week 8

M Oct \_

T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," D365-371.

W Oct \_

Begin discussing William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, D695- 710.

Week 9

M Oct \_

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, D710-745

W Oct \_

Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, D745-93.

Week 10

M Oct \_ **Introduction to Modernism, Part II: The Harlem Renaissance (Lecture).** W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, excerpts, C883-901. Langston Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” “Mother to Son,” “I, Too,” D869-872, and “Harlem” (handout in Blackboard).

W Oct \_ Teams #4, #5, and #6 present.

R Nov \_ **Last day to withdraw from the course.**

Week 11 (Note: begin reading *The Road*, although we will not discuss it as a class until Week 12)

M Nov \_ Langston Hughes, cont’d. Countee Cullen, “Incident” D892-93. McKay, “The Harlem Dancer,” “The Lynching,” and “If We Must Die,” D480-483.

W Nov \_ Hurston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” and “The Gilded Six-Bits,” D528-29, D538-549. Discuss Essay #2 assignment.

Week 12 **POSTMODERNISM AND CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE** (Start Volume E) *Background readings:* “American Literature Since 1945,” E3-19

M Nov \_ **Introduction to Postmodernism (lecture).** McCarthy, *The Road* (a separate novel; not in the Norton)

W Nov \_ McCarthy, *The Road*, continued.

Week 13

M Nov \_ **First draft of Essay #2 due for quiz credit.** McCarthy, *The Road*, concluded.

W Nov \_ **Thanksgiving Holiday.** No classes at UHD.

Week 15

M Nov \_ Gwendolyn Brooks, “A Bronzeville Mother Loiters in Mississippi...,” “The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmett Till,” E322-23, E (Vol. E).

W Nov \_ **Essay #2 due at the beginning of class.** Plath, “Daddy” and “Lady Lazarus,” E623-24, E625-31.

Week 16

M Dec \_ Erdrich, “Dear John Wayne,” E1139-1141. Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek” E1130-1139.

W Dec \_ **Last Day of Class.** Robert Hayden, “Those Winter Sundays,” E165-66, E172. Li-Young Lee, “The Gift” E1165-1167. Discuss final exam.

Week 17

M Dec \_ **FINAL EXAM** (covering Modernism, Harlem Renaissance, and Postmodernism), TBA

**Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:**

**Course Grade                      A: 90-100                      B: 80-89                      C: 70-79                      D: 60-69                      F: 0-59**

| Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, Activities, and Final             |     |
|---|-----|
| Reading Quizzes (including objective pop quizzes and essay quizzes) | 14% |
| Participation   | 7%  |
| Academic Honesty Exam   | 7%  |
| Team Project: Oral and Visual Presentation                          | 10% |
| Essay #1 (multiple-draft)   | 12% |
| Midterm Exam (including objective and essay questions)              | 15% |

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| Essay #2 (multiple-draft, with secondary sources)    | 15% |
| Final Exam (including objective and essay questions) | 20% |