

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA
Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado
Programa de MA en Literatura Inglesa
Prof. M.L. Juan Carlos Saravia V.

COURSE OUTLINE I-2017

Name: Lectura dirigida II: Literatura Estadounidense	Requisites: NA
Course Code: SP-7212	Co-requisites: NA
Credits: 3	Type : Plan de Estudios MA in English Literature
Schedule: 3 hours / week in-class work 6 hours / week out-of-class work	18 weeks
Level: Graduate	Cycle: I semester

I.DESCRPTION

The course offers an overview of US literature from its colonial beginnings to the 21st Century. It takes into account both chronological and thematic characteristics. The course includes novels, short stories, poetry, and plays, and it is designed to help students read the texts to discover how they manifest three major cultural constructs: racial prejudice, religious oppression, and economic/ technological supremacy.

Since this is a panoramic course, it will strive to present a general view of American literature as it has developed through time. To do so, major literary periods and significant authors will be discussed.

II.GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- A. To examine the chronological evolution of US literature within its historical, social, and political contexts.
- B. To analyze three hegemonic cultural constructs (racial prejudice, religious oppression, economic/technological supremacy) across different periods in US literature
- C. To consider the implications of the ongoing manifestation of the cultural constructs above in the literary pieces studied.

III.SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

During this course, the students will

- A.identify the historical context manifested by each literary work,
- B.improve their ability to do close textual analysis of both commonly studied and commonly omitted literary works,
- C.use their ability to articulate original ideas in clear English,

- D.organize their ideas to generate individual responses to literary works,
- E.define concepts like race, miscegenation, religious sublimation, martyrdom, manifest destiny, social determinism, McCarthyism, software mono-culture, among others.
- F.consider the influence that racial ideas, religious discourses, and economic/technological development have exerted on American culture,

I.CONTENTENTS

- A.Race Theory: Historical, European origin
- B.Native Americans and Puritans
- C.Indentured servitude and captivity
- D.Revolutionary War, independence, slavery,
- E.Resistance, rebellion, and religion
- F.Scapegoats, martyrdom
- G.Approaches to war: religious discourse, political activism, technological supremacy
- H.Picturesque literature
- I.Modernism and modernity: the new world
- J.Responses to rapid technological advances: spiritual emptiness, mechanization of society, dystopia, literary nihilism
- K.Imagination and technology: science fiction (Humanistic vs. Mechanical)
- L.The American Dream and Economic Success
- M.Existential crisis in America
- N.The Information Era and literature
- O.Major literary periods: colonial, literary nationalism, 20th Century, 21st Century

I.METHODOLOGY

This course is organized as a graduate seminar. Consequently, the active participation of students is paramount. To contribute to a well-informed classroom atmosphere and a productive discussion, students must read the assigned material for each week prior to class.

Furthermore, each student will be required to give an oral presentation to expand a particular topic and to write three short argumentative essays (guidelines will be distributed later).

Additional class activities include film showing and discussion and active student research.

II.EVALUATION

3 essays (max. 5 pages)	60% (20% each)
Student presentation (oral)	10%
Final exam	30%

III.BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Friedman, Thomas F. *The World is Flat; A Brief History of the Twentieth-First Century, Release 3.0*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007. Print.
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- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "The Golden Touch." *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys*. 2015. Epub file.
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- Kitterman, Margaret and Douglas Kampsen. *Occupy Spoon River*. USA: CreateSpace, 2012. Print.
- Lovecraft, H.P. *The Shadow out of Time*. Web. 24 January, 2015.
- Masters, Edgar Lee. *The New Spoon River*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Melville, Herman. "Bartleby, The Scrivener." 2015. Epub file.
- Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. *The Portable Arthur Miller*. Ed. Harold Clurman. Dallas: Penguin Books, 1977. Print.
- Morone, James A. *Hellfire Nation; The Politics of Sin in American History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. Print.
- Nahin, Paul J. *Time Machines; Time Travel in Physics, Metaphysics, and Science Fiction*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1993. Print.
- Robinson, Mary. "Yours." *Sudden Fiction; American Short-Short Stories*. Eds. Robert Shapard and James Thomas. Utah: Gibbs-Smith Publisher, 1986. Print.
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- Slotkin, Richard. *Gunfighter Nation; The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1993. Print.
- Tapahonso, Luci, *Sáanii Dahataal: The Women Are Singing, Poems and Stories*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993. Print.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 2015. Epub file.
- Vonnegut, Kirk. "2BO02B." 2015. Epub file.

Contents and Suggested Course Schedule

	Contents	Assignment
Week 1 March 10	Introduction. Documentary: Indian Wars	
Week 2 March 17	Section 1 Race Theory; The World View of Puritans Colonial literature	
Week 3 March 24	Section 2 Representation/Demonization of Indians, Captivity Narratives	
March 31	Easter	

Week 4 April 1	Section 3 Slavery, American Revolution, Independence, and Scapegoating	
Week 5 April 7	Section 4 Literary Nationalism in the 19 th Century Sentimental Literature and Children's Literature in America	Essay 1 due today
Week 6 April 14	Section 5 Late 19 th Century: Picturesque Literature Twain's <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	
Week 7 April 21	Section 6 Late 19 th Century: Realism, Representation, and Controversy	
Week 8 April 28	Section 7 Early 20 th Century: The Frontier and War Modernity and Adaptation	
Week 9 May 5	Section 8 The Nightmarish By-product of Modernity: Fantastic Literature and Horror	
Week 10 May 12	Section 9 Faith Resurrected: Eliot's <i>Four Quartets</i>	Essay 2 due today
Week 11 May 19	Section 10 Social Standing and the Idea of Success Ellison's <i>Invisible Man</i>	
Week 12 May 26	Section 10 (Cont.)	
Week 13 Jun 2	Section 11 Materialism, Science and The American Nightmare	
Week 14 Jun 9	Section 12 The Information Era and Literature	
Week 15 Jun 16	Section 13 The Collapse of the Empire	Essay 3 due today
Week 16 Jun 23	Presentations # 1	
Week 17 Jun 30	Presentations # 2	
Week 18 July 7	Final Exam	