

CAMOSUN COLLEGE
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH 224--AMERICAN LITERATURE
COURSE OUTLINE

1. Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Nigel Brooks

Office: Paul 327A

Phone: 370 3302

E-mail: brooks@camosun.bc.ca

Web site: www.camosun.bc.ca

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday: 2:00pm-3:00pm

Tuesday and Thursday: 10:00am-11:00am

2. Intended learning Outcomes:

Analyze aspects of American literature from the eighteenth century to the present.

Evaluate a variety of genres, which may include poetry, short fiction, novels, drama, and non-fiction, according to critical precepts appropriate to the specific genre.

Identify the socio-historical context of the works and relate the works to others as part of a literary continuum.

Identify and account for recurring themes in American literature.

Compare and contrast various works, authors, and styles within the context of the overall development of American literature.

Distinguish between the subjective and objective aspects of works in order to formulate informed judgments about the works being discussed.

Identify the influence of dominant critical theories or movements in the contexts of the literature studied.

Write their own interpretations of the works by using a variety of critical methods and resources.

Support their own interpretations with relevant textual evidence.

3. Required materials:

Literature and Its Writers. Ann and Samuel Charters. Eds. Fourth Edition.

The Great Gatsby. F. Scott Fitzgerald.

The Things They Carried. Tim O'Brien.

4. Course Content and Schedule:

The History and the Evolution of the American Dream:

This course will look at how American literature explores all aspects of life in a United States shaped by the fundamental principle of the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”--as expressed by Thomas Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence. We will consider not only how the formation of the United States was influenced by the eighteenth century Enlightenment, but also how the country came to maturity under the influence of Romanticism. We will follow this romantic thread through the works of Thoreau, Whitman, Dickinson and Poe in the nineteenth century on into the works of writers such as Scott Fitzgerald and Arthur Miller in the twentieth century. The course will also look at the way in which--throughout the rise of the Beat Poets, the upheavals of the Sixties Counter-culture and the experiences of the Vietnam War--American literature continued to embody the quest for self-fulfillment and greater authenticity in life.

Week One: “The Declaration of Independence“ by Thomas Jefferson (A Hand Out); Extract from The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (A Hand Out); Extract from Nature by Ralph Waldo Emerson (A Hand Out); “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe; “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Week Two: Extract from Walden by Henry David Thoreau (A Hand Out); “Bartleby The Scrivener” by Herman Melville; Extract from Song of Myself by Walt Whitman; Selection of poems by Emily Dickinson; “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman; “Desiree’s Baby” by Kate Chopin; “In A Station of the Metro” and “A Pact” by Ezra Pound.

Week Three: The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald; “A Rose For Emily” by William Faulkner.

Week Four: “Hills Like White Elephants” by Ernest Hemingway; Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller.

Week Five: “A Good Man Is Hard to Find“ by Flannery O’Connor; “Sonny’s Blues” by James Baldwin; “America”, A Supermarket in California” and Extract from “Kaddish” by Allen Ginsberg--along with the whole section on The Beat Poets; “Daddy” by Sylvia Plath.

Week Six: “Where Are You Going, Where have You Been?” by Joyce Carol Oates, “Cathedral” by Raymond Carver, “Greasy Lake” by T. Coraghessan Boyle, “The Red Convertible” by Louise Erdrich.

Week Seven: The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien, “Two Kinds” by Amy Tan; Conversation On Graphic Storytelling.

5. Basis of Student Assessment:

750-1000 word essay: 20%

1500 word essay: 25%

In-class reports: 15%

In class tests: 15%

Final exam: 25%

6. Grading System:

90 - 100% = A+ Grade Point Equivalent: 9

85-89% = A 8

80-84% = A- 7

77-79% = B+ 6

73-76% = B 5

70-72% = B- 4

65-69% = C+ 3

60-64% = C 2

50-59% = D 1

0-49% = F 0

7. Learning support and services for students

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services or the College web site at

camosun.ca

Student conduct policy

There is a Student Conduct Policy which includes plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services and on the College web site in the Policy Section.