

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: 1:30 - 2:20

Wednesday: 1:30 - 2:20

2. Intended learning Outcomes:

Analyse 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 and relevant textual evidence.

3. Required materials:

The American Tradition in Literature. Twelfth Edition. Edited by George and Barbara Perkins.

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Death Of A Salesman by Arthur Miller.

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 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 Counterculture 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; Extract from The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin: pages 215-219; “Self-Reliance” by Ralph Waldo Emerson; “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe.

Week Two: “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne; Extract from Walden by Henry David Thoreau: pages 702-706; “Bartleby The Scrivener” by Herman Melville; Extracts from Song of Myself by Walt Whitman: Sections 1,5,6,11,13,21,24,32,50-52; “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Week Three: “In A Station of the Metro” by Ezra Pound; “The Hollow Men” by T.S. Eliot; “Shine, Perishing Republic” by Robinson Jeffers; The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Week Four: Death Of A Salesman by Arthur Miller.

Week Five: “Good Country People” by Flannery O’Connor; Poetry by Claude McKay; “Black Boy” by Richard Wright, “Invisible Man” by Ralph Ellison; Crosscurrents: The Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance.

Week Six: “Sonny’s Blues” by James Baldwin; Crosscurrents: The Age of Anxiety: The Beat Generation and Social Responsibility; “Howl”: lines 1-33 and “America” by Allen Ginsberg; “Daddy” by Sylvia Plath.

Week Seven: Crosscurrents: What Is An American? Freedom and Responsibility; “Where Are You Going, Where have You Been?” by Joyce Carol Oates; “The Red Convertible” by Louise Erdrich; “Shiloh” by Bobbie Ann Mason.

5. Basis of Student Assessment:

750-1000 word essay: 15%

1500 word essay: 25%

In-class reports: 20%

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.