

American Literature

Course code: LIT 224

Semester and year: Spring 2020

Day and time: Wednesdays, 14:45-17:30

Instructor: Andrew L. Giarelli, Ph.D.

Instructor contact: andrew.giarelli@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Tuesdays, 13:00-15:00 in Faculty Lounge

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Intermediate
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	Toefl iBT 71
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	BA Required/Elective

1. Course Description

This course introduces students to the wide range and breadth of American literature, from colonial times to the present. Emphasis is on close reading of texts and their placement in the context of the development of North American culture and cultures.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Comprehend and have a clear understanding of key figures, movements and periods in American literature from colonial times to the present.
- Understand and analyze literature via close reading of texts, attuning themselves to nuances of meaning.
- Understand American literature within the context of its multiplicity of cultures and ethnicities, enriching their own perspectives.

3. Reading Material

Required Materials

- Baldwin, James. "Sonny's Blues." First published in *The Partisan Review*, 1957. In Baldwin, *Going To Meet the Man*. New York: Dial Press, 1965. Available on NEO.
- Bradstreet, Anne. *Anne Bradstreet*, Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/anne-bradstreet>. Available on NEO.
- Cather, Willa. "Paul's Case." *McClure's Magazine* 25 (May 1905), 74-83. In *The Willa Cather Archive*, Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. URL: <https://cather.unl.edu/writings/shortfiction/ss006>. Available on NEO.
- Chopin, Kate.
 - "The Story of An Hour," *Vogue*, 1894. In KateChopin.org. URL: <http://www.katechopin.org/pdfs/Kate%20Chopin,%20The%20Story%20of%20An%20Hour.pdf>.
 - "The Storm". In *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969. In AmericanLiterature.com. URL: <https://americanliterature.com/author/kate-chopin/short-story/the-storm>. Available on NEO.
- Crane, Stephen.

- "The Blue Hotel." In *Great Short Works of Stephen Crane*. New York: Harper and Row (Perennial Classics), 1965, 1968. Available on NEO.
- *The Open Boat and Other Stories*. "An Experiment In Misery," (211-226); London: William Heinemann, 1898. Project Gutenberg E-Book, 2014. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45524/45524-h/45524-h.htm#The-Men-in-the-Storm>. Available on NEO.
- Dickinson, Emily. Selected poems, Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/emily-dickinson>.
- Faulkner, William. "Barn Burning." *Harper's*, June 1939, 86-96. Faulkner, William. "Barn Burning." *Selected Short Stories of William Faulkner*. New York: The Modern Library, 1993 (1962). 1-25. Available on NEO.
- Ginsberg, Allen. "Howl." On Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/49303/howl>. Available on NEO.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Young Goodman Brown." In Hawthorne, *Twice-Told Tales* (1835). Bedford St. Martins Public Domain Readings. URL: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/webpub/english/bedguide8e/Public%20Domain%20Readings/Hawthorne%20Young%20Goodman%20Brown.pdf>.
- Hemingway, Ernest. "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber." In *The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938. *Cosmopolitan*, Sept. 1936. Available on NEO.
- Hughes, Langston. Selected Poems, Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/langston-hughes>. Available on NEO.
- Irving, Washington. "Rip Van Winkle." In Irving, *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Esq.* (1819, rev. 1863). E-Book created by Jose Menendez, Ibiblio. URL: https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Irving/Winkle/Irving_Winkle.pdf. Available on NEO.
- Kerouac, Jack. *On the Road*. New York: The Viking Press, 1972 (1955). Excerpts. Available on NEO.
- Lowell, Robert. "For the Union Dead." On Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57035/for-the-union-dead>.
- Mather, Cotton. *The Wonders of the Invisible World*. Reiner Smolinski, ed. Digital Commons @ University of Nebraska – Lincoln (1693). URL: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=etas>. Available on NEO.
- Melville, Herman. "Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-street." In Melville, *The Piazza Tales*. New York: Dix & Edwards, 1856. Available on NEO.
- O'Connor, Flannery. *Collected Works*. New York: The Library of America, 1988. "A Good Man Is Hard To Find," 137-152. Available on American Studies At The University of Virginia. URL: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr/goodman.html>. Available on NEO.
- Plath, Sylvia. Selected poems on Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/sylvia-plath>. Available on NEO.
- Poe, Edgar Allen. "William Wilson" (1839). University of Virginia Hypertext. URL: http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/POE/w_wilson.html. Available on NEO.
- Porter, Katherine Anne. "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall," "Flowering Judas." In *Flowering Judas and Other Stories*. New York: The Modern Library (Random House), 1940 (first published 1930). Available on NEO.
- Stevens, Wallace. Biography and selected poems in *Poetry Foundation*. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/wallace-stevens#tab-poems>. Available on NEO.
- Thoreau, Henry David. "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For." In Thoreau, *Walden; Or, Life in the Woods*. Boston, MA: Ticknor and Fields, 1854. In *LitToGo*. URL: <https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/90/walden-or-life-in-the-woods/1538/where-i-lived-and-what-i-lived-for/>. Available on NEO.

- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. New York: Charles L. Webster and Co., 1885. *The Project Gutenberg E-Book Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. URL: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/76/76-h/76-h.htm#c1>
- Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five: A Novel*. New York: New American Library, 2001 (1970). Available on NEO.
- Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. The Electronic Classics Series, Hazelton: Pennsylvania State University, 2007-2013. URL: https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/3985648/mod_resource/content/1/LEAVES%20OF%20GRASS.pdf
- Williams, William Carlos. Selected poems and biography on The Poetry Foundation. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-carlos-williams>. Also "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower" (excerpt). On Poets.org. URL: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-carlos-williams>. Both available on NEO.

Recommended Materials

- *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2017, 9th Edition, Vols. 1 and 2. Some course materials linked above and available on NEO are also in this anthology, as are supplemental essays on some of the writers covered and additional works from them, for students to use at their discretion. On reserve at AAU Library.

4. Teaching methodology

Classes will consist of directed close reading, in which individual students will be asked precise questions about assigned texts in order to gradually unfold the layers of meaning in literary works. Student participation is thus more intense than in a normal lecture course, though also considerable time will be devoted to lectures. **Because of the intense level of student participation expected, it will not be possible to miss classes and to simply "make up" work: every class session will lead to deeper and more challenging efforts at understanding layers of literary complexity.**

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
Week 1 Feb. 12	Topic: Introduction: Colonial North America: History, Cultures, Languages Description: After an introductory lecture on colonial North America, we'll examine two key New England authors. Reading: In Class: Cotton Mather, <i>The Wonders of the Invisible World</i> , excerpts; Anne Bradstreet, selected poems Assignments/deadlines:
Week 2 Feb. 19	Topic: Early U.S. Literature: Looking Back, Looking Forward Description: The first major U.S. authors. Reading: Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle"; Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Browne" Assignments/deadlines:
Week 3 Feb. 26	Topic: Poe and Dickinson Description: Two early-mid 19 th century outcasts whose work resonates deeply today. Reading: Edgar Allen Poe, "William Wilson"; Emily Dickinson, selected poems and "Emily Dickinson" biographical essay on <i>Poetry Foundation</i> page. Assignments/deadlines:

Week 4 March 4	<p>Topic: Melville and Thoreau</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Herman Melville, "Bartleby, The Scrivener"; Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i>, "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For."</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 5 March 11	<p>Topic: Twain</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, Chapters 1-16.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 6 March 18	<p>Topic: Twain</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, Chapters 17-32.</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 7 March 25	<p>Topic: Twain, Whitman</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>, Chapters 33-43; Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i>: "I Sing the Body Electric" (109-117); "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (193-99); "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (383-91)</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 8 April 1	<p>Topic: Late 19th-Early 20th Century Fiction</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Kate Chopin, "The Story of An Hour," "The Storm"; Stephen Crane, "The Blue Hotel," "An Experiment In Misery"; Willa Cather, "Paul's Case."</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines: Essay 1 due.</p>
Week 9 April 8	<p>Mid-term break: No Class.</p>
Week 10 April 15	<p>Topic: A Poetic Revolution</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: William Carlos Williams, "Danse Russe," "Tract," "Dedication For A Plot of Ground," "Spring and All," "To Elsie," "To A Poor Old Woman," "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower" (excerpt); Wallace Stevens, "Sunday Morning," "Anecdote of the Jar," "The Emperor of Ice-Cream," "The Idea of Order At Key West," "Of Modern Poetry"; Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again," "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "Harlem".</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 11 April 22	<p>Topic: Early 20th Century Modernist Fiction</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Katherine Anne Porter, "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall," "Flowering Judas"; Ernest Hemingway, "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber."</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 12 April 29	<p>Topic: Postwar Modernism</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Reading: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard To Find"; James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"; Robert Lowell, "For the Union Dead."</p> <p>Assignments/deadlines:</p>
Week 13 May 6	<p>Topic: Dissident Voices</p> <p>Description:</p>

	Reading: Allen Ginsburg, "Howl"; Jack Kerouac, excerpts from <i>On the Road</i> ; Silvia Plath, "Daddy," "Lady Lazarus." Assignments/deadlines:
Week 14 May 13	Topic: American Postmodernism Description: Reading: Kurt Vonnegut, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> Assignments/deadlines:
Week 15 May 20	NO CLASS Assignments/deadlines: 1) Essay 2 Due 2) Final Exam Posted on NEO, due on NEO May 22 at 11:59 p.m.

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Attendance and Class Participation	42	25,00%	Consistent ability to interpret texts via instructor's questions.	1,2,3
Quizzes	18	10,00%	Ability to answer fact-based questions designed to test whether student has done the assigned reading.	1,3
Essays (2)	60	40,00%	Incisive, persuasive textual analysis over an extended piece of writing..	1,2
Final Exam	30	25,00%	Ability in a time-limited setting to synthesize insights developed over the semester into one or more cohesive short essays comparing several of the works studied.	1.2.2019
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

1. Detailed description of the assignments

Assignment 1: Class Participation. Here is where you will not only show me that you are carefully reading the works assigned, but also where you will develop and practice the skills you will use in your essays (see above). I will ask each of you questions

designed to elicit hard thinking about the text in front of you, at least until and if we develop a pattern of full participation in the class.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Proof that you have read the text	50
Ability to participate in group close reading of text	50

Assignment 2: Quizzes. These will test your factual knowledge of the works studied to make sure you have done the reading. Each of the 10 quizzes will be unannounced and worth 1% of your final grade.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Factual knowledge of reading.	100

Assignment 3: Essays. Each essay must be approximately 1500 words, about one of the works studied during the period leading up to which the essay is due. Your first essay must be about one of the works studied in Weeks 1-7, and your second about one of the works studied in Weeks 8-15.

Assessed area	Percentage
Clear writing and correct grammar/punctuation.	40
Incisive, persuasive analysis.	60

Assignment 4: Final Exam. The final exam will consist of short answers and a choice of essay questions designed to get you to synthesize the thinking you have developed all semester into cohesive literary analysis of texts.

Assessed area	Percentage
Factual knowledge of texts	25
Critical thinking displayed in essay answers	50
Clear writing and correct grammar/punctuation	25

7. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU’s academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules available in the Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students’ university email address for communication. It is strongly recommended that any email communication between students and instructors take place in NEO LMS. Each e-mail sent to an instructor that is about a new topic (meaning not a reply to an original email) shall have a new and clearly stated subject and shall have the course code in the subject, for example: “COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question”. All electronic submissions are carried out through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance is required. Students who are absent 35 percent of classes will be failed (or administratively withdrawn from the course if most absences are excused). Students might also be marked absent if they miss a significant part of a class (by arriving late or leaving early) as specified in the syllabus.

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he must submit to the Dean of Students an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence. The form and documents must be submitted within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences cannot be made up which may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows for a make-up. Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

Electronic devices

Electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops...) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive or other conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment of an institution of learning, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the activity or for the day and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating (e.g. whispering or passing notes) will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misbehavior the student will be expelled from the exam and the exam will be marked as failed.

Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin's White Paper 'The Plagiarism Spectrum' (available at <http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum>) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.

4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

As the minimum policy the types of plagiarism from 1 through 8 results in the failing grade from the assignment and must be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult their papers with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: <http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are asked to contact their instructor as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodation.

8. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95 – 100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A-	90 – 94	
B+	87 – 89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83 – 86	
B-	80 – 82	
C+	77 – 79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73 – 76	
C-	70 – 72	
D+	65 – 69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student's work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60 – 64	
F	0 – 59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by and when: Andrew Giarelli, November 2019