



## MASTER COURSE OUTLINE

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Date: September 2017

## COURSE TITLE

American Literature III

## GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Dept.: ENGL&

Course Num: 246

(Formerly: ENG 246)

CIP Code: 23.0801

Intent Code: 11

Program Code:

Credits: 5

Total Contact Hrs Per Qtr.: 55

Lecture Hrs: 55

Lab Hrs: 0

Other Hrs: 0

Distribution Designation: Humanities HU

## COURSE DESCRIPTION (as it will appear in the catalog)

This class explores American literature published in the decades since 1960. Themes studied may include terrorism and cold war anxiety, technology, gender roles, multiculturalism, alienation, rebellion, popular psychology, or others relevant to the literature of the time. Students will read contemporary novels, stories, and poems that reflect American trends and culture during this period. Students do NOT need to have taken American Literature I or American Literature II to do well in this course.

## PREREQUISITES

None

## TEXTBOOK GUIDELINES

Instructor should choose at least three contemporary novels, as well as contemporary poems and short stories (available in print anthologies or online). Emphasis should be on "canonical" texts published since 1960 that act as artifacts of and lenses into contemporary American culture. Authors should be of recognizable importance to contemporary literature.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate the following knowledge or skills:*

1. Identify and discuss a variety of contemporary literary themes and schools of thought, and be able to apply these to contemporary poetry and fiction.
2. Identify and discuss the relevance of a variety of contemporary short story writers, novelists and poets, and be able to articulate their contribution to the canon.
3. Identify and discuss some of the major historical, cultural, and biographical influences on contemporary literature, and be able to isolate these in the literature of the period.
4. Utilize effective writing and discussion to communicate knowledge of the above.

## INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES

IO1 Communication: Students will be able to communicate clearly and effectively.

## **COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE**

1. The course's design will reflect one of the realities of post-1960 literature: that the contemporary canon is flexible and represents literature of many different voices, cultures, and themes. The content of the class will reflect this abundance and flexibility.
2. The course will use lectures (in-person or online), readings, and/or supplemental materials (images, audio, video clips) to introduce students to relevant themes and schools of thought present in contemporary literature. Some of these themes and schools of thought have roots that pre-date 1960 (feminism, the civil rights movement, etc...), but with few exceptions, this class will focus on texts published after 1960.
  - Themes might include terrorism and cold war anxiety, technology and media, gender roles, multiculturalism, alienation, and popular psychology/the self-help movement. Schools of thought might include feminism, postmodernism, confessionalism, or the ideologies of the Beats, the deep image movement, the Black Mountain movement, the New York School, or others of literary relevance.
3. Students will read novels, stories, and poems from established contemporary American authors that reflect these themes and/or schools of thought.
  - Poets might include Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Gary Soto, Billy Collins, Jorie Graham, Elizabeth Bishop, Mary Karr, John Berryman, Theodore Roethke, Ann Sexton, May Swenson, Sharon Olds, Lucille Clifton, Randall Jarrell, Amiri Baraka, Galway Kinnell, Robert Creeley, James Dickey, Ray Gonzalez, Allen Ginsberg, or others of literary relevance.
  - Fiction writers might include Toni Morrison, Dorothy Allison, Richard Ford, Raymond Carver, Marilyn Robinson, Cormac McCarthy, Kurt Vonnegut, Lorrie Moore, Jamaica Kincaid, Tillie Olson, John Updike, Philip Roth, Sherman Alexie, Tim O'Brien, Joyce Carol Oates, Amy Tan, Dave Eggers, Edward Jones, Don DeLillo, Jack Kerouac, William S. Burroughs, Kim Barnes, Joshua Ferris, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bobby Ann Mason, Peter Ho Davies, David Means, Allen Gurganus, Jonathon Safran Foer, Mary Gaitskill, Gish Jen, Daniel Orozco, David Foster Wallace, Jonathon Franzen, Vendela Vida, Anne Tyler, Ann Patchett, Steven Millhauser or others of literary relevance. Canonical literature (from arrival of Christopher Columbus to the transcendentalists, including, but not confined to such authors as John Winthrop, Anne Hutchinson, Thomas Paine, James Fennimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville and Walt Whitman)

## **DEPARTMENTAL GUIDELINES** *(optional)*

1. As long as the relationship between literature and culture remains a centerpiece of the class, some of the themes listed in the course description may change at the discretion of the instructor, with the understanding that certain texts will emphasize certain themes, while other texts may emphasize others.
2. The course will provide instruction in contemporary American literature, emphasizing the thematic connections between individual texts and contemporary culture. Instructor may choose to structure the course around specific contemporary eras/decades, as long as contemporary themes in literature remain the focus.
3. The course will focus on written texts, including at least three novels. Audiovisual elements may be included to supplement written texts, but assessment methods must emphasize the written text.
4. All of the categories of literature (poetry, short stories, and novels) described in the course description must be used at some point during the term, but the instructor may use his/her discretion to determine which of these to emphasize in a given quarter. Other literary categories (such as plays, graphic novels, hypertexts, etc...) may be used to supplement this material.
5. Students will be frequently quizzed to show their comprehension of readings.
6. Students will be expected to write at least one formal essay or take at least one exam with a substantial written component.

7. Exams and/or essays must be focused on both comprehension of texts and the ability to articulate ideas and themes present in these texts. Students may also be asked about relevant historical, biographical, and cultural influences, as well as formal elements of the texts and/or literature.
8. Students may also be required to give formal presentations and/or participate in group projects and/or discussion groups to assess their understanding of course content and outcomes.
9. Although this class focuses on post-1960 literature, texts published after WWII (such as The Beats) can be used to establish contemporary context and themes.

PO4 should be assessed: Students will be able to recognize or articulate personal/interpersonal aspects of, or connections between, diverse cultural, social, or political contexts.

PO5 should be assessed: Students will be able to solve problems by gathering, interpreting, combining and/or applying information from multiple sources.

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**DIVISION CHAIR APPROVAL**

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**DATE**