

ENG 361 SURVEY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1865 TO THE PRESENT

3 credit hours

Fall 2007

Evan 358

11-11:50 MWF

Dr. Diane Dowdey

Office: 111 Farrington and 410 Evans

Office hours: By appointment. I am on campus from 10-5 Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. I am on campus from 10-3 on Fridays.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A survey of authors, genres, and movements in American literature from 1865 to the present, including representative works of Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, and Post-Modernism. Required of all English majors. Also required of all English minors not seeking certification. Prerequisites: 9 hours of English. Credit 3.

The methods of instruction used in the course include lecture, group discussion, group presentations, and small group discussions.

COURSE RATIONALE:

How did American literature of the last half of the nineteenth century through the present change and develop, both in content and technique? Questions of individual rights and social responsibilities changed in the period after the Civil War and the development of increasing technology, urbanization, and economic discrepancy. Literature reflects the expectations of society for people as well as individuals' rebellion against those expectations. The rebellions may be reflected in the content of the material, the actions of the characters, or in the techniques used by the author to fulfill or subvert the expectations of the reader. In the changing dynamic of the times, what personal freedoms beckon? Are they different for men and women, for rich and poor? What social contracts are necessary to preserve the ability to live together, as families or as larger social units? How have expectations, freedoms, and social responsibilities changed in the last 139 years and been reflected in the literature. How have the important literary movements reflected and responded to changing social conditions?

The intent of this course is to answer these questions by examining short stories, novels, poems, and plays by significant authors. The assignments given in the course are intended to help you perceive, critique and understand American literature and its historical and cultural context.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To become familiar with the works of significant American authors from 1865 to the present.
2. To learn how to analyze and interpret a work of literature by situating it in its historical time and literary movement.
3. To develop your skill in writing and speaking about literature.

TEXT:

The American Tradition in Literature, Vol. 2, 11th edition, edited by George Perkins and Barbara Perkins. McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-321736-0.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Do the assigned reading before coming to class on the day it is listed. I have listed the works to be read and the page numbers for the works. However, I suggest that you read the introductory material about the author. You should be prepared each class to take a quiz over the reading material.

Participate in class discussions.

Take 3 exams.

Teach a lesson on a work of literature, working with fellow classmates.

Write a paper in which you explore the way the work of literature discusses the concept of personal freedom and societal expectations. You will need to include scholarly references in the paper.

COURSE POLICIES:

You are expected to attend class and be punctual. Some assignments will be done during class

time, and if you miss class, you will not be able to complete them. Excessive absences will affect your final grade. If you must be absent on an exam day, please let me know in advance. We will find a time for you to take a make-up examination.

If you have to leave class early, please let me know and sit near the door that day, so you won't disturb your classmates. I expect you to not disturb or distract your fellow students. The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Section 5 explains the university's expectations about student behavior. Members of this class are subject to this code.

Please turn your cell phones off or on vibrate during class time as ringing phones are distracting to your classmates and me. It is also distracting to see students text messaging during the class. It can also raise issues of academic honesty. Do not text message during class.

Students are expected "to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the class room. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subjected to disciplinary action." Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Section 5.3, as printed in the student guidelines. Any written work submitted by you, or any formal oral presentation will be expected to be your own work, with appropriate scholarly citations.

Students who are absent from class for observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to make up a test or other class assignment scheduled for that day within one week of returning to class.

Students with disabilities that affect their academic performance are expected to arrange conference times with me so that appropriate strategies may be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. Students with disabilities are responsible for contacting the Director of the Counseling Center as chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students to register their status. The phone number is 936-294-1720.

You will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Further information on course policies is posted at <https://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Information on the course, including grades and assignments, are posted on Blackboard. I expect you to check Blackboard regularly for updates.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Test 1 150 points—essay questions

Test 2 150 points—essay questions

Test 3 (Final exam) 200 points—essay questions

Teaching the class 200 points—group project

Annotated bibliography 100—related to paper topic

Paper 200 points—detailed description will be given during the semester

Reading quizzes and class participation 100

Total points: 1100

Letter grade is a percentage of total points.

Caveat: As in life, **the above is subject to change at any time.**

SCHEDULE:

Aug. 20 Introduction to course

Aug. 22 *Little Women* pp. 122-143

Aug. 24 *The Awakening* pp. 563-592 (Chapters 1-13)

Aug. 27 *The Awakening* pp. 592-624 (Chapters 14-26)

Aug. 29 *The Awakening* pp. 624-649 (Chapters 27-39)

Aug. 31 "Democratic Vistas" pp. 110-111; *Song of Myself* Secs. 1-8 (pp. 13-18),

Sept. 5 *Song of Myself* Sec. 9-21 (pp. 18-26) Sec. 24 (pp. 28-29), Sec. 46-48 (pp. 47-50), Sec. 52 (p. 51-52)