

Fall 2021

LIT 320-SL1: American Literature

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L. CASTRONOVA AMERICAN LITERARY SURVEY LIT 320(SL 1) Fall, 2021

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Office Hours: Regular: Tues. 2:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m., Thurs. 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

By Appointment: Wed. 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Course Meetings: Tues/Thurs 4:00 p.m. – 5:20 p.m. in Cullimore 110

C O U R S E S Y L L A B U S

Course Textbook: Abcarian, Richard, et al. LITERATURE – THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE. Shorter 12th Edition. New York: Bedford/St Martin's, 2018

ISBN: 978 – 1319 05471 – 7 (also available as an e-book)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Welcome to LIT 320 (SL -1), AMERICAN LITERARY SURVEY, a course for international students. In this course, students will examine American culture through poetry and fiction, and they will also study a play about the American dream. All of the works covered will shine a light on ideas and life here in the USA. Through the voices of a diverse selection of American writers, students will gain a grasp of literary works that mirror the American experience. Through the study of these works, students will improve their understanding of the English language. In addition, they will gain greater insights into American culture and the issues faced in this country. Various writers will voice concerns on some aspect of American life, allowing for vital discussion in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY for our twice-weekly sessions. It is necessary for students to not only attend but to also be punctual and be prepared in order to participate in each of our class meetings.

Students will need to earn a passing average on any quizzes, essays and/or tests given on the literature in question. We are aiming for students to develop critical thinking in regard to what they believe each writer's intended message might be. Everything is open for interpretation. All assignments will be given in advance in reference to the readings due the following week. BE SURE TO READ YOUR SYLLABUS for a basic overview of these assignments. If changes in assignments occur, I will be sure to contact you with an email well in advance (or I will tell you in person in a face- to- face class session). Via email, I will keep you informed of any course-related information.

Students are required to pass both the mid-term and the final exams. NO SURPRISES HERE: the mid-term will cover all literary works from the first session to the mid-term point. The final exam will cover all works from the mid-term point to our last class session.

ORAL PRESENTATION: Each student will be required to deliver a presentation (about five minutes in length). The topic will be something that all students will find to be relatable. I will assist each student in the planning of this presentation.

PERSONAL STORY: Students will need to write a 3 to 4 page paper on their lives in America. The focus will be on a personal experience that has helped to shape them in their lives here. The instructor will be assisting each student with this project. It will also be connected to the oral presentation component of the course. Details on both of these projects (the personal story and the oral presentation) will be detailed during our face to face class sessions.

Therefore, to sum up the requirements:

Attendance is mandatory. Participation is, too! A mid term and final exam will be given.

Any quizzes will also need a passing average. There will be an oral presentation session

for all class members. Students will also be required to write personal stories which the instructor will assist them with as the assignment takes shape.

Hopefully, all students will be attentive and will leave LIT 320 SL with a vital understanding of American literary works and American culture. In addition, students will feel more confident about their verbal English skills as there will be plenty of speaking practice in our class sessions. Analytical writing about literature is also part of the LIT 320SL learning experience.

COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1 - First meeting will be on THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd. (The class meets on Tues/Thurs., but during Week 1, we have just ONE session as classes begin on WED. SEPT. 1st). Introduction to the course. Review of the course syllabus. Student introductions. Ways to write about literature will be reviewed in class.

Week 2 – Short story to be given for reading and writing a diagnostic writing sample. We will also discuss the story AFTER all students have submitted a written response. Homework reading for Week 3:

Jealousy, love -vs- possession come alive in Irwin Shaw's "THE GIRLS IN THEIR SUMMER DRESSES." Story is online at:

Classicshorts.com/stories/dresses.html

Week 3 - Discussion of Shaw's story and written response to a given question

Homework for Week 4: Emma Lazarus' poem- The New Colossus -page 536 (or online)

Benjamin Franklin - The Way to Wealth (available online)

Week 4 - Discussion of the works listed above as Homework for Week 4

Homework for Week 5 - Voices in American Poetry

Textbook information about poetry (pages 12-16)

Walt Whitman page 11, Robert Frost, pages 173, 640, 897 and 900

Student poetry assignment

Week 5 - Discussion of the above-listed readings

Homework for Week 6- Relationships and Discoveries

Robert Hayden - Those Winter Sundays page 656

Theodore Roethke - My Papa's Waltz p. 655

Robert Mezey - My Mother p. 191

Philip Larkin - This Be The Verse p. 178

Audre Lorde - Hanging Fire p. 178-179

Marge Piercy - Barbie Doll p. 513

Langston Hughes poems pages 189, 251, 359 and 367

Week 6 Discussion of the above-listed readings

Homework for Week 7 Stories by African American writers

Zora Neale Hurston SWEAT pages 584-593

Alice Walker EVERYDAY USE pages 480-487

On racism in society: Flannery O'Connor EVERYTHING THAT RISES MUST CONVERGE (to be given in class)

Week 7 Discussion of the above-mentioned works

Presentation details will be discussed in class, too. These will be given during Week 12, so there will be plenty of time to practice/prepare this presentation.

Homework for Week 8:

Coming of Age in America : Innocence and Experience

John Updike A & P pages 94-99

Joyce Carol Oates WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? Pages 608-621

Week 8- Discussion of the above-listed works Details on PERSONAL STORY discussed.

Homework for Week 10 (mid term exam is week 9) is John Steinbeck's OF MICE AND MEN (novella (short novel) found online

Week 9 - MID TERM EXAM to be given in class. It will cover ALL works covered up to the mid term point. TUESDAY AND THURSDAY of WEEK 9 PARTS 1 and 2

HOMEWORK: finish the reading of John Steinbeck's novella OF MICE AND MEN

Week 10- FROM FICTION TO FILM Film adaptation of Steinbeck's novella.

Discussion of the story.

Homework for Week 11: Early Feminist Literature in America

Kate Chopin - The Storm pages 579-583

also by Chopin - Story of An Hour pages 843-845

and Charlotte Perkins Gilman - The Yellow Wallpaper pages 442-454

Week 11 - Discussion of the above feminist stories.

Homework: Student presentations will be given during Week 12. Preparation needed!

Week 12 - Student PRESENTATIONS

Homework: Continue working on personal stories These are due during Week 13

Week 13 Submission of final copy of personal stories THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY on Thurs. 11/25

Week 14 American story of values: Ethan Canin's THE PALACE THIEF (online story) and film adaptation Reading assignment: Arthur Miller's DEATH OF A SALESMAN

Week 15 Watching the Broadway play, DEATH of a SALESMAN

Discussion of the play

HAVE AN ENJOYABLE SEMESTER!

Please be sure to review information on the NJIT Academic Integrity Code below:

The New Jersey Institute of Technology is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through teaching and research. We expect our graduates to assume positions of leadership with their professions and communities. Honesty in your academic work will develop into professional integrity.

The NJIT Code of Academic Integrity embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of the university and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the university community.

All assignments submitted shall be considered “graded work” and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

The full text of the NJIT university Code on Academic Integrity can be found at www.njit.edu/education/pdf/academic-integrity-code-pdf.

