Welcome to American Literature since the Civil War

Engl 2328 - Spring 2012, CRN 79080
Monday, 6 – 9 p.m., Room 108
3 Credit Hours / 48 hours per semester
Lecture / Core Curriculum

Instructor: Michael Ronan

Contact Information:
• 713-718-5784
• Michael.ronan@hccs.edu
• elearning site: http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/michael.ronan
• Office at Spring Branch Campus, Room 601g
• Office Hours 9:30 – 4 p.m. Monday – Friday by appointment

Please contact me concerning any problems that you are experiencing in this course, and remember that you do not need to wait until you have received a poor grade before asking for my assistance. I am available. As department chair, I must attend meetings and travel around the district, but if you contact me, we can arrange a time to meet. Feel free to do so and stop by my office at Spring Branch and I’ll be glad to discuss things with you. Also, be sure to take advantage of the tutors (see additional support) who are available during much of the day at the Katy and Spring Branch Campuses, five days a week.

Additional Support:
• Tutoring and Writing Centers
  • On-Campus tutors in the Katy Campus Writing Center, which is located across from the third floor Library: 713-718-5841. These anticipated hours may change: M&T (8 a.m. – 7 p.m.); WR (8 a.m. – 2 p.m.); F (8 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
  • Writing Center at Spring Branch Campus: 713-718-5889. Posted hours: MTWR (8 a.m. – 8 p.m.); F (8 a.m. – 12 p.m.); S (10 a.m. – 2 p.m.)
• On-Line Tutors: http://askonline.net

Prerequisites: English 1302 or the equivalent
**Instructional Materials:**

- Sophomore Literature Study Guide
- Blue Books for all in-class exams
- Suggested Texts:
  - Current MLA Guidelines
  - The New McGraw-Hill Handbook or an equivalent grammar text
  - Literary Response Journal (extra credit)
  - College Level Dictionary

**Course Description:**

This course will introduce students to a representative selection of American Literature written since the Civil War. They will become familiar with the works of significant writers and be able to recognize those characteristics that distinguish one writer from another. They will develop a critical vocabulary that articulates an understanding of the elements of fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction prose, and will, using critical analysis, demonstrate the application of this knowledge through class discussions, written papers and exams, and investigative research. Core Curriculum Course.

**Course Prerequisites:**

1302 or the equivalent

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Explain and illustrate stylistic characteristics of representative works of major American writers from 1865 to the present (since the Civil War).

2. Connect representative works of major American writers from 1865 to the present to human and individual values in historical and social contexts.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of various works of major American writers from 1865 to the present.

4. Analyze critical texts relating to the works of major American writers from 1865 to the present.

5. Critique and interpret representative literary works of major American writers from 1865 to the present.
**Learning Objectives:**

1. Demonstrate the ability to coherently analyze fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction: recognize the elements of literature in representative works, identify examples of each, and evaluate the contribution of each verbally in class and in exams;

2. Apply the basic principles of critical thinking—evaluation, analysis, and synthesis—to identify themes in works of literature and to identify characteristics that show their place in literary, social, and historical periods;

3. Identify and illustrate the significance of passages from literary works and how they contribute to the development of a literary text and of its theme(s);

4. Find and evaluate literary texts and/or library books, journals, magazines, and/or databases to support a thesis and write a documented paper using proper MLA citations and Works Cited;

5. Expand the scope, confidence, and creativity of interpreting works of fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction.

**Course Calendar:**

**Readings and Assignments:**

By the class period listed, students are to have read textual information on the period being studied and biographical information on the author being studied along with his or her listed works. Works may be added to or deleted from the course as discussed in class.

**Week 1**

1/16  
No Class  
MLK, Jr. Holiday!

**Week 2**

1/23  
Handouts Syllabus, Introduction to Course  
Theme: American Dream and Identity  
Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain)(100)  
"The War Prayer" (322)  
Discussion of Realism

**Week 3**

1/30  
American Literature 1865 - 1914 (1-14)  
Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and Charles Dudley Warner  
"Colonel Beriah Sellers" Chapter VIII from *The Golden Age* (on Learning Web labeled “from The Gilded Age")  
Hamlin Garland "Under the Lion's Paw"(752)
Week 4
2/6
Stephen Crane "The Open Boat" (1000)
American Literature between the Wars, 1914-1945 (1177-1191)
Poetry Analysis (SG 24 - 28)
Edwin Arlington Robinson, "Richard Cory," (1211)
CRP Assignment (CRP = Creative Research Paper)

Week 5
2/13
Edwin Arlington Robinson, "Miniver Cheevy," (1211)
Robert Frost "Death of the Hired Man" (1391)
Literature and Short Story Analysis (SG 1-22)
Raymond Carver "Cathedral" (2828)
CRP Novel Title and Research Notebook Due (book readers only)

Week 6
2/20
No Class
Presidents' Day

Week 7
2/27
Exam: American Dream and Identity

Week 8
3/5
CRP Text Title and Research Notebook Due (Texts from syllabus readers)
Theme: Emancipations: African-American
Langston Hughes "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," (2026) "I, Too," (2028) "Song for a Dark Girl," (1927), Freedom" (2034)
Countee Cullen "Yet Do I Marvel," "Incident" (2061)
Ralph Ellison "Battle Royal" (2304)

Optional background reading:
Booker T. Washington "Atlanta Exposition Address" (680)
W.E.B. DuBois "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" (901)

3/12
Spring Break!!!!!
No Class
Week 9
3/19
CRP Prospectus Due for all
Toni Morrison "Recitatif" (2685)
**Theme Emancipations: Women**
Susan Glaspell *Trifles* (1412)

Week 10
3/26
CRP Outline, Works Cited and Draft of Cover Letter Due
Katherine Anne Porter "Flowering Judas" (1690)
Adrienne Rich "Storm Warnings" (Handout) and "Diving into the Wreck" (2656)

Week 11
4/2
**CRP: Formal Creative Research Paper and all Support Material Due**
**Theme Emancipations: Native Americans**
Cochise "I am alone" (383)
Charlot "He has filled graves with our bones" (385)
Wounded Knee (handout)
Leslie Marmon Silko "Lullaby" (3082)
Sherman Alexie, “Do Not Go Gentle” (3245)

Week 12
4/9
Exam: Emancipations

Week 13
4/16
**Theme: Families**
Arthur Miller *Death of a Salesman* (2325)

Week 14
4/23
Helena Maria Viramontes "The Moths" (handout)
Silvia Plath "Daddy" (2704)
Cathy Song "The White Porch" (3191)
Allen Ginsberg, “A Supermarket in California” (2584)

Week 15
4/30
Tennessee Williams *The Streetcar Named Desire* (2184)
Week 16
5/7
Monday: Final: Families

Instructional Methods:
To fulfill my personal goal of making you the best reader and thinker about imaginative works of American Literature that I can in 16 weeks, you will experience a variety of instructional methods. Although class discussions about literary texts will dominate class time, you will also be involved in collaborative activities, including group work and projects.

CORE Curriculum Competencies:
This course is a required part of the HCC CORE Curriculum and transfers to other Texas colleges and universities. As such, it stresses the HCC CORE Competencies of reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and computer literacy. The Student Learning Outcomes listed above directly address these.

Minimum Writing Requirement:
To be good on a computer, one must spend many hours on it. To be a good short stop, one has to field endless amounts of grounders. To be a good reader and writer, one must . . . . As in any other skill, practice advances mastery: 5,000 words minimum.

Student Assignments:
This class begins with a steep learning curve, and then levels off, so students can gain mastery of the skills taught. Consequently, students should strive to not miss any classes, especially those at the beginning of the semester. Each assignment builds upon the next so that by the end of the semester, the attentive student will know how to effectively analyze fiction, poetry, drama and creative non-fiction, and understand their cultural and historical context. To demonstrate this, students will take three exams and write a creative research paper. The creative research paper allows students the opportunity to delve deeply into a literary text and illustrate their mastery of literary elements by creating different genres associated with the text. It will also demand thoughtful research and the proper citation of sources and application of MLA style.

Assignments include:
- *American Dream and Identity*: the first thematic exam covers texts relating to the American Dream and Identity and includes identifying authors, titles, and the significance of representative quotations from the pieces studied and discussed in class. Works by Samuel Clemens, Hamlin Garland, Stephen Crane, Edward Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, and Raymond Carver will be covered.
• *Emancipations:* the second thematic exam will explore readings associated with African-American, Native-American, and Women writers in their separate quests for emancipation. As in the first exam, this one will also challenge students to identify authors, titles, and the significance of representative quotations from the pieces studied and discussed in class. Works by Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Katherine Anne Porter, Adrienne Rich, Leslie Marmon Silko, Sherman Alexie, and others will be featured.

• *Families:* the final thematic exam will focus on a shorter list of poems, short stories, and two plays dealing with family issues. It will be organized just like the first two exams and will stress the works of Arthur Miller, Helena Maria Viramontes, Silvia Plath, Cathy Song, Allen Ginsberg, and Tennessee Williams.

• *Creative Research Paper:* Students will either read a book from a list provided or choose to work with one of the texts in the syllabus to create a paper that poses a question not answered in the text and answers it. The answer will be proven through research and imagination.

• *Quizzes, In-class Exercises, Class Participation:* To ensure students read the texts assigned weekly, reflect on them, participate in class discussions, and have a higher chance of success, quizzes will be given at the start of each session. They will cover the content of the works assigned for that week (see Calendar). The two lowest quiz grades will not be included in the final assessment.

**Student Assessments**
- First Thematic Exam 22.2%
- Second Thematic Exam 22.2%
- Final Thematic Exam 22.2%
- Literary Analysis: Creative Research Paper 22.2%
- Class Participation, Quizzes and Homework 11.2%

**Where to Find Copies of the Calendar, Specific Assignments, and Written Support for this Class:**
On the elearning site noted above, this syllabus and calendar, assignments, handouts, and other materials concerning English are available to read, download and/or print.

**Instructor Requirements:**
- *Submission of materials.* As in any activity, like basketball, for example, writing follows certain rules so that audience and participants know what to do and what to expect.
• In-class exams must be written on blue books. Unless told otherwise, students with less than perfect handwriting will skip every other line and write with pen or a dark led pencil.

• The Creative Research Paper (CRP) is to be turned in at the beginning of the class period on which it is due: first 20 minutes. Papers and other work will be penalized one letter grade (10 points) after the beginning of class when due and every calendar day they are late up to three days. After that a paper is no longer accepted. Make-up of in-class exams follows the same criteria.

• Electronics in the classroom: As a student active in the learning community of this course, it is your responsibility to be respectful of the learning atmosphere in your classroom. To show respect of your fellow students and instructor, you will turn off your phone and other electronic devices and will not use these devices in the classroom unless you receive permission from the instructor. If such a device sounds or is used during class, it will be considered a disruption of the educational process (such as other forms of inappropriate behavior) and the student may be asked to leave for the rest of the class period. If a student expects an emergency call, he or she must speak to the instructor to receive an exception to this policy.

HCC Grading Scale:

- A = 100 - 90  
  4 points per semester hour
- B = 89 - 80:  
  3 points per semester hour
- C = 79 - 70:  
  2 points per semester hour
- D = 69 - 60:  
  1 point per semester hour
- 59 and below = F  
  0 points per semester hour
- IP (In Progress)  
  0 points per semester hour
- W (Withdrawn)  
  0 points per semester hour
- I (Incomplete)  
  0 points per semester hour
- AUD (Audit)  
  0 points per semester hour

IP (In Progress) is given only in certain developmental courses. The student must re-enroll to receive credit. COM (Completed) is given in non-credit and continuing education courses. To compute grade point average
(GPA), divide the total grade points by the total number of semester hours attempted. The grades "IP," "COM" and "I" do not affect GPA.

Instructor Grading Criteria

- Exams:
  - The three exams will follow the same criteria. They are essay in format and give students the opportunity to show they know the names and works of major writers studied, their intentions in specific literary contexts, and the interconnectedness of their works. They also will demonstrate a working knowledge of literary genres and periods.
  - They require students to respond to at least seven of the literary quotes offered on the exam citing words and phrases from the quotes as evidence. Each response is worth 14 points: 2 points for the author’s full name, 2 points for the work’s full title, and up to 10 points for the analytic response.

- The Creative Research Paper:
  - This paper provides students with a vehicle to show their ability to creatively manipulate language and practice critical analysis in a literary context. The grade will be awarded holistically based on the creativity, research, analysis, and writing demonstrated as well as the use of MLA standards and the use of grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, word usage, tone, and mechanics.

HCC Policy Statements:

- **Discipline:** As your instructor and as a student in this class, our shared responsibility is to develop and maintain a positive learning environment for everyone. I take this responsibility seriously and will inform members of the class if their behavior makes it difficult for me to carry out this task. As a fellow learner, you are asked to respect the learning needs of your classmates and to assist me achieve this critical goal.

- **Academic Honesty:** A student who is academically dishonest is, by definition, not showing that the coursework has been learned, and that student is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student’s individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcing roles. You are expected to be familiar with the HCC’s policy on Academic Honesty found in the catalogue. What that means is that if you are charged with an offense, pleading ignorance of the rules will not help you.
Just so there is no misunderstanding, plagiarism (using another’s ideas or words without giving credit), Collusion (unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit), and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. To be accepted, all papers require proof of their development. Students who plagiarize, collude, or cheat may face disciplinary action including the grade of 0 for the assignment, an F for the course, and/or dismissal from the college. For more on plagiarism, see "Plagiarism" in The New McGraw-Hill Handbook, second edition.

- **Special Needs**: Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty is authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office. For questions, please contact Donna Price at 713.718.5165 or the Disability Counselor at your college. To visit the ADA Web site, please visit www.hccs.edu then click Future students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information.

Northwest ADA Counselor – Mahnaz Kolaini – 713.718.5422

- **Missing Class**: If absent or late to a class, the student is responsible for any information missed. Each student should exchange emails or phone numbers with at least three other students. After an absence, students are to find out what they missed before returning to class. Do not ask the instructor if you missed anything important. If students come in tardy, it is their responsibility to find out what they missed and to make sure, after class, that their attendance has been recorded; otherwise, they will be considered absent.

- **Attendance/Withdrawals**: You should understand that your in-class grade will suffer as a result of absences, and of course, your ability to do the work required in the course will also be impaired and grades on that work will naturally be lower. If a student misses more than 6 hours of class, excused or non-excused absences, the student may be dropped from the course. Three tardies equal one absence. Leaving early is the same as a tardy. If students stop attending the class, it is their responsibility to formally withdraw.

  - If you feel that you cannot complete this course, you will need to withdraw from the course prior to the final date for withdrawal. Before you withdraw from the course, please take the time to meet with me to discuss why you feel it is necessary to do so. I may be able to provide you with suggestions to enable you to complete the course. Your success is important.
o If you wish to withdraw, obtain the withdrawal form from Student Services and submit it in the registration office or do so online. However, before you withdraw from any class, please consider the following carefully:

o The State of Texas imposes penalties on students who drop courses excessively. For example, if you take the same course more than two times, you have to pay extra tuition. In 2007, the Texas Legislature passed a law limiting new students (those starting college in Fall 2007) to no more than six total course withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree. There may be future penalties imposed.

o In consideration of the above law, I will not give a “W” unless you request it of me before the drop date. It is up to the student to fill out the paperwork and submit it. If you stop coming to class, I will submit the grade earned by adding up your grades to date. If you have less than a “D” average, you will receive an Fx, which means you stopped attending the class and did not earn a passing grade before doing so.

o International Students: Receiving a W or an Fx in a course may affect the status of your student Visa. Once a W is given for the course (after you have submitted a withdrawal form formally), it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8520 if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

• **Last day for Administrative /Student Withdrawals:**
  Thursday, March 29, 4:30 p.m.

• **EGLS3 -- Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System**
  At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.
HCC Student Services

Information:
Student Services provides master’s and doctoral-level counseling for the Northwest College student body. Counselors are available at each campus to assist students in creating class schedules, evaluating college transcripts, and completing degree/certificate plans.

Student Services Locations and Hours:

- Katy Campus, Suite 104, 713-718-5751
  - 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. M – Th
  - 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. F
- Spring Branch Campus, 713-718-5669
  - 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. M – Th
  - 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. F

Additional Information:
http://northwest.hccs.edu/northwest/campus-services

Early Alert: HCC has instituted an Early Alert process by which your professor will “alert” you through counselors of concerns that you might fail a class because of excessive absences and/or poor academic performance.