

MEDAILLE COLLEGE
AGASSIZ CIRCLE
BUFFALO, NEW YORK

COURSE OUTLINE

Program: Humanities
Course Number: ENG 325
Course Title: American Literature: Colonial to the Civil War
Number of Credits: 3
Prerequisites: Any 200-level Literature Course

A. Catalog Description of Course:

An intensive critical study of American literature beginning with texts of the New World exploration and settlement up until the Civil War, inclusive of Native American oral literature. Emphasis in the course is on both individual works and literary/historical traditions.

B. Goals:

- To give students familiarity with the various literatures and interests which brought this literature into being in the centuries immediately preceding and immediately following the birth of the United States, including Native oral literature.
- To acquaint students with the major aspects of American history during this period, including European settlement, slavery, the movement from colonies to nationhood, and the tensions which resulted in Civil War, as expressed in American literature.
- To develop student appreciation and familiarity both with the canon of American literature of this period and with non-canonical figures and aspects.
- To give students practice and training in literary analysis and in speaking and writing about literature.
- To draw connections between the early literature of the American continent and aspects of our present national identity.

C. Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the major periods, traditions, features, and important figures of Colonial and early American literature, including Native oral literature.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the influence of historical developments in pre-America and early America on the literature of these periods and on contemporary American culture.

- Write and speak clearly on topics pertaining to these studies.
- Show ability to analyze American literary texts and employ and recognize literary terms and features in these texts.
- Recognize both canonical and non-canonical aspects of these periods in American literary history.

D. Outline of Course Content:

- I. Native American Orature
- II. Puritans: Founding Texts (Bradford, Winthrop) and Poetry (Bradstreet, etc.)
- III. Federalist Literature (Franklin, etc.)
- IV. The Literature of Slavery: Abolitionist Writings & Slave Narrative (Douglass, Jacobs)
- V. The American Renaissance (may include any or all: Emerson, Hawthorne, Melville, Poe, Whitman, Stowe, Dickinson) and Antebellum Period

E. Suggested Texts:

Bradley, Sculley, ed. et al. The American Tradition in Literature. 7th ed. New York: Norton, 1989.

Mc Michael, George. Anthology of American Literature. 4th ed. New York: Macmillan, 1989.

Miller, Perry, ed. Major Writers of America. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1962.

Paperbacks of individual authors/works

F. Suggested Modes, Media, and Techniques of Instruction:

library resources for secondary material

Videos - American Literature
 American Short Story
 Voices and Visions (American poetry)

G. Instructor References:

Bank, Stanley, ed. American Romanticism: A Shape for Fiction. New York: Capricorn Books, 1969.

Beidler, Philip C. American Literature and the Experience of Vietnam. University of Georgia Press, 1982.

- Blair, Walter et al., eds. American Literature; a Brief History. 1964.
- Cowie, Alexander. The Rise of the American Novel. 1948.
- Etulain, Richard W. American Literary West. Sunflower Univ. Press, 1980.
- Fiedler, Leslie. Love and Death in the American Novel. New York: Criterion Books, 1962.
- Foerster, Norman. American Criticism; a Story in Literary Theory from Poe to the President. 1962.
- Gray, Richard. American Fiction: New Readings. Imports, 1983.
- Hoffman, Daniel G. Form and Fable in American Fiction. New York: Oxford University Press, 1961.
- Hughes, Richard. The Lively Image: Four Myths in Literature. 1975.
- Kartiganer, Donald. Theories of American Literature. 1972.
- Levin, Harry. The Power of Blackness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville. New York: Knopf, 1958.
- Martin, Ronald. American Literature and the Understanding of Force. Duke University Press, 1983.
- Matthiessen, F.O. American Renaissance. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.
- Morse, David. American Romanticism. Imports, 1986.
- Richards, R.F., ed. Concise Dictionary of American Literature. 1955.
- Scherman, David E. & Redlich, Rosemarie. Literary America: A Chronicle of American Writer:
1607-1952. Greenwood, 1978.
- Trend, W.P., et al., ed. Cambridge History of American Literature; 3 vols. 1954.
- White, Michael C. & Davis, Alan. American Fiction 87. Wesley Press, 1987.
- Wilson, Edmund, ed. The Shock of Recognition. New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1955.