American Literature—political, popular, and literary—reflects an inherent contradiction between individualism and community, self and others, freedom and fairness. This American Literature course provides a survey of American literature (since 1870) that will allow us to explore how these themes of independence and inclusion, equality and exclusion (have) shape(d) America and American Literature. We will explore how Americans balance and represent the conflicting demands of self and society, particularly with respect to flashpoints such as race, class, gender, the environment, and a whole host of other messy, contemporary American concerns. We will focus on texts that highlight the central tension in American politics and literature between ideas of rugged individualism and the national unity, E pluribus unum, that was represented on the official U.S. Seal until 1956. In considering elements that have affected these shifting, fluid tensions between the self and society, our course material will include the emerging, historical themes of disillusionment, fragmentation, technological advances, a mistrust of authority, and the development of uniquely American regional and environmental literatures and a host of literatures that diversified and expanded the canon.

Important goals of the class include introducing students to the pleasures of exploring literary texts and reinforcing their skills in literary analysis and research. The course’s pedagogy gives special attention to critical thinking and writing as a means of putting students in a continual process of interpreting, confronting, discovering, and discussing human experience within its cultural/historical context. Upon completion of this course, students will have gained a broader knowledge some of the most significant literary masterpieces from these united states, and this semester, we will wind our way through the literary landscape of the short story by following one thread...

Identity.
General Policies for Students in Undergraduate English Courses

General policies for learners in College Writing I are determined at the department level. Our online Blackboard content includes a link in the left-hand menu to “University Policies,” and you will find a link there to these general policies, including classroom behavior, plagiarism, absences, and disability services information.

Regular and punctual class attendance is required of all students, and poor attendance may prevent students from earning a passing grade in the course for the semester. Important highlights:

- **5 absences are allowed in a T-Th class**
- **Religious Holidays:** Tell me within 15 days

The following actions may also result in a student being counted as officially absent:

- Coming to class without an adequate draft on a day when a draft is due (for peer response or for an assignment)
- Showing up to class more than 10 minutes late
- Failing to attend a mandatory scheduled conference with the instructor

More Specifics for Learners in American Lit II

**Course Communication**
Most communication for this course will take place online. **It is the responsibility of the student to regularly check email and the announcements in Blackboard.** Find out what email your Blackboard is linked to.

**Inquiry Project Notebook**
**Weekly, informal essay assignments** are due each Tuesday and are graded non-judgmentally (~1 typed page). I will provide you with a focus or perspective each week. Please refer to the instructions posted in Blackboard as often as necessary.

I will sometimes refer to these as “Think” Writings. This is NOT a book report or summary; rather, the purpose is to make connections with other texts, draw attention to bias or contradiction in the text, and/or recognize the broader implications of the information presented. “Think” writings should demonstrate serious thought or reflection on form and/or content of readings.

**Services Available for Additional Help**

- **The UNT Writing Lab:** Qualified tutors will work with you one-on-one to improve your writing and overall performance on a given assignment, either in person or via electronic submission. SAGE 152/ 940-565-2563.
- **The UIT Helpdesk:** For all technology issues! SAGE 130/ 940-565-2324/ helpdesk@unt.edu
- **The UNT Library/Librarians:** an excellent source for all research needs. www.library.unt.edu/ask-us
- **My office hours:** I am available both in person and always by email. Please find opportunities to engage.

**Essays and Compositions**
All essays/compositions need to be typed and submitted through the correct online Turnitin dropbox on Blackboard on the assigned due date by 11:59 p.m. For all essays, include your header—the name and the page number on the top right of each page (i.e. : Lastname 1). Please also include a heading with the date and the course number and section (i.e. ENGL 3430.002). There is no need to put your name in the heading. Use a text font for all essays (Times Roman or Garamond for example) at 12 points, with all one-inch (1”) margins, and double-spacing. Ask me if you need to see an example.

I do not accept papers late. Please contact me immediately if something may prevent you from submitting an assignment.

**Attendance**
Attendance will be taken by means of quizzes and exercises completed or submitted at the beginning of any given class period. Reading quizzes will be based on the day's assignment. **You May Use Your Notes.** These quizzes will range from the simple, short responses to more involved short essay responses. I will not give make-up assignments, but I will drop your lowest grade in this category.

**Exams**
Exams will vary with respect to formatting, but are generally a mix of short answer, matching, true/false, etc. They are just as likely to cover in-class discussion topics as they are to cover course readings.
TROUBLESHOOTING/FAQ:

What if I need to drop the course?

Contact your instructor first. Many learners are surprised to find that they can still pass the course if they can locate the right help/services. Also, the State of Texas has a “Six Drop Rule,” which only allows students to drop a maximum of six courses during their undergraduate academic career, so consider your options carefully before deciding to drop a course.

It is the learner’s responsibility to drop the course if he/she plans to discontinue the coursework. Speak with your instructor to get and complete the required forms in accordance with published university deadlines. If you remain on the class roster and have not completed the coursework, you will receive an “F.”

How can I keep up with my work?

Some learners misjudge the nature of the investment required to complete university-level coursework. Do your best to avoid this mistake. Get involved from day one:

- Add assignment due dates to a calendar you use often
- Make a schedule and complete work EARLY to allow time for feedback and revisions
- Talk to your instructor and classmates often

What if I fall behind in my work? or I’m unhappy with my grades?

Contact your instructor as soon as you are concerned. This will increase the likelihood of a positive outcome. S/he will help you honestly assess your situation and consider the options. You might also:

- Reread “suggestions for success” on this syllabus, Pg1.
- Speak with your classmates—you will find that peers can offer great advice. Writing is not a solitary activity.
- Go to the UNT Writing Lab—having a qualified tutor look over your work (FOR FREE) before submitting assignments can be an excellent way to improve your grades.

What if Turitin isn’t working?

Difficulty submitting through Turnitin will NOT BE CONSIDERED AS AN ACCEPTABLE REASON for not completing course activities according to the schedule. In the event that you find yourself in this situation, please EMAIL me directly, and attach a copy of your completed assignment to that email. This will allow us both to deal with the Turnitin issue with no concern about whether the assignment was completed on time.

What if my computer crashes?

Not having a working computer or a crashed computer will NOT BE CONSIDERED AS AN ACCEPTABLE REASON for not completing course activities according to the schedule. It is the responsibility of the learner to identify in advance a second computer that can be used in the event that your computer crashes. Computers are available for public use at libraries, the university, internet cafes, and any FedEx location, among others. Regularly backup your work to a memory stick, free Dropbox account, or other online tool so that it is not lost.

What if Blackboard is down?

Blackboard is down weekly for routine maintenance. Please be aware of this weekly outage so that you do not unintentionally put off an assignment, expecting to access the system at that time. In the event that Blackboard experiences an unforeseen outage that threatens to disrupt coursework or a scheduled due date, I will post an announcement detailing what changes, if any, have been made to the requirements and deadlines.

What if I submit something and it disappears into cyberspace?

It is the learner’s responsibility to keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external memory drive and/or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure or any contradictions/problems, I may request that you resubmit the files. In other words, if I do not receive a file or it is corrupted when I open it, it is incumbent upon you to resend it to me with little or no “downtime” or wait.

What if I am having trouble with technology?

If you experience technological problems of any kind during the semester, don’t wait until you are hopelessly behind to seek help. Particularly if this is the first time that you are taking a university course with an online component, don’t wait until the last minute to submit your assignments.

If you are still experiencing problems, contact the student Helpdesk: Helpdesk@unt.edu/SAGE 130/940-565-2324. There is more information in greater detail on Blackboard.
Final Reminders and Notes:
Failure to complete any of the three major essays or either exam will result in failure of this course. Note the due dates of all essays and the dates of all exams.
As you can see from the syllabus, this course features a fairly heavy reading load. Plan ahead to complete the readings and course assignments. Annotating your readings and/or keeping reading notes in a notebook is helpful. You are responsible for all material covered.

Course Schedule:
Schedule is provisional and may change; I reserve the right to add supplemental essays or make additional changes as needed. All assignments are due on the class period listed below.

All readings come from the Norton or will be provided to you for free as handouts. The first page number of the selection is provided for you. I strongly recommend that students, especially those majoring in Literature or Creative Writing, read the background information on all authors.

Week 1 (Jan 17, Jan 19)
- Introduction to policies, instructor, and course plan
- In-class Writing
- Class discussion: what is literature? Why does it matter? Where do we begin?

- Romanticism
  - Class Discussion: Critical Reading Strategies
  - Whitman, “When Lilacs Last...” (78+)
  - Dickinson: #479, #591, #1263, #1773

Week 2 (Jan 24, Jan 26)
- Realism/Regionalism
  - Class discussion: Literature as Experience
  - Huck Finn, through Chapter XV
  - Huck Finn, through Chapter XXIII

Week 3 (Jan 31, Feb 2)
- Realism/Regionalism
  - Class discussion: Literature as Representation
  - Huck Finn, through Chapter XXXIV
  - Huck Finn, through the end

Week 4 (Feb 7, Feb 9)
- Critical Controversy: Huck Finn
  - All essay excerpts (303-18)

- Essay 1 Due

Week 5 (Feb 14, Feb 16)
- Becoming American in the Gilded Age
  - All essay selections (1157+)
  - Sinclair, “The Jungle” (1148+)

Week 6 (Feb 21, Feb 23)
- The American Dream? Choose One.
  - Crane, “Maggie, Girl of the Streets” (1002+)
  - Cahan, “Yekl: A Tale of the New York Ghetto” (785+)
  - BOTH: Martí, “Our America” (691) + Zitkala Sa, ALL selections (1124+)

Week 7 (Feb 28, Mar 2)
- Contradictions within Communities
  - Washington, “Up from Slavery” (701+)
  - Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk” (920+)
Week 8 (Mar 7, Mar 9—Midterm)
• MADNESS AND THE MOVE TO MODERNITY
  • Gilman's “Yellow Wallpaper” (844+)
  • Midterm Exam (1870 – 1914)

Spring Break (Mar 13-17)

Week 9 (Mar 21, Mar 23)
• MODERNISM: WHO AM I NOW?
  • Poetry, Selections TBD
  • Essay 2 Due

Week 10 (Mar 28, Mar 30)
• SOUTHERN GOTHIC
  • Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” (SS)
  • O’Connor, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (449)

Week 11 (Apr 4, Apr 6)
• MODERNISM AND THEATER
  • O’Neill, A Long Day’s Journey into Night (389)

Week 12 (Apr 11, Apr 13)
• SCIENCE/SPECULATIVE FICTION: WHO MIGHT WE BE?
  • Jackson, “The Lottery” (handout)
  • LeGuin, “The One Who Walk Away from Omelas”
    (handout)

Week 13 (Apr 18, Apr 20)
• POLITICS, SUFFERING, & THE ROLE OF ART
  • Ellison, from Invisible Man
  • Baldwin, “Going to Meet the Man” (Tale)

Week 14 (Apr 25, Apr 27)
• EXPLORATIONS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY & SPACES
  • Walker, “Everyday Use” (913+)
  • Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek” (1101+)

Week 15 (May 2, May 4)
• POSTMODERNISM
  • Poetry Selections: Lee, Ginsberg+ (TBD)
  • Essay 3: Research Essay Due

Week 16 (Tuesday, May 11)
• Final Exam, 8:00a – 10:00a

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