

American Literature & Culture

Last Updated: Sat, 08/02/2025

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 3511

Section: B

CRN (you may add up to five):

94482

Instructor First Name: Randall

Instructor Last Name: Harrell

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

Introduces students to American literature and culture broadly construed, examining foundational works of critical and historical significance.

Course learning outcomes:

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Analyze** a diverse range of American literary texts from Indigenous oral traditions to contemporary works, recognizing the historical, cultural, and artistic contexts that shape them.
2. **Demonstrate** critical reading and close analysis skills through written essays and discussions focused on language, form, symbolism, and thematic content.
3. **Identify and explain** key American literary movements and their influence on cultural and artistic expression across different historical periods.
4. **Conduct** research that situates literary texts within broader cultural, social, and historical frameworks, culminating in a multimodal collaborative project.
5. **Communicate** literary and cultural analysis effectively in written, oral, and digital formats, using appropriate academic conventions.
6. **Engage** thoughtfully and respectfully in class discussions and peer collaboration, demonstrating awareness of diverse perspectives and inclusive approaches to American literature.

Required course materials:

Required Course Materials

Primary Anthology (Required):

The Broadview Anthology of American Literature: Concise Volume

General Editors: Derrick R. Spires, Sandra M. Gustafson, and Sarah E. Rigo

ISBN: 9781554815727 (print) / eISBN: 9781554815734 (digital)

This single-volume edition offers a rich, inclusive, and critically engaging selection of American literature from Indigenous oral traditions to the twenty-first century. It features a diverse array of authors and integrates cultural and historical documents alongside literary texts. The anthology is designed for classroom use, with extensive introductions, footnotes, and contextual materials that support close reading and historical engagement.

Supplementary Contemporary Poetry Anthology:

The Best of Write Bloody Anthology

Edited by Derrick Brown

ISBN: 9781946218003 (print)

Published by Write Bloody Publishing

This anthology showcases a vibrant collection of contemporary spoken word and performance poetry from leading voices like Clint Smith, Andrea Gibson, and Sarah Kay. It features poems alongside tour stories, photographs, and cultural context that highlight the dynamic intersections of poetry, identity, and performance in 21st-century American culture. This text complements the historical literary works by engaging students with current poetic forms and social themes.

Supplementary Readings (provided via Canvas):

- Critical essays, cultural texts, or multimedia (film clips, images, recordings) will be assigned to supplement the anthology and support major assignments.

Grading policy:

Grading Policy (Points-Based, 100 Total)

- Weekly Reading Responses (5 x 5 pts) – 25 pts
- Midterm Literary Movements Exam (take-home essay) – 20 pts
- Close Reading Essay (4-5 pages) – 20 pts
- Final Collaborative Project and Presentation (Multimodal) – 25 pts
- Participation and Attendance – 10 pts

Attendance policy:

Attendance Policy

Attendance is essential. You may miss up to three classes without penalty. Each absence beyond that will result in a 1-point deduction from your final grade. If you experience illness

or emergency, communicate promptly to make arrangements. I reserve the right to determine what constitutes any extenuating circumstance.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts in English or other languages, or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence