Course Description
This 11th grade course in American Literature is designed to be a college/university level course embedded with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical undergraduate university English Literature/ Humanities course. In this course students will read a wide variety of in-depth texts, drawing upon an array of multiple genres and periods—from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century. As a culmination of the course, students will write a 6-10 Literary Research paper on one of the readings in class.

The purpose of this class is to raise reading and critical thinking skills, and writing and speaking skills. Students will write analytical, personal, creative, and MLA style research papers. Most of the learning is on the learner, and as such, is conducted as a seminar. Class participation is essential because the exchange with classmates will be the means to “decode” this literature. The teacher is the facilitator of these discussions, not the director.

Grading Scale:
98-100= A+
94-97= A
90-93 = A-
88-89 = B+
84-87 = B
80-83 = B-
78-79 = C+
74-77 = C
70-73 = C-
68-69= D+
64-67= D
60-63 = D-

Students are graded in three areas: writing, speaking, class participation, and tests/quizzes. There is no extra credit in this class.
Focus Standards:

Reading Comprehension
2.5 Analyze an author’s implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject

Literary Response and Analysis
3.1 Analyze characteristics of subgenres (e.g. satire, parody, allegory, pastoral) that are used in poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories, essays, and other basic genres.
3.2 Analyze the way in which the theme or meaning of a selection represents a view or comment on life, using textual evidence to support the claim.
3.4 Analyze ways in which poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds to evoke readers’ emotions.
3.6 Analyze the way in which authors throughout the centuries have used archetypes drawn from myth and tradition in literature, film, etc.

Literary Criticism
3.8 Analyze the clarity and consistency of political assumptions in a selection of literary works.
3.9 Analyze the philosophical arguments presented in literary works to determine whether authors’ positions have contributed to the quality of each work and the credibility of the characters.

Writing Strategies
1.2 Use point of view, characterization, style, and related elements for specific rhetorical and aesthetic purposes.
1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way and support them precise and relevant examples.
1.5 Use language in a fresh and natural way.
1.6 Develop presentations by using clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies
1.7 Use systematic strategies to organize and record information
1.8 Revise text to highlight the individual voice, improve sentence variety and style, and enhance subtlety of meaning and tone in ways that are consistent with purpose, audience and genre.

Writing Applications
2.2d Demonstrate an understanding of an author’s use of stylistic devices and an appreciation of the effects created.

Written and Oral English-Language Conventions
1.0 Write and Speak with a command of standard-English conventions.

Listening and Speaking
2.4 Deliver oral responses to literature
2.5 Recite poems, selections from speeches, or dramatic soliloquies with attention to performance details to achieve clarity, force, and aesthetic effect and to demonstrate an understanding of the meaning.

Textbooks, Reading and Teaching Materials
Dickenson, Emily. Selected Poems.
Ellison, Ralph. Invisible Man.
Miller, Arthur. The Crucible
Steinbeck, John. Of Mice or Men
Woolf, Virginia. A Room of One’s Own.
McDougal Littell, The Language of Literature
Fall Semester


*Looking at Creation Myth and Folktale*
- Iroquois, “The World on the Turtle’s Back”
- Silko, “The Man to Send Rain Clouds”
- Momaday, from *The Way to Rainy Mountain*

*Students compare style, subject, or theme between the three texts*

Week 3: Accounts of Exploration and Exploitation: First Encounters

- Nunez, from *La Relacion*
- Polo, “The Travels of Marco Polo”
- Bradford, from *Of Plymouth Plantation/ Women and Children First*

Weeks 4-7: From Colony to Country (1620-1800)

*Essential Questions:*
1. How does a collective fear affect the group or individuals?
2. Is hypocrisy a natural human flaw?
3. Why and how do religion, politics, and persecution interact?

*The Puritan Tradition*

*Students read and analyze the dramatic elements of Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible*, examining the text from an historical perspective, and making connections to current day issues like Terrorism and Illegal Immigration. Additionally, students will read Mary Rowlandson’s “Captivity Narrative” and Hawthorne’s “Young Goodman Brown.” Students particularly focus on point of view, characterization, and setting.*

Week 8: Writers in the Time of Revolution

- Jefferson, “The Declaration of Independence”
- Jean de Crevecoeur, “What is an American?”
- Martin Luther King, Jr.-from “Stride toward Freedom”
- Malcolm X, “Necessary to Protest Ourselves”
- Rodolfo Gonzalez, from “I am Joaquin”

Weeks 9-10: The Spirit of Individualism (1800-1855)

*Celebrations of Self*
- Whitman, “I Hear America Singing”
- Neruda, “Ode to Walt Whitman”

*The Dark Side of Individualism*
- “The Mask of the Red Death”
- Poe, “The Raven”
- Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily”
O’Connor, “Save May be Your Own”

*I*Irony

**Weeks 11-12: Conflict and Expansion (1850-1900)**
Morrison, “Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination”
Douglass, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*
Excerpts from *Ralph Ellison’s “Invisible Man”*
Excerpts from *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*

**Weeks 13-14: The Great Depression (1920s to 1940s)**
*Essential Questions:* 1. As a society, what is our responsibility to people whose circumstances are beyond their control? 2. What happens if our dreams are never realized?

A Psychoanalytical Perspective

Steinbeck, “Of Mice or Men”
Excerpts from *Grapes of Wrath*

**Weeks 15-16: Alienation of the Individual**
Plath, “Mirror”
Sexton, “Self in 1958”
T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock”
Woolf, chapters 1-2 of *A Room of One’s Own*

**Final project:** Literary Research Paper – Adhering to MLA format, students will write a 6-10 double-spaced research paper (that is persuasive in focus) on a poem, short fiction, novel, or play already studied in class. Each paper must be original in selection, evaluation, analysis, expression, and conclusion. As part of their research, students will be asked to prepare an annotated bibliography and a final outline before starting their rough drafts. All final drafts will be peer edited by two classmates before being submitted.