Purpose and Outcomes: The purpose of this course is to read the most important authors of American literature from Walt Whitman to the present. Historical background and biography will be used to help analyze the works studied, but the emphasis remains on the literary texts themselves. Poetry, drama, and fiction form the principle subjects for study and literary analysis through form, plot, character, structure, theme, point of view, imagery, symbol, and irony. Careful attention will also be given to language and style, as developed by individual authors like Emily Dickinson and Mark Twain. Since this is a reading course, the student should gain a greater appreciation and knowledge of the nature of literature, its creative impulse and expression, especially as literature changes from the late 19th century and into the 20th and 21st centuries. The present use and abuse of the American literary tradition will be discussed in class.

Obligations: Students are expected to attend all classes, to be on time and to be prepared by reading the assigned texts for each class. They will be asked to discuss their readings and to write a weekly quiz essay in class on the assignments. They will also write a short five-page research paper on one of the authors studied in the course. There will be two major exams, at mid-term and at the end of the semester.

Grade: The final grade will be based of weekly quizzes (30%), the research paper (10%), mid-term (30%) and final (30%). Any unexplained absences will result in a lower final grade. Three consecutive unexcused absences will be reported to the departmental chair and Dean of Students. The grading policy of the Arts and Letters Division is attached.


Outline:
January 22  Introduction 1-9
    24, 26  Whitman 10-68 QUIZ
    29, 31  Dickinson 68-96, Crosscurrents 109-121 QUIZ
February 2  Twain 144-151, 155-161, 172-219
    5,7,9  Twain 219-344 QUIZ
    12  Twain 344-377
    13  Howells 380-400
    14, 16  James 400-443 QUIZ
    19  James 443-459
    21  James 459-501
    23  Harte 502-509, Introduction 537-542, Adams 543-552QUIZ
February 26  Jewett 554-560, Wharton 708-710, 71
    28  Crane 747-752, 793-809
March 2  Dreiser 809-823 QUIZ
    5  MID-TERM EXAM
    7  Introduction 835-840, Robinson 841-853
    9  Frost 898-928 QUIZ
   19  Anderson 932-940, Crosscurrents 952-960
   21  Pound 961-980
   23  Eliot 980-1014 QUIZ
   26  Stevens 1029-1044
   28  Williams 1044-1057, Tate 1074-1077
   30  Moore 1057-1068, Ransom 1068-1074 QUIZ
April 2  Crane 1077-1090, Introduction 1091-1099
    4  O'Neill 1100-1132
   11  MacLeish, Millay, Cummings, 1152-1172 QUIZ
   13  Crosscurrents 1173-1181, Hughes, Gordon, Fitzgerald 1189-1218
   16, 18  Faulkner 1234-1261, Introduction 1319-1329
   20  Hemingway 1261-1275 QUIZ
   23  Wolfe, Porter 1275-1290
   25  Steinbeck, Wright 1297-1314 RESEARCH PAPER
   27  Williams 1330-1376 QUIZ
   30  Roethke 1480-1488, Bishop 1488-1499, Lowell 1517-1529
May 2  Cheever, Ellison 1597-1617
    4  Baldwin 1623-1645 QUIZ
    7  FINAL EXAM

Office: Whittaker 201, hours posted  Phone: 569-3162  E-mail  cotter@msmc.edu
Weather alert: 569-3500

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DO NOT WRITE ON THIS SHEET.
BRING IT TO THE EXAM ON MAY 9, 8:00 PM, ROOM 305
Four (including no. 11) will be chosen by Dr. Cotter for the final examination.

1. Select three poems by Robert Frost, compare and contrast them for theme, imagery and content.
2. Discuss the poetry of Ezra Pound and his contribution to other poets.
3. Discuss the structure, imagery, and content of “The Waste Land.”
4. Select three poems by Wallace Stevens, compare and contrast them for theme, imagery and content.
5. Both “The Hairy Ape” and “The Glass Menagerie” employ nonrealistic methods in their presentations. Give examples of non-realism in both plays. What is the purpose of such a presentation?
6. Sherwood Anderson, Katherine Anne Porter, and John Steinbeck depict women in their stories. Compare and contrast their characterizations. What are they saying about American women?
7. Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and James Baldwin depict African-American in their stories. Compare and contrast their characterizations. What are they saying about American blacks?
8. William Faulkner, Caroline Gordon, and F. Scott Fitzgerald depict youngsters in their stories. Compare and contrast their characterizations. What are they saying about young American?
9. Select three poems by three women poets you have read this semester. Compare and contrasts the three poems for style, content, and imagery.
10. Select three poems by three male poets (not Frost, Pound, Eliot or Stevens). Compare and contrast the three poems for style, content, and imagery.
11. Briefly identify the following. You may substitute for half credit.