

Course Outline: Introduction to American Literature

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH | FALL/WINTER 2026-2027

Note for students: This short course outline is provided for planning purposes only. Course information is tentative and subject to change; the final course syllabus will be available by the first day of classes.

Course Code

AP/EN 2230 6.00 A (Y)

Course Description

This course introduces students to American literature from the first encounters between European and Indigenous peoples to the twenty-first century. Rather than attempting to cover every major author or movement, it explores a series of enduring questions that have shaped American culture and literary expression: Who belongs in America? What does freedom mean? How should individuals relate to communities, religions, governments, and nations? How have race, slavery, immigration, class, sexuality, and regional difference shaped American identities?

American writers have returned to these questions repeatedly, often arriving at strikingly different answers. Literature provides a record of the hopes, anxieties, conflicts, and aspirations that have accompanied the nation's development, while also challenging the assumptions and myths through which Americans have understood themselves.

Through close reading, discussion, and analytical writing, students will examine the competing stories through which Americans have imagined themselves, their communities, and their nation.

Course Delivery

Delivery Mode: BLEN

Lecture: Online (Asynchronous)

Tutorials:

TUTR01	Tuesday	14:30-15:20	DB 0004
TUTR02	Tuesday	15:30-16:20	DB 0004
TUTR03	Tuesday	14:30-15:20	VH 1154

Course Materials

Díaz, Junot. The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao. 2007. New York: Riverhead, 2008.
Approximate cost \$24.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. The Scarlet Letter. 1850. New York: Modern Library, 2000.
Approximate cost \$6.

Levine, Robert S., ed. The Norton Anthology of American Literature (Shorter 10th Edition). 2 vols. New York: Norton, 2017. Print or eBook version. Approximate cost \$95.

Nabokov, Vladimir. Lolita. 1955. New York: Vintage, 2010. Approximate cost \$24.

Williams, Tennessee. A Streetcar Named Desire. 1947. New York: Penguin, 2009. Approximate cost \$18.

Tentative Grade Breakdown and Deadlines

Assessment	Weight	Mode	Tentative Deadline
Essay 1 – Close Reading (5-6 pages)	10%	Take-home	November 13, 2026
Midterm Examination	15%	In-person	December 8, 2026
Essay 2 -Thematic Analysis (6-8 pages)	15%	Take-home	February 5, 2027
Essay 3 – Comparative Analysis (8-10 pages)	25%	Take-home	April 1, 2027
Final Examination	15%	In-person	Winter exam period (April 7-24, 2027 – TBA)
Tutorial Analytical Exercises	15%	In-person	Throughout the course
Informed Participation	5%	In-person	Throughout the course
	100%		

Additional Information

Category:	C
Historical Requirements:	N/A
Open To:	EN, CRWR, and ENPR – Year 2 and 3