

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

HUM 152 Cultures of America Sample Course Outline Panama Program

Course Description:

An introduction to the interdisciplinary study of the arts and humanities in contemporary American culture emphasizing the convergence of European, African, Hispanic, Asian and indigenous cultures as well as the distinguishing characteristics of each culture as revealed in such fields as literature, philosophy, religion and popular entertainment.

Course Goals:

The course is designed to help students: (1) recognize that social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical circumstances; (2) understand the ways in which race, ethnicity, and/or gender are socially constructed; (3) explore how different cultures may hold different views of the same issues; (4) and learn how evaluate to evaluate pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and completeness. The theme of the course will be based on the question posed by the eighteenth century French-American author J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur: "What is an American?" Throughout the semester we will explore a variety of texts, films, music and other media in American culture that represent an evolving dialogue on this question and examine the values and beliefs that have in the past and continue in the present to shape this most basic of civic debates.

Required Texts:

Baym, Nina [editor]. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Shorter Seventh Edition.

General Education Statement:

This course fulfills a General Education requirement in Humanities and is thus designed to enable students to:

1. Communicate an understanding of vocabulary, concepts, materials, techniques, and methods of intellectual inquiry within the arts and/or humanities.
2. Describe and evaluate texts using primary and secondary materials.
3. Analyze and synthesize texts, recognizing the diversity of cultures and historical contexts.

Cultural Diversity Statement:

This course fulfills a General Education requirement in Cultural Diversity (CD1) and is thus designed to enable students to:

1. Recognize that social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical circumstances.
2. Communicate an understanding of the ways in which race, ethnicity, and/or gender are socially constructed.
3. Communicate an understanding that different cultures may hold different views of the same issues.
4. Evaluate pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation, and completeness.

Reading Outline

Introduction; Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*; Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity"; Franklin, *The Autobiography* [pp. 283-292]; Film: *The Godfather*

Crèvecoeur, "Letter III. What Is an American?"; Jefferson, all selections from text + additional class hand-outs

Emerson, "The American Scholar" [in textbook] and "The Divinity School Address" [hand-out]; Film: *Last of the Mohicans*

William Apess, "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man"; "Memorial of the Cherokee Citizens, November 5, 1829"; Zitkala Sa, "Impressions of an Indian Childhood"; Leslie Marmon Silko, "Lullaby"

Phillis Wheatley, poems (419-429); Frederick Douglass (924-988); Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery* (1630-1638); W. E. B. Du Bois *The Souls of Black Folk* (1729-1744); Film: *Jazz*

Claude McKay, poems (2144-2047); Langston Hughes, poems (2265-2271); Countee Cullen, poems (2284-2287); Zora Neale Hurston "How It Feels to Be Colored Me" (2158-2161)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wall-paper" (1684-1695); Sui Sin Far, "In the Land of the Free" (1721-1727); Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (2763-2771); Film: selections from *The Godfather II*

Henry David Thoreau, selections from *Walden*; Rebecca Harding Davis, "Life in the Iron Mills"; Film: selections from *Modern Times* and *The Grapes of Wrath*

Allen Ginsberg, "Howl" and "A Supermarket in California"; Martin Luther King, Jr., "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence" [handout]; Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet"

[handout]; Hunter S. Thompson, selections from *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*
[handout]; Film: selections from *Woodstock*

Thomas Merton, "Rain and the Rhinoceros" [hand-out]; Christopher Columbus, "Letters"
Film: *The Birdcage*