

## English 3260 – Major American Authors

### Overall English Department Mission Statement

The English Department at Dixie State College strives to instill in students an appreciation for the centrality of language and literature in human culture, particularly their function in social, historical, and political contexts. Students who major in English master skills in analyzing and evaluating texts and other media, as well as learning how to produce focused critical essays.

### Emphasis Mission Statement (Literature)

Our literature courses seek to broaden and deepen students' understanding of the unique value of literary expression as an aesthetic form that challenges the senses, the intellect, and the imagination. Students also learn to appreciate the complex relationship between the aesthetic and intellectual aspects of literature and the culture and time in which it was produced.

### Course Description

Fulfills a Major Authors requirement for English majors pursuing an emphasis in Literary Studies or English Education, and open to other interested students. In depth exploration of the work of a major writer or group of writers. Topics and time periods vary among American authors according to instructor expertise and might include, for example, Jefferson, Douglass, Melville, Dickinson, Cather, Hemingway, Silko, or Morrison, among others. Emphasizes the dynamic interplay among the aesthetics of the text(s), the author's life, and the socio-political context in which the works are produced. Students will be expected to read extensive amounts of work from these authors, write several critical assignments, and conduct a major research project. Prerequisite: ENGL 2010

### Course Goals:

Goals to be reached in this course:

- A knowledge and awareness of the expansive and unique role that selected American authors have added to the field of literature.
- An understanding of the creation and dynamics of an author's critical reception and his/her acceptance into the literary canon.
- An ability to analyze literature critically through personal reaction to literary texts coupled with the reactions and analysis of other students and scholars.

### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will have improved their ability to:

- Create written work that meets the professional standards of academic writing in the field of literature.
- Make connections between their own thinking and writing and the work of secondary scholars.
- Effectively communicate their ideas orally and in writing.

### Methods of Assessment:

#### *Formative Assessment Methods*

Quizzes: Students will periodically take quizzes, preparation checks, and/or tests to assess whether or not they are reading the material.

Mid-term Exam: Students will also take a mid-term exam to assess their understanding of literary concepts, and to test their ability to apply those concepts to the specific works they have read. Exams will be returned promptly with instructor feedback.

Essay: Near the middle of the term, each student will also write a typed take-home essay demonstrating his or her knowledge of how major authors use aspects and techniques of fiction/poetic elements. Essays will be returned promptly with instructor feedback.

### ***Summative Assessment Methods***

Final Exam: At the end of the semester, students will take a cumulative final exam to assess their ability to synthesize concepts and writers.

Essay: Students will also write an end-of-the-term research paper in which they reflect upon and analyze chosen authors, works, and literary scholarship covered during the semester.

### ***Value-Added Assessment Method***

Pre/Post Test: Students will take a course-specific pre- and post-test, to assess the ways in which their learning has increased during the semester. This will be a multiple-choice (scantron) test.