

ENG 475 TOPICS IN AMERICAN STUDIES

Syllabus

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COURSE CREDIT:

Three Semester Hours

PREREQUISITES:

ENG 210 with a minimum grade of C or instructor's permission

COURSE MATERIALS:

Please obtain the exact edition listed of the following books and films—borrow, rent, or buy as you choose.

Required Materials:

ENG 475 Course Packet from the ASC Bookstore

Required Books:

- Allison. (1993). *Bastard out of carolina*. NY: Penguin (Plume Books)
0-452-26957-1
- Baldwin. (1985). *Go tell it on the mountain*. NY: Dell (Laurel Books)
0-440-33007-6
- Hawthorne. (1994). *The scarlett letter*. Mineola, NY: Dover
0-486-28048-9
- Spiegelman. (1993). *Maus, vols. I and II*. NY: Pantheon
0-679-74840-7
- Wharton. (1997). *The age of innocence*. Mineola, NY: Dover
0-486-29803-5

Required Films:

- Scorsese, Martin. (Director). (1993) *The age of innocence* [Motion Picture]. Sony Pictures
- Huston, Anjelica. (Director). (1996) *Bastard out of carolina* [Motion Picture]. Fox Lorber
- Lathan, Stan. (Director). (1985) *Go tell it on the mountain* [Motion Picture]. Monterey Video
- Joffé, Roland. (Director). (1995) *The scarlet letter* [Motion Picture]. Buena Vista Home Entertainment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course emphasizes specific topics in American Studies, including readings in the literature and an investigation of current problems, including the American character, popular culture, and ethnic and women's studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completing this course, students will:

- understand the scope, methods, and aims of American Studies;
- be able to write a theoretically sophisticated, well supported, and well developed paper;
- understand the relations between ideology, myth, politics, and literature;
- relate texts to their cultural, historical, and political contexts; and
- be better prepared for introductory coursework at the graduate level.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students must read all assigned work and write five short critical essays (4-6 pages each, except for the final essay, which should be 8-10 pages long). In addition, students must take two proctored essay exams.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

In alignment with ASC academic policies, no D may apply to a major or minor field.

Grade Distribution:

Introductory Exam (background readings)	100 points
Critical Essay 1 (<i>Scarlett Letter</i>)	100 points
Critical Essay 2 (<i>Age of Innocence</i>)	100 points
Critical Essay 3 (<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i>)	100 points
Critical Essay 4 (<i>Maus</i>)	100 points
Critical Essay 5 (<i>Bastard out of Carolina</i>)	100 points
Final Essay	200 points

Final Exam
Total Points

200 points
1000

I will grade your exams and critical essays on the basis of: 1.) the strength of the arguments they make and 2.) the degree to which they demonstrate your familiarity with the texts studied and your mastery of the key concepts of American Studies.

Scale:

900-1000	A
800-899	B
700-799	C
600-699	D
599 and below	F