

Course Name : American Literature II							
Course Code	Course Type	Regular Semester	Lecture (hours/week)	Seminar (hours/week)	Lab. (hours/week)	Credits	ECTS
ELL 314	B	Spring	3.00	0.00	0.00	3.00	5.00
Lecturer		Tidita Abdurrahmani, Prof. Assoc. Dr.					
Assistant							
Course language		English					
Course level		Bachelor					
Description		The course aims to introduce students to the movements, periods and principal authors of American literature from naturalism to contemporary American Literature. It covers the three genres: prose, poetry and drama where literary texts are placed in the context of broader social and historical of their time and perceived as important cultural performances					
Objectives		By the end of this course students will be able to: ■ Analyse relationships between Modern/Postmodern American Literature and the cultural, political and social history of the period; ■ Critically engage with a range of different critical approaches to Modern.Postmodern American Literature; ■ Discuss the ways in which writers of Modern/Postmodern American Literature approached questions relating to the organisation of society and the nature of identity; ■ Assess a wide range of critical and theoretical approaches; ■ Frame arguments effectively in speech and in writing at an advanced level					
Core Concepts		modernism, postmodernism, fragmentarization, pastiche, intertextuality					
Course Outline							
Week	Topic						
1	1.DEFINITION OF POSTMODERN LITERATURE The term postmodern literature is used to describe certain characteristics of post-World War II literature (relying heavily, for example, on fragmentation, paradox, questionable narrators, etc.) and a reaction against Enlightenment ideas implicit in Modernist literature. Postmodern literature, like postmodernism as a whole, is hard to define and there is little agreement on the exact characteristics, scope, and importance of postmodern literature. But as is often the case with artistic movements, postmodern literature is commonly defined in relation to its precursor. For example, a postmodern literary work tends not to conclude with the neatly tied-up ending as is often found in modernist literature, but often parodies it. Postmodern authors tend to celebrate chance over craft, and further employ metafiction to undermine the writer's authority. Another characteristic of postmodern literature is the questioning of distinctions between high and low culture through the use of pastiche, the combination of subjects and genres not previously deemed fit for literature.Baum 30						

2	2. Comparisons with modernist literature Both modern and postmodern literatures represent a break from 19th century realism. In character development, both modern and postmodern literature explore subjectivism, turning from external reality to examine inner states of consciousness, in many cases drawing on modernist examples in the "stream of consciousness" styles of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, or explorative poems like <i>The Waste Land</i> by T. S. Eliot. In addition, both modern and postmodern literature explore fragmentariness in narrative- and character-construction. <i>The Waste Land</i> is often cited as a means of distinguishing modern and postmodern literature. The poem is fragmentary and employs pastiche like much postmodern literature, but the speaker in <i>The Waste Land</i> says, "these fragments I have shored against my ruins". Modernist literature sees fragmentation and extreme subjectivity as an existential crisis, or Freudian internal conflict, a problem that must be solved, and the artist is often cited as the one to solve it. Postmodernists, however, often demonstrate that this chaos is insurmountable; the artist is impotent, and the only recourse against "ruin" is to play within the chaos. Playfulness is present in many modernist works (Joyce's <i>Finnegans Wake</i> or Virginia Woolf's <i>Orlando</i>, for example) and they may seem very similar to postmodern works, but with postmodernism playfulness becomes central and the actual achievement of order and meaning becomes unlikely. Baum 60
3	3. Post-war developments and transition figures Though postmodernist literature does not refer to everything written in the postmodern period, several post-war developments in literature (such as the Theatre of the Absurd, the Beat Generation, and Magic Realism) have significant similarities. These developments are occasionally collectively labeled "postmodern"; more commonly, some key figures (Samuel Beckett, William S. Burroughs, Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortázar and Gabriel García Márquez) are cited as significant contributors to the postmodern aesthetic Baum 90
4	4. Post-war developments and transition figures CONTINUED The work of Jarry, the Surrealists, Antonin Artaud, Luigi Pirandello and so on also influenced the work of playwrights from the Theatre of the Absurd. The term "Theatre of the Absurd" was coined by Martin Esslin to describe a tendency in theatre in the 1950s; he related it to Albert Camus's concept of the absurd. The plays of the Theatre of the Absurd parallel postmodern fiction in many ways. For example, <i>The Bald Soprano</i> by Eugène Ionesco is essentially a series of clichés taken from a language textbook. One of the most important figures to be categorized as both Absurdist and Postmodern is Samuel Beckett. The work of Samuel Beckett is often seen as marking the shift from modernism to postmodernism in literature. He had close ties with modernism because of his friendship with James Joyce; however, his work helped shape the development of literature away from modernism. Joyce, one of the exemplars of modernism, celebrated the possibility of language; Beckett had a revelation in 1945 that, in order to escape the shadow of Joyce, he must focus on the poverty of language and man as a failure. His later work, likewise, featured characters stuck in inescapable situations attempting impotently to communicate whose only recourse is to play, to make the best of what they have. As Hans-Peter Wagner says, "Mostly concerned with what he saw as impossibilities in fiction (identity of characters; reliable consciousness; the reliability of language itself; and the rubrication of literature in genres) Beckett's experiments with narrative form and with the disintegration of narration and character in fiction and drama won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. His works published after 1969 are mostly meta-literary attempts that must be read in light of his own theories and previous works and the attempt to deconstruct literary forms and genres.[...] Beckett's last text published during his lifetime, <i>Stirrings Still</i> (1988), breaks down the barriers between drama, fiction, and poetry, with texts of the collection being almost entirely composed of echoes and reiterations of his previous work [...] He was definitely one of the fathers of the postmodern movement in fiction which has continued undermining the ideas of logical coherence in narration, formal plot, regular time sequence, and psychologically explained characters. Baum 120

5	5. "The Beat Generation" is a name coined by Jack Kerouac for the disaffected youth of America during the materialistic 1950s; Kerouac developed ideas of automatism into what he called "spontaneous prose" to create a maximalistic, multi-novel epic called the Duluoz Legend in the mold of Marcel Proust's <i>In Search of Lost Time</i>. "Beat Generation" is often used more broadly to refer to several groups of post-war American writers from the Black Mountain poets, the New York School, the San Francisco Renaissance, and so on. These writers have occasionally also been referred to as the "Postmoderns" (see especially references by Charles Olson and the Grove anthologies edited by Donald Allen). Though this is now a less common usage of "postmodern", references to these writers as "postmodernists" still appear and many writers associated with this group (John Ashbery, Richard Brautigan, Gilbert Sorrentino, and so on) appear often on lists of postmodern writers. One writer associated with the Beat Generation who appears most often on lists of postmodern writers is William S. Burroughs. Burroughs published <i>Naked Lunch</i> in Paris in 1959 and in America in 1961; this is considered by some the first truly postmodern novel because it is fragmentary, with no central narrative arc; it employs pastiche to fold in elements from popular genres such as detective fiction and science fiction; it's full of parody, paradox, and playfulness; and, according to some accounts, friends Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg edited the book guided by chance. He is also noted, along with Brion Gysin, for the creation of the "cut-up" technique, a technique (similar to Tzara's "Dadaist Poem") in which words and phrases are cut from a newspaper or other publication and rearranged to form a new message. This is the technique he used to create novels such as <i>Nova Express</i> and <i>The Ticket That Exploded</i>. Baum 180
6	Magic Realism is a technique popular among Latin American writers (and can also be considered its own genre) in which supernatural elements are treated as mundane (a famous example being the practical-minded and ultimately dismissive treatment of an apparently angelic figure in Gabriel García Márquez's "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings"). Though the technique has its roots in traditional storytelling, it was a center piece of the Latin American "boom", a movement coterminous with postmodernism. Some of the major figures of the "Boom" and practitioners of Magic Realism (Gabriel García Márquez, Julio Cortázar etc.) are sometimes listed as postmodernists. This labeling, however, is not without its problems. In Spanish-speaking Latin America, modernismo and posmodernismo refer to early 20th-century literary movements that have no direct relationship to modernism and postmodernism in English. Finding it anachronistic, Octavio Paz has argued that postmodernism is an imported grand récit that is incompatible with the cultural production of Latin America. Along with Beckett and Borges, a commonly cited transitional figure is Vladimir Nabokov; like Beckett and Borges, Nabokov started publishing before the beginning of postmodernity (1926 in Russian, 1941 in English). Though his most famous novel, <i>Lolita</i> (1955), could be considered a modernist or a postmodernist novel, his later work (specifically <i>Pale Fire</i> in 1962 and <i>Ada or Ardor: A Family Chronicle</i> in 1969) are more clearly postmodern. Baum 220
7	Scope and themes of postmodernism Postmodernism in literature is not an organized movement with leaders or central figures; therefore, it is more difficult to say if it has ended or when it will end (compared to, say, declaring the end of modernism with the death of Joyce or Woolf). Arguably postmodernism peaked in the 60s and 70s with the publication of <i>Catch-22</i> in 1961, <i>Lost in the Funhouse</i> in 1968, <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> in 1969, <i>Gravity's Rainbow</i> in 1973, and many others. Some declared the death of postmodernism in the 80's with a new surge of realism represented and inspired by Raymond Carver. Tom Wolfe in his 1989 article "Stalking the Billion-Footed Beast" called for a new emphasis on realism in fiction to replace postmodernism.[9] With this new emphasis on realism in mind, some declared <i>White Noise</i> in 1985 or <i>The Satanic Verses</i> in 1988 to be the last great novels of the postmodern era. A new generation of writers—such as David Foster Wallace, Giannina Braschi, Dave Eggers, Michael Chabon, Zadie Smith, Chuck Palahniuk, Jennifer Egan, Neil Gaiman, Richard Powers, Jonathan Lethem—and publications such as McSweeney's, <i>The Believer</i>, and the fiction pages of <i>The New Yorker</i>, herald either a new chapter of postmodernism or possibly post-postmodernism. Baum 300
8	Midterm Exam

9	POSTMODERN TECHNIQUES Irony, playfulness, black humor Linda Hutcheon claimed postmodern fiction as a whole could be characterized by the ironic quote marks, that much of it can be taken as tongue-in-cheek. This irony, along with black humor and the general concept of "play" (related to Derrida's concept or the ideas advocated by Roland Barthes in <i>The Pleasure of the Text</i>) are among the most recognizable aspects of postmodernism. Intertextuality Since postmodernism represents a decentered concept of the universe in which individual works are not isolated creations, much of the focus in the study of postmodern literature is on intertextuality: the relationship between one text (a novel for example) and another or one text within the interwoven fabric of literary history. Pastiche Related to postmodern intertextuality, pastiche means to combine, or "paste" together, multiple elements. In Postmodernist literature this can be an homage to or a parody of past styles. It can be seen as a representation of the chaotic, pluralistic, or information-drenched aspects of postmodern society. Baum 390
10	Metafiction Metafiction is essentially writing about writing or "foregrounding the apparatus", as it's typical of deconstructionist approaches,[18] making the artificiality of art or the fictionality of fiction apparent to the reader and generally disregards the necessity for "willful suspension of disbelief".[citation needed] For example, postmodern sensibility and metafiction dictate that works of parody should parody the idea of parody itself.[19][20][21] Fabulation Fabulation is a term sometimes used interchangeably with metafiction and relates to pastiche and Magic Realism. It is a rejection of realism which embraces the notion that literature is a created work and not bound by notions of mimesis and verisimilitude. Thus, fabulation challenges some traditional notions of literature—the traditional structure of a novel or role of the narrator, for example—and integrates other traditional notions of storytelling, including fantastical elements, such as magic and myth, or elements from popular genres such as science fiction. By some accounts, the term was coined by Robert Scholes in his book <i>The Fabulators</i>. Strong examples of fabulation in contemporary literature are found in Giannina Braschi's "United States of Banana" and Salman Rushdie's <i>Haroun and the Sea of Stories</i> Baum 450
11	Temporal distortion in postmodern literature This is a common technique in modernist fiction: fragmentation and non-linear narratives are central features in both modern and postmodern literature. Temporal distortion in postmodern fiction is used in a variety of ways, often for the sake of irony. Historiographic metafiction (see above) is an example of this. Distortions in time are central features in many of Kurt Vonnegut's non-linear novels, the most famous of which is perhaps <i>Billy Pilgrim</i> in <i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> becoming "unstuck in time". In <i>Flight to Canada</i>, Ishmael Reed deals playfully with anachronisms, Abraham Lincoln using a telephone for example. Time may also overlap, repeat, or bifurcate into multiple possibilities. For example, in Robert Coover's "The Babysitter" from <i>Pricksongs & Descants</i>, the author presents multiple possible events occurring simultaneously—in one section the babysitter is murdered while in another section nothing happens and so on—yet no version of the story is favored as the correct version. Baum 560
12	Different perspectives in postmodern literature John Barth, the postmodernist novelist who talks often about the label "postmodern", wrote an influential essay in 1967 called "The Literature of Exhaustion" and in 1979 wrote "Literature of Replenishment" in order to clarify the earlier essay. "Literature of Exhaustion" was about the need for a new era in literature after modernism had exhausted itself. In "Literature of Replenishment" Barth says, My ideal Postmodernist author neither merely repudiates nor merely imitates either his 20th-century Modernist parents or his 19th-century premodernist grandparents. He has the first half of our century under his belt, but not on his back. Without lapsing into moral or artistic simplism, shoddy craftsmanship, Madison Avenue venality, or either false or real naiveté, he nevertheless aspires to a fiction more democratic in its appeal than such late-Modernist marvels as Beckett's <i>Texts for Nothing</i>... The ideal Postmodernist novel will somehow rise above the quarrel between realism and irrationalism, formalism and "contentism," pure and committed literature, coterie fiction and junk fiction...[35] Many of the well-known postmodern novels deal with World War II, one of the most famous of which being Joseph Heller's <i>Catch-22</i>. Heller claimed his novel and many of the other American novels of the time had more to do with the state of the country after the war: Baum 640

13	DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON POSTMODERNISM 2 Novelist and theorist Umberto Eco explains his idea of postmodernism as a kind of double-coding: I think of the postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows that he cannot say to her "I love you madly", because he knows that she knows (and that she knows he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Still there is a solution. He can say "As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly". At this point, having avoided false innocence, having said clearly it is no longer possible to talk innocently, he will nevertheless say what he wanted to say to the woman: that he loves her in an age of lost innocence.[37] Novelist David Foster Wallace in his 1990 essay "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction" makes the connection between the rise of postmodernism and the rise of television with its tendency toward self-reference and the ironic juxtaposition of what's seen and what's said. This, he claims, explains the preponderance of pop culture references in postmodern literature Baum 720
14	POSTMODERN LITERATURE AND ART It was in post-atomic America that pop influences on literature became something more than technical. About the time television first gasped and sucked air, mass popular U.S. culture seemed to become High-Art-viable as a collection of symbols and myth. The episcopate of this pop-reference movement were the post-Nabokovian Black Humorists, the Metafictionists and assorted franc-and latinophiles only later comprised by "postmodern." The erudite, sardonic fictions of the Black Humorists introduced a generation of new fiction writers who saw themselves as sort of avant-avant-garde, not only cosmopolitan and polyglot but also technologically literate, products of more than just one region, heritage, and theory, and citizens of a culture that said its most important stuff about itself via mass media. In this regard one thinks particularly of the Gaddis of The Recognitions and JR, the Barth of The End of the Road and The Sot-Weed Factor, and the Pynchon of The Crying of Lot 49 ... Here's Robert Coover's 1966 A Public Burning, in which Eisenhower buggers Nixon on-air, and his 1968 A Political Fable, in which the Cat in the Hat runs for president Baum 840
15	Review
16	Final Exam
Prerequisites The student must attend the course at a minimum rate of 75%.	
Literature • Baym, N., Franklin, W., Gura, P., Krupat, A. (2007). The Norton Anthology of American Literature.	
References • Cunliffe, M. (1991). The Literature of the United States of America. 4th ed., Penguin Books, London. • Daiu, M. (2000). Profile autorësh modernë amerikanë. Shtëpia Botuese e Librit Universitar. Tiranë.	
Course Outcome	
1	Students understand and appreciate American literary documents as historical documents and philosophical reflections on American values, lifestyles, and works of literature.
2	Students are able to read, analyze and interpret parts of literary works.
3	Students are able to engage in in-depth analysis of works from various currents of American literature.

Course Evaluation			
In-term Studies	Quantity	Percentage	
Midterms	1	20	
Quizzes	0	0	
Projects	0	0	
Term Projects	1	20	
Laboratory	0	0	
Class Participation	1	10	
Total in-term evaluation percent			50
Final exam percent			50
Total			100
ECTS Workload (Based on Student Workload)			
Activities	Quantity	Duration (hours)	Total (hours)
Course duration (Including the exam week: 16x Total hours of the course)	16	3	48
Study hours outside the classroom (Preparation, Practice, etc.)	14	4	56
Duties	1	4	4
Midterms	1	6	6
Final Exam	1	10	10
Other	0	0	0
Total Work Load			124
Total Work Load / 25 (hours)			4.96
ECTS			5.00