

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 Fedra Buciqi, Msc							
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 The subject aims to enable students to analyze and treat literary periods, as well as the connection between them, the social and cultural dimension that they represent							
Core Concepts modernism, postmodernism, fragmentarization, pastiche, intertextuality							
Course Outline							
Week	Topic						
1	This lecture covers early American literature during the Colonial and Puritan period, beginning with Native American oral traditions rooted in spirituality and nature. It explains how religious conflicts in Europe, influenced by figures like Martin Luther and John Calvin, led the Pilgrims and Puritans to settle in America to practice their beliefs freely. The Puritans aimed to build a model religious society, as described by John Winthrop, while their literature focused on religion, morality, and purpose. The lecture also highlights the impact of colonization on Native Americans and introduces key writers like William Bradford.						
2	The lecture explores Puritan poetry through the works of Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor, emphasizing their shared focus on key Puritan themes such as faith, salvation, and the struggle between worldly life and spiritual devotion. Bradstreet's poetry blends religious ideas with personal and domestic experiences, often addressing gender roles and expressing emotional depth alongside her beliefs. In contrast, Taylor's work is more strictly religious, using complex metaphors and meditative structures to show his devotion to God and desire for spiritual purification. While Bradstreet tends toward a more classical and accessible style, Taylor relies on biblical imagery and metaphysical techniques. Together, their works demonstrate the richness and diversity of Puritan literature by combining religious principles with personal expression and poetic creativity.						
3	This lecture covers the early development of American literature during the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary period, alongside the emergence of a distinct national identity. It explains how, despite gaining political independence after the American Revolution, American writers still struggled to break free from European—especially English—literary influence and to create an original national literature. The lecture highlights the role of Enlightenment ideas such as reason, liberty, equality, and democracy, shaped by thinkers like John Locke, and expressed through key figures like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson. It also focuses on Washington Irving as one of the first successful American authors, whose work Rip Van Winkle reflects themes of identity, freedom, change, and the tension between tradition and progress in a newly independent America. Overall, the lecture shows how literature gradually evolved from imitation to originality while reflecting the cultural, political, and philosophical challenges of a new nation.						

4	<p>This lecture explores Transcendentalism as a major phase of American Romanticism and a turning point in the development of a distinct American literary voice, alongside the rise of influential poets Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman. It explains how Transcendentalism, led by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller, emphasized intuition, individualism, nature, and the idea of the “Over-Soul,” encouraging people to seek spiritual truth beyond material reality. Thoreau’s <i>Walden</i> and “Civil Disobedience” illustrate these ideas through simple living, resistance to unjust authority, and self-reliance. The lecture then connects these philosophical foundations to later poetic innovation, showing how Dickinson developed a unique, introspective and unconventional style focused on themes like nature, death, and identity, while Whitman revolutionized poetry through free verse, celebrating democracy, individuality, and the diversity of American life. Together, these writers mark the transition from philosophical idealism to bold poetic experimentation in American literature.</p>
5	<p>This lecture focuses on Gothic literature and its expression in American literature, particularly through Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe. It explains how Gothic literature, emerging from Romanticism, explores the darker aspects of human nature, including sin, guilt, madness, and moral conflict, often set in gloomy and mysterious environments. Hawthorne’s <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> reflects these themes by examining Puritan society, moral judgment, and inner psychological struggle, especially through characters like Hester Prynne and Dimmesdale. Similarly, Poe’s works delve deeply into the human psyche, portraying fear, obsession, and the effects of guilt through suspenseful and symbolic storytelling, as seen in stories like <i>The Tell-Tale Heart</i> and poems like <i>The Raven</i>. Overall, the lecture highlights how American Gothic literature blends psychological depth with moral and philosophical questions, revealing the complexity and darkness within human experience.</p>
6	<p>This lecture examines African American literature from slavery narratives to the cultural movement of the Harlem Renaissance, highlighting the evolution of Black identity and expression in American literature. It explains how early slave narratives by figures like Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs depict slavery as a process of “social death,” followed by a journey toward freedom, self-awareness, and identity. These autobiographical works combine elements of religion, personal struggle, and political purpose to expose the ظلم of slavery and advocate for abolition. The lecture then moves to the Harlem Renaissance, a major cultural awakening in the early 20th century, where writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston expressed pride in African American culture, explored themes of racism, heritage, and urban life, and experimented with new artistic forms. Overall, the lecture shows a shift from literature of survival and resistance to literature of cultural affirmation and artistic innovation.</p>
7	<p>This lecture examines the emergence of the female voice in American literature through Charlotte Perkins Gilman and her short story <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i>, within the context of local color writing and late 19th-century social realities. It explains how Gilman uses a first-person, diary-style narrative to depict a woman’s mental breakdown caused by enforced isolation and patriarchal control, particularly through the “rest cure” imposed by her husband. The story explores themes such as gender oppression, confinement, mental illness, and the conflict between self-expression and societal expectations. The symbolic yellow wallpaper represents the restrictions placed on women, while the narrator’s descent into madness reflects both personal and societal struggles. Overall, the lecture highlights how the text serves as both a psychological narrative and a feminist critique of traditional gender roles and medical practices of the time.</p>
8	Midterm Exam
9	<p>This week introduces students to the major literary movements that emerged in post-Civil War America: Realism, Regionalism, and Naturalism. Students will explore how writers moved away from the idealism of Romanticism and began portraying life more accurately and objectively. Particular attention will be given to the historical and social forces that shaped these movements, including industrialization, urbanization, and scientific thought. Students will examine the characteristics of each movement and analyze how authors represented ordinary life, regional identities, and the influence of environment and heredity on human behavior.</p>
10	<p>Students will study Mark Twain’s <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> as a major work of American Realism. The lesson focuses on themes such as freedom, racism, slavery, moral development, and the conflict between individual conscience and social expectations. Students will analyze Twain’s use of satire, vernacular language, symbolism, and first-person narration while examining Huck Finn’s journey as both a physical and moral quest. The significance of the Mississippi River as a symbol of freedom and self-discovery will also be explored.</p>

11	This week examines Charlotte Perkins Gilman's <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> within the contexts of feminism, regionalism, and psychological fiction. Students will analyze the story's portrayal of women's roles in the nineteenth century, the treatment of mental illness, and the restrictions imposed on women by patriarchal society. Through close reading, students will explore narrative voice, symbolism, and the protagonist's psychological decline while discussing Gilman's critique of gender inequality and the medical practices of her time.
12	Students will be introduced to the Modernist movement and its response to the social, cultural, and intellectual upheavals of the early twentieth century. The lesson explores the historical background of Modernism, including the impact of World War I, urbanization, scientific discoveries, and changing philosophical perspectives. Students will study T. S. Eliot as a leading Modernist poet, examining key Modernist themes such as alienation, fragmentation, disillusionment, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world. Eliot's innovative poetic techniques and contributions to modern literature will be analyzed.
13	This week focuses on an in-depth study of Eliot's <i>The Waste Land</i> , one of the most influential poems of the twentieth century. Students will analyze the poem's structure, symbolism, imagery, and use of literary allusions. Discussion will center on themes of spiritual decay, cultural fragmentation, isolation, and the effects of war on modern society. Through textual analysis, students will gain an understanding of how Eliot employs Modernist techniques to portray the crisis of modern civilization.
14	Students will explore the Imagist movement and its role in shaping modern poetry. The lesson examines Ezra Pound's contributions to literary Modernism and his call to "make it new." Students will learn the key principles of Imagism, including precision of language, clarity of imagery, conciseness, and free verse. Through the analysis of Pound's poetry and selected Imagist works, students will evaluate how imagery functions as a central element in creating meaning and emotional impact in modern poetry.
15	The final week introduces students to Postmodernism and major contemporary literary theories. Students will examine how Postmodernism challenges traditional assumptions about truth, identity, language, and meaning. Key concepts such as fragmentation, multiple perspectives, social construction, and the rejection of universal truths will be discussed. The lesson also provides an overview of influential critical approaches, including New Criticism, Structuralism, Feminism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Marxism, Postcolonialism, and Deconstruction, enabling students to apply various theoretical frameworks to literary texts.
16	Final Exam
Prerequisites	The student must attend the course at a minimum rate of 75%.
Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berke, Amy, et al. "Writing the Nation: A Concise Introduction to American Literature 1865 to Present." ALG Commons, oer.galileo.usg.edu/english-textbooks/5. • VanSpanckeren, Kathryn. <i>Outline of American Literature</i>. 2010.
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procházka, Martin, et al. <i>Lectures on American Literature</i>. 2013.
Course Outcome	
1	Students understand and appreciate works of American literature as historical documents and as philosophical reflections on American values, lifestyle, and literary traditions.
2	Students are able to read, analyze, and interpret excerpts from literary works.
3	Students are able to engage in in-depth discussions and critical analyses of works representing different movements and periods of American literature.

Course Evaluation			
In-term Studies	Quantity	Percentage	
Midterms	1	30	
Quizzes	0	0	
Projects	1	25	
Term Projects	0	0	
Laboratory	0	0	
Class Participation	1	10	
Total in-term evaluation percent		65	
Final exam percent		35	
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	5	70
Duties	2	3	6
Midterms	1	2	2
Final Exam	1	3	3
Other	0	0	0
Total Work Load			129
Total Work Load / 25 (hours)			5.16
ECTS			5.00