

Postmodern and Contemporary American Literature Course Plan

Realized by: BENIA Amel

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Course Information



1. M'sila University

Teacher: BENIA Amel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department: English Language and Literature

Target audience: Master 1st year - Civilization and Literature

Course title: American Literature

Credits: 2

Coefficient: 1

Duration: 15 weeks - 22,5 hours.

Timetable: Thursday 8:00 - 9:30 AM

Office Hours: Sunday 12:30 - 1:30 PM / Thursday 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Contact: Via mail: beniaamel@yahoo.com

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about any course matters

Course description



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Postmodernism is one of the concepts that resist definition and conceptualization. It does not exist as a defined school within the realm of contemporary fiction, but rather, as a diverse worldview that is incorporated in lesser or greater amounts through most contemporary fiction. Postmodern theory and postmodern fiction are strongly intertwined and both express a shared cultural state. Therefore this course will introduce students to the basic strategies, themes, and concerns of postmodern and contemporary American Literature along with some of the most important works of postmodern critical theory. Familiarity with theoretical texts allows students to better understand the backdrops and subtexts of the required literary texts in this course.

Course Content



1. Unit One: Theoretical

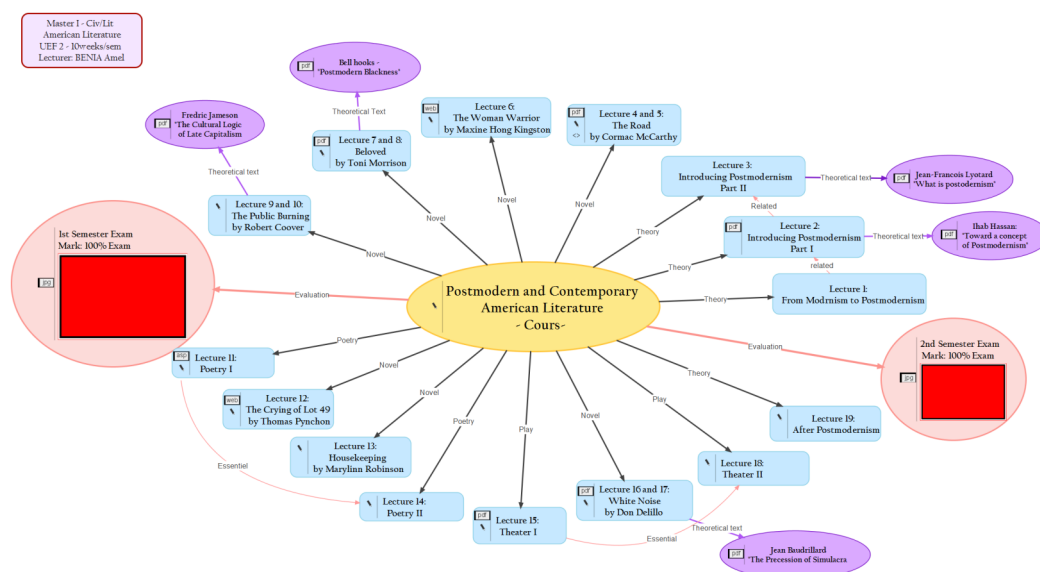
- Diagnostic Session
- American Modernism
- From Modernism to Postmodernism
- Conceptualizing Postmodernism: Jean François Lyotard, Ihab Hassan, Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard, Linda Hutcheon, etc.

2. Unit Two: Literary Texts

- The Road by Cormac McCarthy
- The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston
- Beloved by Toni Morrison
- The Public Burning by Robert Coover
- The Crying of Lot 49 by Thomas Pynchon
- White Noise by Don DeLillo
- Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson

3. Unit Three: Poetry and Drama

- Introduction to Postmodern and contemporary American poetry
- Introduction to Postmodern and Contemporary Drama



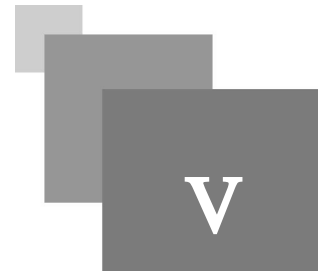
Course Objectives:



1. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and be familiar with postmodern strategies and theories in order to identify postmodern nuances in American Literature.
- Understand the concepts introduced in major theoretical texts by postmodern thinkers.
- Connect the different thematic and stylistic patterns of postmodernism in order to be able to compare and contrast different literary works.
- Improve their writing skills, especially analytical writing and critical thinking expected of MA English majors through frequent composition of essays.
- Literary and theoretical texts covered in this course, in addition to the frequent written compositions and research, have as aim to inspire students for further research and to train them for their upcoming thesis writing.

Course pre-requisites



1. Students must be:

- acquainted with major literary movements in American Literature.
- familiar with major literary theories used to analyze and criticize literary texts.
- able to write essays of literary analysis respecting techniques of academic writing.

Types and modalities of evaluation

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This course will have diagnostic, formative, and Certificative types of evaluation explained as follows in the table. Final evaluation of the course is 100 percent final exam mark.

Types and modalities of evaluation			
Type	Period	Modality of evaluation	Objective
Diagnostic	Beginning of the course	Testing pre-requisites: In-class oral <u>quizz</u>	Testing students' knowledge that can help a better progress and orientation during the course.
Formative	During the semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral questions - Learning activities: written assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In order to test the acquired knowledge necessary for a good flow of the learning units. - In order to make students relate the acquired knowledge to its application.
<u>Certificative</u>	End of the semester	Final exam (100 percent of course evaluation)	Writing essays of literary analysis in order to succeed in the course.

Learning Activities

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1. In class:

- This course is taught as a seminar. I expect students to take notes and to engage in class debates in order to ensure a better mastery of the necessary concepts and works introduced in the classroom.
- Since this class will be discussion based, Regular attendance and active participation are a must. In determining your final participation grades, frequency and quality of your participation will be taken into consideration. In addition to that, you will be asked to submit weekly reports about the assigned theoretical texts in order to ensure that you are familiar with them and to encourage a constructive and well-informed class discussion.
- At the end of each session, you will be provided with topic suggestions for further research and written assignments to submit the following session.

2. Online

- Students are invited to participate in debates on the the class' online group.
- Consult the PDF version of the lessons.
- Ask questions in relation to ambiguous elements tackled in the classroom.

Pedagogical alignment and operating modalities



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1. Pedagogical alignment

- The targeted competence is based on the three pillars: knowledge; know-how and know-how-to-be. all these pillars are necessary and require methods to reach them and assessments to test the students' understanding and learn about the course's goals.
- For essential knowledge, it will be acquired via a transmissive method because it is the most effective method for storing knowledge and theoretical concepts and because this course is taught as a seminar. Demonstrations will also help you memorize concepts. But it is not enough to know them, you will also have to understand them, your understanding will be tested through theoretical questions as well as written assignments.

Resources:


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1. Textbook

Hoffmann, Gerhard. *From Modernism to Postmodernism: Concepts and Strategies of Postmodern American Fiction*. Rodopi, 2005.

2. Literary Texts

- DeLillo, Don. *White Noise*. Picador, 2011.
- Kingston, Maxine H. *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*. Vintage, 2010.
- McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. Pan Macmillan, 2010.
- Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Vintage, 2007.
- Pynchon, Thomas. *The Crying of Lot 49: A Novel*. Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2014.
- Robinson, Marilynne. *Housekeeping*. Faber & Faber, 2015.

3. Theoretical texts

- Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. U of Michigan P, 1994.
- Hassan, Ihab H. *From Postmodernism to Postmodernity: The Local/global Context*. 2000.
- Hutcheon, Linda, and Professor Department of English and of the Centre for Comparative Literature Linda Hutcheon. *The Politics of Postmodernism*. Routledge, 2003.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Duke UP, 1991.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. U of Minnesota P, 1984.