

Course Name : American Culture and Literature							
Course Code	Course Type	Regular Semester	Lecture (hours/week)	Seminar (hours/week)	Lab. (hours/week)	Credits	ECTS
ELL 413	N/A	Fall	4.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	6.00
Lecturer		Tidita Abdurrahmani, Prof. Asoc. Dr.					
Assistant							
Course language		English					
Course level		Master					
Description		The course aims to deepen students' knowledge and discuss the movements, periods, and major authors of American Literature from its inception to the present day. It covers all three genres, prose, poetry and drama where literary texts are placed in the broad social and historical context of their time and conceived as important manifestations of culture.					
Objectives		Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: 1. Identify key ideas, representative authors and works, significant historical or cultural events, and characteristic perspectives or attitudes expressed in the literature of different periods or regions. 2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods. 3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods in different regions. 4. Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities. 5. Write research-based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.					
Core Concepts		american literature, modernism, [postmodernism, representatives, literary trends, postmodern fiction					
Course Outline							
Week	Topic						
1	Lecture 1. The Effects of E.Hemingway´s "Iceberg Technique" with Examples In writing of style Hemingway repeats the analogy of the iceberg, which drifts in the ocean with only 1/8 of its vastness showing.Speaking in an interview about his "principle of omission" as applied in The Old Man and the Sea. Hemingway himself says that he left out all the knowledge and stories from the fishing village, such as the experience of the marlin mating, the sight of more than fifty sperm whales within the same stretch of water and the occasion of harpooning one over sixty feet in length and losing him.						
2	Lecture 2. The Effects of E.Hemingway´s "Iceberg Technique" Continued Hemingway´s approach to writing results in a prose which has clarity while at the same time being richly evocative in its suggestions. "Iceberg Technique" in The Old Man and The Sea "Iceberg Technique" in The Sun Also Rises "Iceberg Technique" in the Short Stories "Iceberg Technique" in Death in The Afternoon "Iceberg Technique" in A Farewell To Arms						

3	Lecture/Seminar 3. TONI MORRISON PARADISE Magic Realism In Tony Morrison's Paradise Morrison begins her book at the end, with the first chapter taking place after nearly all the rest of the novel. While speaking about the way her novel was conceived, Morrison says that she did not go for the linear, chronological stories because they are typical of television narratives, she chose a non-linear story structure, because people experience life as the present moment, the anticipation of the future, and a lot of slices of the past. Toni Morrison's Paradise is said to be written in a difficult, Faulknerian style--with twists, turns, and ghosts. She has also been praised for using magic realism in the style of Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The setting of the story itself is typical of magic realism, Ruby, a fictional town founded by blacks who came West to escape the horrors of Reconstruction. Morrison has given the town's founders a biblical stature, they have been assigned the duty to build an "all black man's paradise" on earth, where neither death, nor famine or destruction threaten, but they become themselves initiators of a discrimination they were meant to fight, and the assault of the posse on the Convent stands for the bringing of the Ruby reality, from paradisiacal down to earthly terms.
4	4. Literary Representation of Race in William Faulkner's Light In August In the earlier drafts of Light in August, William Faulkner identified Joe Christmas as a black man, but in his revisions he carefully removed these identifications, and left the issue of Joe's origin deliberately equivocal. This deliberate equivocity will constitute the basis for the unfolding of the theme of race throughout the novel. Race was a crucial issue in the American south where blacks were assigned radically separate identities and expectations. In a community which attempts to superimpose simplistic, restrictive notions of identity based on broad categories, people become just conveyors of imprisoned psyches, victims of "racially haunting" pasts, as well as antiheroes in a flawed and conflicted modern world.
5	Lecture/Seminar 5 and 6 . Magical Realism & Intertextuality in Postmodern Literature Derived from the Latin "intertexto", meaning to intermingle while weaving, intertextuality is a term first introduced by the French semiotician Julia Kristeva in the late sixties. A literary work, then, is not simply the product of a single author, but of its relationship to other texts and to the structures of language itself. "[A]ny text," she argues, "is constructed of a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another". Another definition is that provided by "A Glossary of Literary Terms" Abrahams M.H. in which intertextuality appears as "A relation in between two texts which has an effect upon the way in which the intertext (that is the text within which other texts reside or echo their presence) is read." (Intertextuality)
6	Lecture/Seminar 6 . Magical Realism & Intertextuality in Postmodern Literature Part 2 Intertextuality in "The Literature of Exhaustion", John Barth Intertextuality in "Mass Society and Postmodern Fiction", Irving Howe Intertextuality in "Postmodernismus Ein begriffsgeschichtlicher Überblick", Michael Koehler It was Franz Roh, who in the mid 1920's introduced the term magic realism into the artistic discourse It was brought all along by him as "Magischer Realismus" a countermovement in art in which "the charm of the object was rediscovered" The essays generally agree that magic realism is a mode suited to exploring and/or transgressing boundaries, it often facilitates the fusion or co-existence of possible worlds, spaces, systems that would be irreconcilable in other modes of fiction. By including a plurality of worlds magic realist texts posit themselves on territory between or among these worlds--in phenomenal and spiritual regions where transformation, metamorphosis and dissolution are common. Magic Realism in House Made of dawn Magic Realism in The Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison Magic Realism In Bless Me Ultima, Rudolfo Anaya
7	Lecture/Seminar 7 The Concept of Reality "In Thomas Pynchon's The Crying Of The Lot 49 Intertextuality in The Crying of the Lot 49, Thomas Pynchon Magic Realism in The Crying of the Lot 49 In The Crying of the Lot 49 reality is packaged in metaphors that reveal the fantasies and desires of a culture bound over to deathly designs. In this book we consider reality in terms of the journey that major characters take in their efforts to learn about their world. The Crying of the Lot 49 also epitomizes the social reality, a convulsion to narcissism. In the world of the book ostensible controllers of society may only virtually exist. The creation and maintenance of uncertainty is central to the book's questioning the nature of reality. In terms of its being the book has been said to be constructed upon an incomplete Godelian system. Pynchon abandons the stable omniscient perspective and the narrative proceeds by the overloading of information into a simple linear plotline. Almost all the characters in the book except Oedipa opt for some form of restricted knowledge, seeking to know less than what can be known, and narcissistically believing that this even more partial view, because of enclosure, represents completeness and truth, the only reality.
8	Mid-term Exam

9	Lecture/ Seminar 9 and 10 Ecocriticism vs. Nature Writing Though ecocriticism is attempting to break new trails by going through the untrammelled nature-centered works, humans are failing to go within the uncharted depths of their spirit and consciousness. Yet it is consoling to accept that the traceable development of Nature writing, is marked by an ever-increasing environmental awareness. Ecocriticism must question more closely the nature of environmental narrative, not praise it, but accept critique and use it constructively because it speaks within a cultural context. Praxis is possible only in view of "new frontiers" to explore. There is a close connection between the systematic undervaluing of women's writing and the exploitation and abuse of the earth.
10	Nature Writing American nature writing as opposed to the European one, is closest to nature and deeply rooted in their ancestors respect and reverence for the land. Male nature writers mostly develop themes such as: the austerity of nature and the wish to explore and alter landscapes to suit the "human design"; the idea of hunting for a "trophy"; grandfather wisdom; wilderness and governmental institutions; earth as a religion. Female-centered approaches to nature are marked by the occurrence of such themes as: moral -considerability of non-human beings; disapproval of economism; the bond to the land; anthropogenic destructive tendencies; nature/self consciousness.
11	REVIEW: AMERICAN POSTMODERNISM Lecture/Seminar 11 and 12 Trends of postmodern theories concerned the breaking of the frame (establishing something new was the motto), the question of language was important (language constructs us/reality, meta-language, meta-novels, self-referentiality, the texts were reflecting itself.) History does not exist, only history writing does exist and thus produces history. Then we have the acceptance of pop culture as high culture □ e.g. a comic book can have the same value as a book that wins the Nobel price. In postmodernism history, genres or periods are not so important anymore. Postmodernism shook the value system of the people working in the field. PM took out the seriousness of the field Breaking the Frame with Postmodernism Postmodern Theory:
12	Postmodern Theory: Continued Jean Baudrillard. Simulacrum and Simulation: "The Precession of Simulacra." Trinh T. Minh-Ha. Excerpt from Woman, Native, Other. Frederic Jameson. Excerpt from Postmodernism and Consumer Society. Fact Meets Fiction Tim O'Brien. "How to Tell a True War Story Gloria Anzaldúa. Excerpt from Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza: "Tlilli, Tlapalli: The Path of the Red and Black Ink." Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 183-191
13	13. Popular Culture and High Culture Collide / Technoculture Postmodernism fuses high culture and pop culture. Both cultures interact on a level using a lot of references from comics, film, intertextuality (ref. to other texts). It's category defying: there is not one stream of category, e.g. Siloh), pastiche, fact and fiction is mixed. The meeting point of pop-culture and high-culture □ authors wanted to be heard; the dominance of TV as a mass medium, our culture is more visual, visual stimuli are important today. In PM we have questions of author, audience, as the work of art refers back to itself, to a metalevel (e.g. Coover.) There is a certain simultaneousness, e.g. the use of film techniques, the omnipresence of multi-media aspects in a text. The visual is always present. Bobbie Ann Mason. „Shiloh“ Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 271-281. Robert Coover. Excerpt from A Night at the Movies. Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 226-241. Douglas Coupland. Excerpt from Generation X. "Shopping Is Not Creating." Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 568-573.
14	Lecture Seminar 14 Revisiting History and Revising Tradition: Toni Morrison's style is comparable to Faulkner's in Modernism □ stream of consciousness, abrupt changes in perspectives and a certain distancing through that. The spatial setting is Cincinnati, just to the North of Kentucky; the Ohio River was the boundary between the North and the South, or between Slavery and Freedom. American history as such plays a major role □ revisiting history and revisiting tradition While Morrison sees herself as a creative historian who reconstructs, she also works to deconstruct master narratives of "official history" in Beloved. Mae Henderson describes the novel as a counternarrative to the "master(s) narrative" We only have fragments of historical events, like the war, the fugitive slave act, ... Plus history as life-lived. A fictional account of the interior life of a former slave might be more historically "real" than actual documents, which were often written from the perspective of the dominant culture. E.L. Doctorow. "The Leather Man." Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 331-338. Art Spiegelman. Excerpt from Maus. Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 294-300. Joseph Heller. Excerpt from Catch-22. Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 345-362. John Barth. From Chimera. "Dunyazadiad." Postmodern American Fiction, pp. 415-443.
15	Revising: Discussion on the American Literature from Realism up to the end of the 20th century (1865-1980)
16	Final Exam

Prerequisites	The student must attend the course at a minimum rate of 75%.		
Literature	• Campbell, N. & Kean, A.(1997). American Cultural Stuides: An Introduction to American Culture. Routledge • Baym, N. (2003). Northon Anthology of American Literature. 6th Edition & Volume A-B-C-D-E • Geyh, Paula, Fred G. Leebron, and Andrew Levy. Postmodern American Fiction: A Norton Anthology. New York: W.W. Norton, 1998.		
References	• Gray, R. (2004). A History of American Literature. Blackwell Publishing		
Course Outcome			
1	Discussion of the most important currents of American literature		
2	Discussion of the most important authors of American literature from the beginnings to the present day		
3	Analysis of works and presentation of ideas of literary authors and their evaluation from a cultural point of view		
Course Evaluation			
In-term Studies		Quantity	Percentage
Midterms		1	20
Quizzes		0	0
Projects		1	10
Term Projects		1	20
Laboratory		0	0
Class Participation		1	10
Total in-term evaluation percent			60
Final exam percent			40
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	4	64
Study hours outside the classroom (Preparation, Practice, etc.)	14	3	42
Duties	2	5	10
Midterms	1	10	10
Final Exam	1	13	13
Other	0	0	0
Total Work Load			139
Total Work Load / 25 (hours)			5.56
ECTS			6.00