

NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Course Syllabus

Course Title: Topics in American Studies

Course #: ENG 229

Course Description: 3 Credits

This seminar will examine the historical and literary definitions of what it means to be an American. Through film, historical documents, novels, short stories, and other printed sources, students will investigate how various events and ideas intertwined to define important aspects of American culture. The class will be run as a seminar with emphasis placed on individual reading and class discussion. Students will be responsible for class presentation on several topics.

Pre-requisite: ENG 101(C- or better) or permission of instructor

Goals:

- To provide a framework for the interdisciplinary study of the history, literature, and culture of the United States.
- To promote understanding of significant themes which have affected U.S. history and culture.
- To focus on particular events, ideas, movements, and individuals which have shaped American culture.
- To provide an opportunity for students to conduct individual inquiry in areas of personal interest.

Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify important themes present in American culture
- Analyze primary and secondary historical and literary sources
- Use literature and historical information to create an interdisciplinary view of American culture
- Discuss important figures of the American past such as (but not limited to):
 - Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - General George Armstrong Custer, Ulysses S. Grant,
 - F. D. R., Herbert Hoover,
 - J. F. K., Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon
- Analyze the role of important literary movements in the American canon such as Romanticism, Transcendentalism, Naturalism, Local Color, Realism, and Modernism
- Describe the role that gender, race and class played in the American past