



Language and Literature Division

AML 2020: American Literature, Reconstruction to the Present

Fall 2026

(80460) Online

Professor

Dr. Matt Brock

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Office Hours: **M** 8-9:30am & by appointment

* I do my best to return emails within twenty-four hours during the week and forty-eight hours on the weekends. Voicemails are answered upon my return to the office.

Division Information

Professor Betty McKinnie, Division Chair

Phone: (850) 769-1551 ext. 2887

Office: Language and Literature Building, room 7

Brandon Bowling, Division Administrative Assistant

Phone: (850) 872-3870

Office: Language and Literature Building, room 8

Course Description

AML 2020

3 hrs., 3 crs.

American Literature, Reconstruction to the Present

(Prerequisite: ENC 1102 with minimum grade of "C. Meets Area III Humanities requirement.) Major writers, literary movements, forms, and themes of American literature from Reconstruction to the present. Students will produce extensive college-level writing. This course requires completion with a minimum grade of "C."

Reading

Because this class is oriented toward reading and discussion, it is imperative for students to critically read all assigned texts and be prepared to engage. Students must keep up with all readings to do well in this class.

Cultural Sensitivity

Students may encounter controversial issues, language, and discussions during this semester. All controversy must be approached in a sensitive and mature manner. In addition, disrespectful behavior toward another person or body of people will not be tolerated.

Textbook and Materials

All instructional materials, including assigned readings, are available on Canvas.

Assignments

All assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

1. Reading journal entries and discussion assignments: 25%
2. Two critical-response essays: 35%
3. Midterm and Final exams: 40%

Assignments will not be accepted late.

GCSC Grade Scale:

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- F: 0-59

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of assigned readings through objective tests to be graded by the instructor.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of assigned readings through written essays to be evaluated according to a rubric for literary analysis.

Academic Integrity

Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism, is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment and therefore will not be tolerated. "Cheating" includes but is not limited to use of any unauthorized assistance in completing course work. "Plagiarism" includes but is not limited to the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment.

Students may use basic assistive technologies for spelling, grammar, and formatting (e.g., PaperRater or SpellCheckPlus); however, the use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI function) for generating, rewriting, or enhancing content is not permitted. All work must reflect the student's original ideas and writing. Representing work created by AI as one's own is a violation of academic integrity and may result in penalties, including a zero on the assignment and additional disciplinary actions as outlined in the college's academic integrity policy.

Sanctions for incidences of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incidence and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or zero) for the test, assignment, or activity, to failure of the course, to suspension or dismissal from the program or the college. Plagiarism and unacceptable use of AI may result in failure of the course.

Accessibility Statement

Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Resources. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. For information regarding the registration process, email sar@gulfcoast.edu or call 850-747-3243.

Student Withdrawals

Students wishing to withdraw from a course must complete a withdrawal form and submit the form to the Office of Enrollment Services before the scheduled withdrawal date as published on the college calendar. Student withdrawals initiated prior to the scheduled withdrawal deadline will be recorded as a grade of "W."

Consequences of Withdrawals: Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, etc.).

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

*The professor has the right to make changes to the schedule of readings and assignments.
If changes are made, students will be properly notified.*

Module 1: After the Civil War: Freedom, Citizenship, and National Trauma

Week 1

Introductions
Walt Whitman "Oh Captain! My Captain!" "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"
"Beat! Beat! Drums!"
Frederick Douglass "What the Black Man Wants"

Week 2

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No class)
Ambrose Bierce "Chickamauga"
Mark Twain "The War Prayer"
Gertrude Bonin (Zitkála-Šá) "The School Days of an Indian Girl"

Module 2: Race, Social Performance, and Survival

Week 3

Alice Dunbar-Nelson "Sister Josepha"
Paul Laurence Dunbar "We Wear the Mask," "Sympathy," "An Ante-Bellum Sermon"
Sui Sin Far "In the Land of the Free"

Week 4

Stephen Crane "The Open Boat"
Sherwood Anderson "Hands"
Robert Frost "Mending Wall," "After Apple-Picking," "The Death of the Hired Man"

Module 3: Gender, Power, and the Birth of Modern Consciousness

Week 5

Sarah Orne Jewett "A White Heron"
Charlotte Perkins Gilman "The Yellow Wallpaper"
Edna St. Vincent Millay "Renascence," "I, Being Born a Woman," "Dirge Without Music"

Week 6

W.E.B. Du Bois "Of Our Spiritual Strivings"
Langston Hughes "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "I, Too," "The Weary Blues"
Claude McKay "If We Must Die," "The Lynching," "America"
2/18 Zora Neale Hurston "Sweat"

Week 7

Katherine Anne Porter "Flowering Judas"
T.S. Eliot "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"
William Carlos Williams "The Red Wheelbarrow," "Spring and All," "This Is Just to Say"
Wallace Stevens "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," "Sunday Morning"

Midterm Review

Week 8

Midterm Exam
Student Conferences

Module 4: Depression, Identity, and American Myth

Week 9

John Steinbeck *Of Mice and Men*

Week 10

John Steinbeck *Of Mice and Men*
Essay 1 due

Week 11

William Faulkner "Barn Burning"
Flannery O'Connor "Good Country People"
Hemingway "Indian Camp"

Module 5: Civil Rights, Vietnam, and American Protest

Week 12

Martin Luther King Jr. "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence"
Dudley Randall "Ballad of Birmingham"
Gwendolyn Brooks "We Real Cool," "The Mother," "The Ballad of Pearl May Lee"
Tim O'Brien "The Things They Carried"
Ocean Vuong "Aubade with Burning City"

Module 6: Heritage, Memory, and Connection

Week 13

Louise Erdrich "The Red Convertible"
Joy Harjo "She Had Some Horses," "Remember," "Eagle Poem"
Sandra Cisneros "My Lucy Friend Who Smells like Corn" and other stories
Li-Young Lee "The Gift," "Persimmons," "A Story"

Module 7: Post-9/11 Literature and Global America

Week 14

David Foster Wallace “The View from Mrs. Thompson’s”
Naomi Shihab Nye “To Any Would-Be Terrorists” and poems
Martin Espada “Alabanza: In Praise of Local 100”
Jamil Jan Kochai “Playing Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain”

Module 8: The End of the World and the Future of Humanity

Week 15

Cormac McCarthy *The Road*
The Road

Week 16

The Road
Final Review
Essay 2 Due