

Nottingham Trent University

Module Specification

	Basic module information	
1	Module Title:	American Literature: Writing Self and Nation
2	Module Code:	ENGL11712
3	Credit Points:	20
4	Duration:	Full year
5	School:	Art and Humanities
6	Campus:	Clifton
7	Date this version first approved to run:	September 2017

8 Pre, post and co-requisites:

These are modules that you must have studied previously in order to take this module, or modules that you must study simultaneously or in a subsequent academic session

Pre, Co, Post Module Code Module Title

9 Courses containing the module

<u>Level</u>	<u>Core/Option</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Course Title</u>
4	Core	FT	ENGL001	BA (Hons) English
4	Core	PT	ENGL001	BA (Hons) English
4	Core	FT		BA Joint Honours Humanities
4	Core	PT		BA Joint Honours Humanities
4	Core	SW		BA Joint Honours Modern Languages
4	Core	PT		BA Joint Honours Modern Languages

10 Overview and aims

American Literature: Writing Self and Nation' introduces many of the authors, literary movements, and historical events that shaped American literature from the birth of the republic to the contemporary period. We will read writers such as Irving, Hawthorne, Sedgwick, Whitman, Stowe, Fitzgerald, or Tennessee Williams who call for a national tradition or assume the task of defining it. We will pay serious attention to the counter-traditions developed by women writers, African American writers, and other ethnic writers, and we will consider how this work reshapes the whole picture. Critical essays will explain how the American literary canon has changed and why the canon wars continue. Ranging from fiction, poetry, drama, to genre fiction, travel writing, or multi-media, roughly half the literature will be written before 1900 and half

after. A strand on 'Literature in the World' runs through the module to make explicit the links between module content and global concerns.

11 Module content

Topics might include:

- What is an American?
- American Renaissance
- The Gothic (Poe, Alcott, Crane, Stephen King etc.)
 - Race, Slavery, and Jim Crow
- Cult of Domesticity
- New Woman and Modernist Women's Writing
- Naturalism, landscape and ecocriticism
 - Immigrant Writing
- Harlem Renaissance
- Southern Writing
- Consumerism
- The Great Depression(s)
- Literature of Empire (Spanish-American War, Vietnam, etc.)
- Feminism and writing
- Detective Fiction
- Science Fiction
- 1960s Protest Literature
- Postmodernism
- The dialogue and borrowings between U.S. and other national literatures
- Issues arising from studying U.S. literature abroad

A named anthology (Norton, Heath, or other) is likely to be part of the set reading, in order to provide access to a range of literature and contextual material.

The 'Literature in the World' strand that runs through the module will comprise of four sessions provisionally titled 'US exceptionalism' 'self and society' 'literature and dissent' 'literature and the global'. Each of these sessions will encourage dialogue and debate on themes raised in the module texts that relate to: issues of global responsibility; issues of difference; the significance of literature beyond academic study; American Literature as a tool that fosters understanding and respect.

12 Indicative reading

Please note this is indicative reading list, giving examples of writers whom we might study. The actual reading list will change from year to year and will be made available to you.

Washington Irving, "Rip Van Winkle" (1819)
Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
Walt Whitman, "Leaves of Grass" (1855-1892)
Emily Dickinson, selected poems (dating uncertain)
Frederick Douglass, *A Narrative of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845)
Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (1900)
Claude McKay, selected poems (available online, 1920-1940)
Allen Ginsberg, "Howl" (1956)
Alice Walker, *Meridian* (1976)
Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977)
Salvador Plascenia, *The People of Paper* (2005)

13 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of the module

Note about English learning outcomes

Although the learning outcomes do not specify everything you learn on the module, they indicate the main areas it addresses and of which you should be aware.

While some learning outcomes may be specific to this module, those with alphanumeric labels at the end – (A1), (B3), etc. – map into the learning outcomes for English degree programmes. You can see these – and use them to trace your progress through the degree – by consulting the English learning outcomes map.

Knowledge and understanding. After studying this module you should be able to:

understand the complex nature of literary languages A2

understand the relationship between literary texts and their historical and cultural locations A3

have a critical awareness of past and current literary and theoretical approaches to texts A4

have a critical appreciation of the affective power of language and the function of the imagination A9

Skills, qualities and attributes. After studying this module you should be able to:

show confidence in performing close textual analysis B1

write clearly and logically B5

present cogent and coherent written and/or oral arguments B6

demonstrate time management and organisational skills B10

demonstrate information technology skills: the ability to access, work with and evaluate electronic resources B11

14 Teaching and learning

Range of modes of direct contact

This indicates the range of direct contact teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. lectures, seminars

The conceptual framework will be delivered by 1 hour lectures. Students will share their own ideas and prepared material in tutorials and seminars.

The precise balance between lectures and seminars may vary from year to year. The following is an indicative pattern:

Lectures: 24 x 1hr

Seminars: 24 x 1hr

Total contact hours:	48
<i>Range of other learning methods</i>	
This indicates the range of other teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. directed reading, research	
This is indicative only. The precise balance between the range of other learning methods used on this module will vary from year to year. Students will engage with the module material in a number of different ways to encourage preparation, constructive follow-up of class discussion and independent research Directed reading, learning, and independent study: 152	
Total non-contact hours:	152

15 **Assessment methods**

This indicates the type and weighting of assessment elements and sub-elements in the module

<u>Element number</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Description (include any sub-elements)</u>
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1	100%	Essay	1500 word essay
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Diagnostic/formative assessment

This indicates if there are any assessments that do not contribute directly to the final module mark

Students will be set a programme of seminar preparation tasks that may include presentations, class-led discussions, reflections on reading or written responses to set questions. They will also submit a short essay and a research task during the year.

Further information on assessment

This section provides further information on the module's assessment where appropriate

Formative tasks will train students in the skills required for writing well-researched arguments. The first essay will emphasise close reading and argument, with the research task building on this through focusing on research skills and critical engagement. Each of the tasks will require students to choose the primary text on which they will focus, and the final essay will be chosen from a list of 8-10 questions to encourage students in articulating their own topic preferences, and recognising their strengths.

Document management

16	Module Title:	American Literature: Writing Self and Nation
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17	Module Code:	ENGL11712	
18	Subject (JACS) Code:	Q300	
19	Cost Centre:	138	
20	School:	Arts and Humanities	
21	Academic Team:	ECM	
22	Campus:	Clifton	
23	Other institutions providing teaching:	<i>Please complete in box 23 a-d - if applicable</i>	
		Institution	%
23a	Other UK Higher Education or Further Education Institution- Please name Percentage not taught by NTU		
23b	Other public organisation in the UK- Percentage not taught by NTU		
23c	Other private organisation in the UK - Percentage not taught by NTU		
23d	Any other Non-UK organisation - Percentage not taught by NTU		
24	Date this version was formally approved by the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) or Development Approval Group (DAG):		