

Literature of the United States II: From Modernism to 1950

Code: 106305
 ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
English Studies	OB	3
English and Catalan Studies	OT	3
English and Catalan Studies	OT	4
English and Spanish Studies	OT	3
English and Spanish Studies	OT	4
English and French Studies	OT	0
English and French Studies	OT	3
English and French Studies	OT	4
English and Classics Studies	OT	3
English and Classics Studies	OT	4

Contact

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Teachers

Clara Román Vanden Berghe

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

1. Students should have passed "Literatura anglesa s.XX" and "19th century American Literature".
2. A C1(advanced or C2(proficiency), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment is required. C1 allows the student to: understand a wide range of long and/or complex texts; express themselves fluently and spontaneously with having to search around for words or expressions; use language efficiently in various social, academic, and professional contexts; demonstrate skill in the structure of their writing, particular in the use of connectors and other forms of relating ideas. C2 allows the student to understand practically any text, whether oral or written, with as

little additional effort as possible; to summarise information from a wide variety of sources, articulate facts and discussion, presenting them in a coherent fashion; to express themselves fluently and accurately, including nuances in the most complex of situations.

3. History and Culture of the U.S. is a necessary previous requirement to take this course.

Objectives and Contextualisation

"American Literature II: From Modernism until the first half of the 20th century" provides an overview to the fiction and poetry written by American authors during Modernism. The subject involves the reading, analysis, debate and interpretation of the selected works.

On successfully completing American Literature II: From Modernism until the first half of the 20th century students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a good level of reading knowledge as regards the key literary works of American Modernism.
- Produce literary criticism through essays and presentations.
- Use the resources of any university library relating to material on the literature of American Modernism.
- Express an informed opinion on the literary texts studied throughout this course.

Competences

English Studies

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Apply scientific ethical principles to information processing.
- Apply the methodology of analysis and critical concepts to analysing the literature, culture and history of English-speaking countries.
- Demonstrate skills to work autonomously and in teams to fulfil the planned objectives.
- Identify and analyse the main currents, genres, works and authors in English and comparative literature.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Understand and produce written and spoken academic texts in English at advanced higher-proficient-user level (C2).
- Use current philological methodologies to interpret literary texts in English and their cultural and historical context.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources for the collection and organisation of information.
- Use written and spoken English for academic and professional purposes, related to the study of linguistics, the philosophy of language, history, English culture and literature.

English and Catalan Studies

- Critically evaluate the literary and cultural production in the Catalan and English languages and their historical and social context.
- Demonstrate the ability to work autonomously and in teams with the aim of attaining the planned objectives in multicultural and interdisciplinary contexts.
- Identify and interpret literary texts in different languages, analysing the generic, formal, thematic and cultural characteristics in accordance with the concepts and methods of comparative literature and literary theory.
- Make correct use of written and spoken English for academic or professional purposes, related to the study of language, history, culture and literature.

- Recognise the most significant periods, traditions, tendencies, authors and works of literature in the Catalan and English languages in their socio-historical context.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Understand and produce oral and written academic texts with appropriateness and fluency in distinct communicative contexts.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources to gather and organise information.

English and Spanish Studies

- Carry out effective written work or oral presentations adapted to the appropriate register in different languages.
- Correctly use written and oral English and Spanish for academic and professional purposes, related to the study of linguistics, history, culture and literature.
- Critically analyse linguistic, literary and cultural production in English and Spanish, applying the techniques and methods of critical editing and digital processing.
- Demonstrate the ability to work autonomously and in teams in order to achieve the planned objectives in multicultural and interdisciplinary contexts.
- Students can apply the knowledge to their own work or vocation in a professional manner and have the powers generally demonstrated by preparing and defending arguments and solving problems within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Understand and produce oral and written academic texts with appropriateness and fluency in distinct communicative contexts.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources to gather and organise information.

English and French Studies

- Critically apply the different current philological methodologies to interpret literary texts in English and French and their cultural and historical context.
- Demonstrate the ability to work autonomously and in teams with the aim of attaining the planned objectives in multicultural and interdisciplinary contexts.
- Recognize the most significant periods, traditions, trends, authors and works of literature in English and French in their historical and social context.
- Understand and produce oral and written academic texts with appropriateness and fluency in distinct communicative contexts.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources to gather and organise information.
- Use spoken English and French correctly for academic and professional purposes related to the study of linguistics, history, culture and literature.

English and Classics Studies

- Apply the methodology of analysis and knowledge of genres, metrics and stylistics to comment on literary texts and analyse the culture and history of English-speaking countries and the ancient world.
- Recognize the most significant periods, traditions, trends, authors and works of Greek, Latin and English literatures in their historical and social context.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Understand and produce oral and written academic texts with appropriateness and fluency in distinct communicative contexts.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources to gather and organise information.
- Use written and spoken English correctly for academic and professional purposes related to the study of English linguistics, history, culture, and literature.

Learning Outcomes

1. Apply the basic principles of literary text analysis.
2. Carry out basic bibliographic research.
3. Critically analyse American texts in order to understand the complexity of American literature and its historical and cultural context.
4. Express oneself effectively orally and in writing using expository and argumentative techniques.
5. Express oneself orally and in writing in English in an academic register, using appropriate terminology in relation to the study of American literature.
6. Identify and describe the characteristics of the American texts studied.
7. Identify primary and secondary sources.
8. Identify the main arguments of a written text.
9. Incorporate ideas and concepts from published sources into work, citing and referencing appropriately.
10. Interpret, comment and write essays on texts written by American authors and be able to distinguish their most relevant characteristics.
11. Locate specialised and academic information and select this according to its relevance.
12. Organise content clearly and appropriately for oral presentation.
13. Plan work effectively, individually or in groups, in order to fulfil the planned objectives.
14. Understand and analyse the diversity of the United States in terms of culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and linguistic and ideological identity.
15. Understand specialised academic texts at higher-proficient-user level (C2) on research in fields related to American authors and texts.
16. Understand specialised academic texts (C2) on research in fields related to American authors and texts.
17. Understand specialised academic texts on research in fields related to American authors and texts.
18. Understand specialised academic texts on research in fields related to American authors and texts at Mastery level (C2).
19. Use the appropriate resources and methodology for an academic work.
20. Write a summary of contents in a coherent and cohesive way.

Content

The course is divided into five units:

Unit 1 Henry James: *Washington Square* (1880)

Unit 2 Ernest Hemingway: *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)

Unit 3 F.S. Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby* (1925)

Unit 4 Nella Larsen: *Passing* (1929)

Unit 5 Modernist poetry: selections of poetry by Langston Hughes, William Carlos Williams, Edna St Vincent Millay, H.D.

For the first four set texts, please procure an annotated edition with notes and introduction, such as Oxford World's Classics or Penguin Classics.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Directed activities	50	2	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20

Type: Supervised

Supervised activities	25	1	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
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Type: Autonomous

Autonomous activities	50	2	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
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1. Lectures will be based on in class discussion and analysis of the historical, cultural and literary background of the US during the first half of the 20th century. Texts will be discussed in class and this is why students should have read them well in advance.

2. Studying literature involves a deep reflective reading of primary sources.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Class participation and in-class activities	10%	8	0.32	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
Written assessment 1 in-class essay	45%	15	0.6	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20
Written assessment 2 - exam	45%	2	0.08	3, 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 4, 5, 2, 19, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20

1. Written assessment.

Mid-term paper, 45%

Exam, 45%

The student will write academic texts expressing a critical judgement on American literature of modern American literature.

2. Class participation and groupwork = 10% (in-class debates and group tasks in class).

3. PLEASE NOTE:

-All the subjects in this degree follow continuous assessment.

-Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

-The student's command of English will be taken into account when marking all exercises and for the final mark.

-Re-assessment conditions:

Re-assessment for this subject requires a content-synthesis test, for which the following conditions are applicable:

-The student must previously have submitted a minimum of two-thirds of the course-assessment items.

-The student must previously have obtained an average overall grade equal to or higher than 3.5.

-The maximum grade than can be obtained through re-assessment is 5.

-The following activities are not eligible for reassessment: in-class tasks and class participation

Students can't attend the reassessment to improve their marks. If the student can't attend the exam because s/he is sick, they will have to agree on an alternative date with the teacher.

-Procedure for Reviewing Grades Awarded: On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Irregularities refer, for instance, to copying in an exam, copying from sources without indicating authorship, or a misuse of AI such as presenting work as original that has been generated by an AI tool or programme. These evaluation activities will not be re-assessed.]

Single assessment:

Essay 40%

Passage commentary 30%

Comparative analysis 30%

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI): This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding task will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Examination Dates and Submission Deadlines: Requests to change examination dates or submission deadlines for personal reasons will not be granted unless they are illness related and a doctor's certificate can be provided; Erasmus and exchange students who cannot take an exam or submit an essay for justifiable reasons will need to submit to their teacher(s) written proof of the latter issued by their home university.

Bibliography

READINGS

1. Henry James, *Washington Square*

Penguin edition. ISBN: 9780141441368

Oxford edition. ISBN: 9780199559190

2. Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*

Vintage edition. ISBN: 9780099273974

3. F.S.Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

Penguin edition. ISBN: 9780141182636

Oxford edition. ISBN: 9780199536405

4. Nella Larsen, *Passing*

Penguin edition. ISBN: 9780142437278

5. Modernist poetry (selections provided by the teachers)

SECONDARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

More specific bibliography will be provided during the semester.

Bigsby, Christopher. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern American Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Cowley, Malcolm. *Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s*. New York: Penguin, 1994.

Gray, Richard J. *A History of American Literature*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.

Lewis, Pericles. *The Cambridge Introduction to Modernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Mitchell, Angelyn (ed). *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.

Showalter, Elaine. *A Jury of Her Peers: American Women Writers from Anne Bradstreet to Annie Proulx*. London: Little, Brown Book Group, 2010.

Sollors, Werner (ed.). *A New Literary History of America*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009.

Digital sources: requires library access with NIU.

Donaldson, S. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway*, 1996.

Freedman, J. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*, 1998.

Hutchinson, G. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to the Harlem Renaissance*, 2007.

Kalaidjian, W. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to American Modernism*, 2005.

Miller, J. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to the American Modernist Novel*, 2015.

Phillips, C.N. (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to American Poets*, 2018.

Prigozy, Ruth (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to F Scott Fitzgerald*, 2001.

Software

Not applicable

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	English	first semester	morning-mixed
(PAUL) Classroom practices	2	English	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	English	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	2	English	first semester	morning-mixed