

## **Guidelines for Teachers of General Education Literature (GEL) Old Dominion University**

- **112L: Introduction to Literature**
- **114L: American Writers, American Experiences**

### **Course catalogue descriptions (Revised 2020): To be printed in the Syllabus 2020-2021 AY**

#### **English 112L- Introduction to Literature:**

This course introduces students to a broad range of literary forms, including poetry, fiction and drama, exposing students to a diverse range of writers across race, gender, sexuality, nationality and time periods. As students engage with the readings, they will develop skills in literary interpretation, analysis and critical evaluation.

#### **English 114L- American Writers, American Experiences:**

This course introduces students to the diversity of American culture as depicted in American literature. Readings expose students to a diverse range of writers across race, gender, sexuality, and time periods. As students engage with the readings, they will develop skills in literary interpretation, analysis and critical evaluation.

#### **Required Texts:**

ENGL 112L

[Norton Introduction to Literature, Portable, 13th ed, Mays, Norton, 2020](#) \*\* New edition-

#### Approved Alternate Texts:

- [Literature to Go](#), 4th ed, Meyer, Macmillan, 2020
- [Literature: The Human Experience \(shorter edition\)](#); 12th ed; Abcarian, Klotz, and Cohen; Macmillan; 2017

ENGL 114L

- The Norton Anthology: American Literature shorter 9th ed, Baym et al, 9th ed, Norton, 2017

\*\*Faculty who have taught the class previously for at least 1 year may opt to use open source material and make their class textbook free. Faculty who choose this option should alert the Director of GE Literature they are doing so.

### **Student Learning Outcomes (Revised 2018) - Include SOL's on Your Syllabus**

#### **Students in general education literature will:**

1. **Read** literary texts from an eclectic selection of works written in a variety of genres and styles by writers who reflect diversity in race, gender, sexuality, class, region, religion, historical culture

etc. and engage in class discussion, written assignments, and projects designed to help students:

- Appreciate the literary expression of ideas, emotions, and shared experiences
- Gain exposure to diverse perspectives that may add to but also challenge students' ideas and experiences
- Develop empathy for the human experience of others

2. **Interpret** literary texts through class discussion, written assignments, and projects designed to help students:

- Recognize how texts not only reflect but produce culture and history
- Argue for distinct connections between texts and context in interpreting meaning
- Support interpretations with evidence from close reading of the text in ways that demonstrate integrative and independent thinking
- Allow for a multiplicity of meanings and reflect on how acts of making meaning are dependent on perspective
- Relate ideas expressed in literature to everyday life

3. **Analyze** literary texts through class discussion, written assignments, and projects designed to help students:

- Become acquainted with aspects of genre, voice, and a variety of literary elements
- Conduct "close readings" of texts through attention to word choice and context
- Consider how authorial techniques and material delivery affect reader experiences

4. **Evaluate and apply critical thinking to literary texts** through class discussion, written assignments, and projects designed to help students:

- Integrate aspects of reading, analysis, and interpretation when synthesizing and expressing their ideas and opinion of a text
- Recognize and articulate the ways in which literature reflects, influences, perpetuates, and resists cultural beliefs and how those beliefs interact with race, gender, class, sexuality, and nationality
- Reflect on how literature connects to various professions, disciplines, and aspects of social and civic life

## Course design and teaching guidelines:

- **Methods and Common goals:** English 112L and ENGL 114L are general education courses designed to equip students with a substantive introduction to the study of literary texts written in English and are oriented towards the non-English major. Through engaging with a diverse selection of literary texts, written in different generic forms, by diverse authors, over multiple historical periods, students will develop skills in critical reading, critical thinking and written analysis.
  - In English 112L, the course content is predominantly organized around the study of three literary forms: narrative fiction, poetry and drama.
  - In ENGL 114L, the course content is organized around a survey of American literature and culture.
  
- **Academic Substance:** English 112L and 114L contribute to the general student's overall academic preparation by:
  - Developing skills in critical reading, critical thinking, and textual analysis.
  - Exposing students to a variety of worldviews and experiences that may differ from their own through engagement with imaginative literature. This includes a variety of previously marginalized voices such as, but not limited to, women, African- American, Native American and non-western writers.
  - Developing students' written and verbal communication skills and effective use of the English language by asking them to articulate their own responses, ideas and interpretations of literary texts *and support their interpretation with rationale and evidence.*
  - Encouraging a lifelong practice of reading for both knowledge and pleasure.
  
- **Assessment:**
  - **Low Stakes Assignments** (at least 30% total grade): Students should be given **multiple opportunities** to develop all 4 learning outcomes prior to major assessments- these can include, but are not limited to:

- Daily/weekly reading quizzes
  - Journal responses to readings
  - Freewrite exercises in class
  - Group Work and discussion responses
  - Weekly written reflections
  - In-class discussion participation
- **Required High Stakes Assignments: At least 4 in total including reflection.**
- **Tests/Exams:** Exams may test objective factual information (terms, authors, literary content covered) ***but should stress the application of analytical skills through short answer/essay questions.*** Analysis should constitute **at least ½ of the exam.** Instructors are encouraged to allow students access to their materials in order to support their answers with evidence from the works assigned. The reflective essay below may constitute all or part of the final exam.
  - **Papers/Projects**
    - **Literary analysis essay or project:** These assignments allow students to demonstrate an in depth application of analysis to a work or works of their choice.
      1. **Analysis Essays:** Students should support their main argument about the work or set of works (interpretation) with evidence from the text they are analyzing (close-reading). Outside research is not required for this paper, but may be helpful in establishing the work’s cultural context. **Instructors should provide students with resources for proper MLA citation if they choose to require research.** Papers should be assessed primarily on the student’s ability to articulate an interpretive judgment about the text and support that judgement

with evidence and reasoning. In doing so, students should also demonstrate rhetorically effective writing skills. (750-1000 words or 4-5 pages double spaced) suggested.

2. **\*\*\*For 2020-2021 AY Due to the move online and other labor demands the COVID -19 crises demands, instructors may choose to assign a collection of smaller assignments from multiple works in place of a full length paper. These assignments should still involve interpretive and analytic outcomes and show some evidence of close reading for support of student's ideas/argument and should amount to 2500-3000 words in total. These can be incorporated in part or in whole of an exam (described above) but if so, students should have time to write an polish these responses with access to their materials, as opposed to in the context of a timed, closed book exam. (SLO 1,2&3)**
3. **For other projects:** Instructors may elect to substitute an analytical/interpretive assignment in place of a formal essay provided the instructor has a rationale for how that assignment still demonstrates **SLO's 2 & 3** and the student's work can be archived in google drive in some fashion (recording of oral presentation/ photo of creative project with written rationale etc.)
4. **Reflective essay** (At least 1000 words) This paper gives students the opportunity to reflect on the breadth of ideas they engaged in the course. Students will be given a prompt that asks them to pick **at least 5-6 selections, (though can be more)** from the course that represent a variety of authors, historical contexts, and genres and comment on how

those works challenged their thinking and/ or exposed them to different ideas. **This essay can be a stand alone paper, or can be included as part or the whole of a larger final exam at the instructor's discretion-** either way, students should be allowed the time **to write and polish this essay at home** and utilize materials accumulated from the course in order to actively reflect on their coursework and experience.

#### **SLO 1 & 4**

- Other assignments- instructors are free to add assignments of their choosing; however, *instructors should have a rationale for how additional assignments are tied to 1 or more of the stated learning outcomes.*
  
- **Departmental monitoring and deliverables:**
  - **Syllabi:** Instructors will submit a syllabus for the course each semester to the department. The course syllabus should include:
    - Catalogue course description
    - Statement of department learning outcomes for the course
    - Required course materials and electronic access
    - Classroom policies and procedures.
    - A clear breakdown of assignments, due dates, and weight towards final grade
    - Tentative course schedule of readings/weekly topics and assignments. Instructors should consider how each assignment and aspect of the course contributes to the cultivation of the 4 student learning outcomes.
    - Required university policies (honor code, student accommodations, add/drop etc.)
  
- **Student Opinion Surveys:** Instructors submit student opinion surveys as part of their yearly performance review/portfolio.

- **Archiving Student Work:** Instructors should upload (or have students upload) clean copies (no grades or comments) of the analysis paper (or project) and reflective essay to folders in Google drive at the end of each semester. Alternatively, instructors may have students create showcase ePortfolio websites to present these materials. These folders or websites will then be shared with the GEL Director. **\*\* For 2020-2021 AY this portfolio requirement is waived.**
  - *Note- the extent to which instructors incorporate Google drive/ePortfolios in their pedagogy is up to the individual instructor. This collection merely serves as a depository for departmental collection of artifacts to be assessed. Instructions for upload procedure will be provided by the GEL Director*
  
- **Evaluation and Revision:** The literature sub-committee of the General Education Committee made up of instructors who regularly teach the course, will meet yearly to review the course and discuss possible revisions to these guidelines.