This course offers a survey of American literature from 1850 to the present day, offering a mix of the most important fiction, poetry, and drama to emerge from this period. We will cover texts that consider the explosive changes in American society during these years—from the Civil War and the end of slavery to the rapid growth of American cities; from the anti-communist persecutions of the 1950s to the struggles of Native American writers to memorialize the past and imagine a future. We'll also consider how the nature of writing evolved alongside this changing society, which will include discussions on the development of literary realism, the radical innovations of literary modernism, and why the representation of speech is such a crucial feature of American literature. A discussion-based classroom and a range of assignments will facilitate our encounters with a wide-ranging and exciting set of texts.

Course reading:
You must complete all the essential reading listed for each class, and come prepared to discuss it. This is a discussion-based classroom, and I expect everyone to have something to contribute in every session.

Attendance:
At the beginning of each class you should sign the attendance register. You are allowed three unexcused absences. Missing classes beyond this without adequate excuse and documentation (such as a doctor’s note) will result in your overall grade being lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade for each absence. Six such absences results in a failing grade.

Classroom Electronic Communications Policy:
In this class, cell phone use and the use of tablet devices is prohibited. All such devices should be stored in your bags or left at home. Laptop computers are permitted but only for activities related to the content of the class.

Plagiarism:
All written work should be either your own or contain clear references to your sources; one of the hallmarks of good scholarship is being able to use the insights of others while keeping your ideas distinct from theirs. I expect you to abide by university regulations on the proper acknowledgement of source material, and to follow accepted conventions for how to reference scholarship. I advise you to check on the university’s student conduct code (http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx) for information about this; I recommend MLA style for the presentation of your research papers. Information about how to prepare bibliographies and citations in MLA style can be found at the Purdue Online Writing Lab (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/), and at the Knightcite MLA citation application (http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/).

Late papers:
Papers should be submitted in class on the day of the deadline listed. I will deduct 1/3 of a letter grade for each day a paper is late. I will not accept any paper that is more than a week late. Any request for extensions will be carefully considered, but should be made as far in advance of the due date as possible.

**Disability:**
If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to discuss this with me as soon as possible. Also please request that an AEC Advisor send a letter outlining your approved accommodations. [Accessible Education Center: uoaec@uoregon.edu, 346-1155; http://aec.uoregon.edu/].

**Office Hours and Contact details**
My office hours for this term are Wednesdays 11:30-1 and Fridays 11:30-1. My office is PLC 207; my e-mail is whalan@uoregon.edu.

**GRADED WORK**

**Participation 10%**
I will reward students who approach discussion in an enthusiastic, informed, and collegial way. Both I and your fellow students will appreciate informed opinions, critical insight, a willingness to take a few risks, and respect for others. I will occasionally set small in-class activities and presentations which will also count towards this grade.

**Quizzes 10%**
There will be five quizzes throughout the term. Your best four scores will count.

**Group discussion forum posting 10%**
Here, you will work in small groups with questions given ahead of time. Please work together to write 1 page in response to the day’s reading material, which you will post ahead of time to orient the beginning of our class discussion.

**Parody exercise 15%**
This will ask you to write 2-3 pages in the style of one of the authors we cover. You will also complete a page of reflective commentary, which discusses why you made the stylistic choices you did in your story or poem.

**Midterm close reading exercise 15%**
This will give you several short sections of writing to analyze. You will choose one and write a short response which carefully considers the style of the piece and the ideas it presents.

**Research paper, 6-7 pages 25%**
This is your chance to work in more detail on a paper, using critical sources and pursuing a thesis of your own creation.
Final, 15%
This will give you a series of prompts, and 24 hours in which to write a 2-3 page answer.

More details about these assignments will be given in advance of the due dates.

**ESSENTIAL READING**: please purchase these texts or arrange access for them for the duration of the course. These texts are available at the Duckstore.


Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*, Harperperennial 1989 (0060972459)

**IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU BRING THESE BOOKS—AND PRINTOUTS OF INDIVIDUAL STORIES, ESSAYS, OR POEMS FROM BLACKBOARD—TO CLASS.**

You should also get into the habit of marking up your books as you go along: it will help you focus your reactions and ideas for class discussion, and will improve the detail and insight of your written papers.

**WEEK ONE**: 6/1: Introductions


**WEEK TWO:**

1/13: Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 1-11 (to p.73)

1/15: Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 12-16 (to p.116)

1/17: Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 17-20 (to p.150)
WEEK THREE:
1/20: Martin Luther King Day: No class.
1/22: Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 21-33 to (p.240)
**1/24: PARODY EXERCISE DUE**
Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapters 34-43 (to conclusion, p.296)

WEEK FOUR:
1/27: Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, chapters 1-20 (to p.59)
1/29: Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, chapters 21-30, (pp.59-87)
1/31: Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, chapters 31-39, (pp.87-109)

WEEK FIVE: City Stories
2/3: Theodore Dreiser, “Typhoon;” Willa Cather, “Paul’s Case”
**2/5: MIDTERM**
All stories on Blackboard

WEEK SIX: Modern poetry
2/12: Langston Hughes, selected poems
All poems on Blackboard
WEEK SEVEN:
2/17: Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*, Act 1

WEEK EIGHT:
2/24: James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*, to the end of part two, chapter one (p.84)
2/26: James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room*, pp.84-136
**2/28: RESEARCH PAPER DUE**
James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room*, p.136 to conclusion

WEEK NINE:
3/3: Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*, chapters 1-4
3/5: Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*, chapter 5
3/7: Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*, chapter 6

WEEK TEN:
3/10: Louise Erdrich, *Tracks*, chapters 7-9
3/12: Conclusions
3/14: Finals preparation

FINALS WEEK:
**3/18, TUESDAY: FINAL DUE, 10:30AM**