Class code: COLIT-UA 9190

Instructor Details:
Hana Ulmanová
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222 329 092
776123979

15 minutes both before and after every class, and also by appointment

Class Details:
American literature – European perspectives
Mo 10.30 – 11.50, We 10.30 – 11.50
Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites:
none

Class Description:
This class is devoted not only to close reading of the selected texts, but also to relevant broader issues (see syllabus). While the approach and methods are interdisciplinary, the main emphasis is on literary theory (explaining and applying basic literary terms), literary history (both American and European) and literary criticism (analyzing different responses to given works). The students will in particular learn how the individual literary works were translated into Czech, and how were they received in the Czech cultural context (both before and after 1989).

With the exception of the first two classes (and a guest lecture), every class starts with the oral presentation delivered by a student, then there is a minilecture by the teacher, and a discussion follows

Desired Outcomes:
To be able to interpret literary works in many different contexts
On the basis of the chosen works, to understand the larger cultural shifts and transformations both in America and in Europe
To develop students’ analytical skills and critical approach towards complex phenomena
To deepen students’ understanding of European, and especially Czech culture

Assessment Components:
Regular attendance and active participation in the class 25 per cent
Oral presentations 25 per cent
Mid-term paper 25 per cent
Final in-class essay 25 per cent
Students will be signing up for oral presentations on the assigned readings, according to their interest, during the first week of classes. Each oral presentation should last about 30 minutes. (Details concerning the number of presentations per student as well as their content will be explained during the first week of classes: the actual number of students, their eventual second subjects and other important factors will be taken into consideration.) The mid-term paper, relevant to the class work done during the whole semester, must be submitted before the mid-term break and must be cca 10 pages long (double-spaced). While the actual topic is chosen by the student and should be of genuine interest to him/her, it must be approved by the teacher. To this end, the student must submit a written two-paragraph project proposal by the end of February, which must include the following: a preliminary list of both primary and secondary sources, the aim of the paper and methods and/or methodology used. In order to prepare an adequate proposal, the students are encouraged to see me at their convenience. As to the final in-class essay, the students will be given a choice of three different extracts from three different works studied in the class (identified by the author and the title), and will be asked to respond to two attached questions: one of them aiming at the actual extract, the other being contextual. (Details to be specified later.)

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent work demonstrating an observant approach to the subject, sound research, ability to express thoughts cogently and to interpret complex phenomena in a non-reductive manner, keen interest in the field

**Grade B:** Very good work but falling short of the highest level (lack of precision as to terms and their applicability, clear argument that is not developed and does not lead to any persuasive conclusion, etc.)

**Grade C:** Satisfactory work, sufficiently accurate

**Grade D:** Passable work, with limited knowledge of the basic concepts taught in the class and weak analytical and critical thought

**Grade F:** Failure to achieve a passable standard: no interest in the subject, no understanding of the basic concepts taught in the class

**Grade conversion**

A = 94 – 100
A minus = 90 – 93
B plus = 87 – 89
B = 84 – 86
B minus = 80 – 83
C plus = 77 – 79
C = 74 – 76
C minus = 70 – 73
D plus = 67 – 69
D = 65 – 66
F = below 65

**Grading Policy**

NYU Prague aims to have grading standards and results similar to those that prevail at Washington Square. At the College of Arts and Sciences, roughly 39 per cent of all final grades are in the B plus to B minus range, and 50 per cent in the A/A minus range. We have therefore adopted the following grading guideline: in any non-Stern course, class teachers should try to ensure that no more than 50 per cent of the class receives an A or A minus. A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that – it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.
Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absences will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.

Late Submission of Work

As to oral presentations, in case of medical reasons (see above), you should notify me by phone or e-mail that you are not able to attend that particular class, and you may re-sign for another oral presentation. As to mid-term papers, if you fail to submit them for medical reasons (see above) before the deadline, this will not be considered a problem. If the reasons are other than medical, your grade for the mid-term paper will be most likely lowered by half a grade (this depends on the seriousness of your reason, and also on the actual delay).

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as though it were one’s own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one’s own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer’s work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student’s intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science’s Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)

Required Text(s)

All the required texts can be found in my NYU reader

Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-P Library)

On my shelf in NYU Prague library – not required, just recommended

Internet Research Guidelines

Avoid webpages of questionable quality, and rely mainly on those backed by respectable institutions

Additional Required Equipment

In order to take notes, you may want to use labtop, your own reader (not the one from the library), or blank sheets of paper

Session 1

Translating American literature (lecture)
Monday, February 11
Discussion about the differences between Czech and English, between Czech and American culture

**Session 2**
Wednesday, February 13
Reception of American literature in the Czech Republic (lecture)
Visit the local bookstores, see what is available, how is it advertised

**Session 3**
Friday, February 15
(make up for Monday classes)
THE INTERNATIONAL THEME
Henry James: Daisy Miller
Pgs 1491-1533 (43 pages)

**Session 4**
Monday, February 18
COSMOPOLITAN AND EXPERIMENTAL ART
Henry James: Beast in the Jungle
Pgs 1550-1580 (30 pages)

**Session 5**
Wednesday, February 20
NATURALISM IN LITERATURE
Stephen Crane: The Blue Hotel
Pgs 741-787 (46 pages)

**Session 6**
Monday, February 25
THE 1920s IN AMERICA AND IN EUROPE
Ernest Hemingway: The Snows of Kilimanjaro
Pgs 1685-1704 (19 pages)

**Session 7**
Wednesday, February 27
MODERNISM IN PROSE
William Faulkner: As I Lay Dying
Pgs 1532-1630 (98 pages)
<table>
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<th>Session 8</th>
<th>MODERNISM IN PROSE</th>
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| **Friday, March 1** (make up for Wednesday classes) | William Faulkner: *As I Lay Dying*  
Pgs 1532-1630  
Mid-term paper proposals due |

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<tr>
<th>Session 9</th>
<th>MODERNISM IN POETRY</th>
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| **Monday, March 4** | Wallace Stevens, Ezra Pound  
Pgs 1164-1184 plus 1932-1939 (27pages) |

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<tr>
<th>Session 10</th>
<th>MODERNISM IN POETRY</th>
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| **Wednesday, March 6** | E. E. Cummings, T. S. Eliot  
Pgs 2108-2118 plus 2040-2068 (27 pages) |

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<tr>
<th>Session 11</th>
<th>THE IDEA OF THE AMERICAN WEST</th>
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| **Monday, March 11** | Bret Harte: *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*  
Pgs 284-293 (9 pages) |

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<th>Session 12</th>
<th>THE IDEA OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH</th>
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| **Wednesday, March 13** | Flannery O’Connor: *Good Country People*  
Pgs 2403-2418 (15 pages) |

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<tr>
<th>Session 13</th>
<th>THE IDEA OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH</th>
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| **Friday, March 15** (make up for Wednesday classes) | Eudora Welty: *Petrified Man*  
Pgs 2272-2282 (10 pages) |

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<th>Session 14</th>
<th>THE IDEA OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH</th>
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| **Monday, March 18** | Tennessee Williams: *A Streetcar Named Desire*  
Pgs 2282-2348 (13 pages) |

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<tr>
<th>Session 15</th>
<th>THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN JEW</th>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, March 21</strong></td>
<td>Bernard Malamud: <em>The Magic Barrel</em></td>
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<td>Session 16: THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN JEW</td>
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<td>March 20</td>
<td>Thursday, March 22</td>
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<td>Monday, March 25</td>
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<td>Wednesday, March 27</td>
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<td>Monday, April 8</td>
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<td>Session 19</td>
<td>THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN MIDDLE CLASS</td>
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<td>Session 20</td>
<td>THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN MIDDLE CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 21</td>
<td>THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN</td>
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<td>Session 22</td>
<td>THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN</td>
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**Spring Break**

April 1 - 5

**Mid-term papers due by Friday noon**
Session 23
Monday, April 22
THE IDEA OF AN ETHNIC WOMAN
Alice Walker: Everyday Use
Pgs 2521-2528 (7 pages)

Session 24
Wednesday, April 24
THE IDEA OF AN ETHNIC WOMAN
Audre Lorde
2761-2764 (4 pages)

Session 25
Monday, April 29
POSTMODERN LITERATURE
Thomas Pynchon: Entropy
Pgs 2476-2487 (11 pages)

National Holiday
May 1
no classes

Session 26
Monday, May 6
A writer/work of your choice

National Holiday
May 8
no classes

Session 27
Monday, May 13
Guest lecture

Session 28
Wednesday, May 15
(last day of classes)
Summary

Session 29
Monday,
Final exam: in-class essay
| May 20  
| Final exam  
| Session 30  
| Individual meetings with the students (discussion of their performance during the whole semester, including the final exam and the final grade) – during the regular class hours, cca 15 minutes per student  
| Wednesday, May 22  
| Final exam  
| Classroom Etiquette  
| Reasonable behavior expected: you may drink or take a toilet break, but quietly or quickly, and you should arrive on time as a rule (in case of unexpected circumstances, just join us any time and ask what we did at the end of the class)  
| Required Co-curricular Activities  
| none  
| Suggested Co-curricular Activities  
| Relevant lectures/events at Charles University, American cultural center, Jewish cultural and educational center, etc.  |