

**Common Course
A&S Core Curriculum**

- I. Course Title: American Literary Cultures
- II. Credit Hours: 3
- III. Course Level: 2000
- IV. Department or Departments responsible for teaching course: English
- V. Proposed Description: An introduction to the literature of the United States, from the colonial encounter to the 21st century. This course will emphasize the major works of American literature, by men and women, by authors from different regions of the United States, and by authors from the many cultural backgrounds that constitute the complex, global history of great writing in America.
- VI. Core Curriculum Objectives:
 1. By studying American literature in its historical and social contexts, students will learn to comprehend the diverse heritage of our cultures.
 2. The course will foster cultural literacy while developing creativity, critical thinking, and essential reading and writing skills in our students. A research paper or essays will be required.
 3. Students will develop the ability to read literary texts for meaning, structure, and style.
 4. Students will develop critical reading and writing skills through the analysis of a variety of literary genres. This will involve students in reflecting critically and sensitively about the variety of ethical perspectives in the literature they read and analyze.
 5. Students will increase their ability to express thoughts well.
 6. Students will gain a global appreciation of the many cultures that have shaped the United States and how globalizing impulses continue to shape our nation.

VII. Justification:

1. A&S Core Curriculum Vision Part II, D: “Students will develop critical language for discussing art and literature, as well as skills for articulating their informed response to such works.

The core curriculum will provide meaningful experiences with art and literature, such as the opportunity to appreciate ... works of art, theatre, music, and literature” (p. 4).
2. A&S Core Curriculum Vision Part II, B: “As rational beings, students require the intellectual rigor, integrity, and acumen necessary for the pursuit of truth.... Students will learn how great thinkers have struggled with—and continued to struggle with—challenging and sometimes divisive philosophical and scientific problems in the pursuit of wisdom” (p. 3)
3. A&S Core Curriculum Vision, Part II: “*Functionally*, the Arts and Sciences core curriculum, taught within a community of Christian scholars, enables men and women to acquire the knowledge, skills, and virtues needed to uncover and recognize truth, to deepen their faith, to live virtuously, to strengthen their communities, and to affect the world in transformative ways. To that end, the core curriculum will: 1) provide a shared foundation of knowledge drawn from the rich and diverse liberal arts tradition; 2) develop various skills necessary for the completion of an academic degree, but also essential for personal and professional life beyond Baylor; 3) inspire moral, intellectual, and spiritual values” (p. 2).
4. A&S Core Curriculum Vision, Part II: “[The core curriculum] will teach students to communicate effectively through various means such as open and mutually-respectful debate, discussion-based classes, essay writing.... These fundamental and transferable skills will require students to reevaluate their own assumptions. They will also gain a deeper understanding of and empathy for people from other societies, races, genders, ethnicities, and socio-economic statuses” (p. 4).

5. A&S Core Curriculum Vision, Part II: “Students will develop the skill of critical reasoning in many ways, including problem-solving, composing essays, and writing lab reports. In doing so, the core curriculum will encourage students to cultivate patience and intellectual humility in the search for truth” (p. 3).