

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

College: **[Humanities]**

Department: **[English]**

Note: Use this form to request a single course that can be offered independently of any other course, lab or activity.

1. Course information for Catalog Entry

Subject Abbreviation and Number: **[ENGL 253]**

Course Title: **[Bestselling Literature]**

Units: **[3]** units

Course Prerequisites: **[]** (if any)

Course Corequisites: **[]** (if any)

Recommended Preparatory Courses: **[x]** Completion of the Lower Division Writing requirement

2. Course Description for Printed Catalog: *Notes:* If grading is NC/CR only, please state in course description. If a course numbered less than 500 is available for graduate credit, please state "Available for graduate credit in the catalog description."

[ENGL 253: Bestselling Literature (3)] Preparatory: Completion of the Lower Division Writing requirement. Study of selected literary works that have enjoyed wide commercial popularity. Focus will be on recent texts, although readings may also include older bestsellers. Analysis of the financial, cultural, or critical success of those works, and the implications of that success for diverse social groups and identities. Focus on skills requisite for thinking critically about recent and current developments in popular literature and culture. Available for General Education, Lifelong Learning.]

3. Date of Proposed Implementation: (Semester/Year): **[Fall] / [2018]**

4. Course Level

[x] Undergraduate Only

[] Graduate Only

[] Graduate/Undergraduate

5. Course Abbreviation "Short title" (maximum of 17 characters and spaces)

Short Title: **[B•E•S•T•S•E•L•L•I•N•G•L•I•T•]**

6. Basis of Grading:

[] Credit/No Credit Only

[x] Letter Grade Only

[] CR/NC or Letter Grade

7. Number of times a course may be taken:

[x] May be taken for credit for a total of **[1]** times, or for a maximum of **[3]** units

[] Multiple enrollments are allowed within a semester

8. C-Classification: (e.g., *Lecture-discussion (C-4).*)

[3] units @ **[c] [4]**

9. Replaces Current Experimental Course?

[] YES **[x]** NO

Replaces Course Number/Suffix: **[]**

Previously offered ☐ times.

10. Proposed Course Uses: *(Check all that apply)*

- ☒ Own Program: ☐ Major ☒ Minor ☐ Masters ☐ Credential ☐ Other
☐ Requirement or Elective in another Program
☒ General Elective
☒ General Education, Section **[Lifelong Learning]**
☐ Meets GE Information Competence (IC) Requirement
☐ Meets GE Writing Intensive (WI) Requirement
☐ Community Service Learning (CS)
☐ Cross-listed with: *(List courses)* ☐

11. Justification for Request: *Course use in program, level, use in General Education, Credential, or other. Include information on overlap/duplication of courses within and outside of department or program. (Attach)*

See attached, below

12. Estimate of Impact on Resources within the Department, for other Departments and the University. *(Attach)*

See attached, below

13. Course Outline and Syllabus *(Attach) Include methods of evaluation, suggested texts, and selected bibliography. Describe the difference in expectations of graduates and undergraduates for all 400 level courses that are offered to both.*

See attached, below

14. Indicate which of the PROGRAM'S measurable Student Learning Outcomes are addressed in this course. *(Attach)*

SLOs for the minor in Popular Culture addressed in ENGL 253:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze popular culture texts critically.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply and critically engage with theories relevant to the study of popular culture.

15. Assessment of COURSE objectives *(Attach)*

- A. Identify each of the course objectives and describe how the student performance will be assessed

See attached, below, for matrices for both 14 and 15.

(For numbers 14 and 15, see [Course Alignment Matrix and the Course Objectives Chart](#))

16. If this is a General Education course, indicate how the General Education Measurable

Student Learning Outcomes (from the appropriate section) are addressed in this course. (*Attach*)

See attached, below

17. Methods of Assessment for Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (*Attach*)

- A. Assessment tools
- B. Describe the procedure dept./program will use to ensure the faculty teaching the course will be involved in the assessment process (refer to the university's policy on assessment).

See attached, below

18. Record of Consultation: (*Normally all consultation should be with a department chair or program coordinator.*) *If more space is needed attach statement and supporting memoranda.*

Date:	Dept/College:	Department Chair/ Program Coordinator	Concur (Y/N)
[4/11/17]	[AIS]	[Brian Burkhart]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[AAS]	[Eunai Shrake]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[AFRS]	[Theresa White]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[ANTH]	[Sabina Magliocco]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[ART]	[Edward Alfano]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[CAS]	[Beatriz Cortez]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[CHS]	[Gabriel Gutierrez]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[COMS]	[Kathryn Sorrells]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[CTVA]	[Jon Stahl]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[FCS]	[Yi Cai]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[GWS]	[Breny Mendoza]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[JS]	[Jody Myers]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[JOUR]	[Linda Bowen]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[LRS]	[Ranita Chatterjee]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[LING]	[Ana Sanchez Munoz]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[MCLL]	[Brian Castronovo]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[MUS]	[Ric Alviso]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[PHIL]	[Tim Black]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[QS]	[Greg Knotts]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[RS]	[Rick Talbott]	[Y]
[4/11/17]	[RTM]	[Mechelle Best]	[Y]

Collection Development Coordinator

Please send an email to: collection.development@csun.edu

Date

[]

19. Approvals:

Department Chair/Program

Coordinator: Kent Baxter

[5/1/17]

Date:

College (Dean or Associate Dean):

Date:

[]

Educational Policies Committee:	Date: []
Graduate Studies Committee:	Date: []
Provost:	Date: []

ATTACHMENTS:

11. Justification for Request: *Course use in program, level, use in General Education, Credential, or other. Include information on overlap/duplication of courses within and outside of department or program. (Attach)*

English 253 is designed to offer CSUN students of all majors the opportunity to study recent and current popular works of literature, to investigate the sociocultural significances of the popularity of those works, and to develop reading and thinking skills necessary to analyze trends and developments in the world of popular literary culture. At the moment, CSUN lacks a course devoted specifically to the study of commercially successful literature and the sociocultural implications of the intersection of literature and the popular market. English 253 fulfills that need, providing a way for students in all academic and career tracks to fulfill a GE requirement (Lifelong Learning) through the reading, analysis, and discussion of works shaping the literary marketplace of the present moment.

The focus of the course will be a selection of commercially successful literary works, from any genre, with an emphasis on recent texts, as chosen by the instructor. The works chosen will generally be timely and current, and should reflect the status of commercially successful literature at the time that the course is offered. Students will also consider broader conceptual issues, such as: the impact of market popularity on literature, practices of reading that shape the popular consumption of literature (e.g., book clubs, One City One Book programs, CSUN's own Freshman Common Reading Program), and the marketing of non-literary products tied to successful literary franchises like the *Harry Potter* or *Fifty Shades of Grey* series. In addition, students will be introduced to theoretical approaches to the reading of literature and popular culture drawn from the academic discipline of English.

The course is designed to satisfy the Lifelong Learning General Education requirement. According to the CSUN Catalog, a Lifelong Learning course "encourages students to develop an appreciation for the importance of the continued acquisition of new and diverse knowledge and skills, and offers opportunities to integrate personal, professional, and social aspects of life." English 253 accomplishes this directive by equipping students with the reading habits and analytical skills necessary to understand ongoing and significant literary-cultural developments, and by providing students the chance to situate themselves and their own personal and intellectual priorities in relation to trends in popular literature. English 253 serves three of CSUN's five core competencies: Written Communication, Critical Thinking,

and Information Literacy. Furthermore, this course on bestsellers reaffirms the important goals introduced by CSUN's Freshman Common Reading Program.

English 253 does not duplicate any current course offerings at CSUN, though it complements courses examining popular culture and cultural influences on individuals and communities, thus enabling it to amplify a commitment to the critical study of the lifestyles and aesthetic practices of diverse groups and identities. While the English Department has other courses on contemporary literature and on popular culture, none duplicates the pedagogical purposes of English 253. English 300: Contemporary Literature and English 476: Contemporary American Literature are studies in post-1945 literature without a focus on recent and/or commercially successful literature. English 313: Studies in Popular Culture is not focused on literature or the intersection of literature and the marketplace, but is a study of popular culture more generally. The same is true of Communication Studies 445: Communication and Popular Cultures, which is also unlike English 253 in being an upper-division course. Similarly, Anthropology 305: Individual and Culture, according to its course description, works with a non-aesthetic, anthropological understanding of culture and the individual's relation to it (i.e., culture as a "whole way of life," as a set of social customs and traditions). By contrast, the intent of English 253, to examine the relation of the individual to popular literary culture, is both more aesthetically focused and specific to the discipline of English.

ENGL 253 (Bestselling Literature) and ENGL 254 (Popular Literary Genres) are complementary yet distinct courses. While both deal with popular culture texts, their perspectives differ substantially. Bestselling Literature focuses on the sociocultural implications of commercially successful literature, including analysis of marketplace concerns and how commercial strategies may shape reading practices; at the same time, it poses questions about the traditional opposition between marketplace success and critical respect—an opposition crucial to the history of literary studies. In this way, Bestselling Literature opens questions about the very concept of literature, and places the work of English studies within a broad historical frame that includes markets and audiences. By contrast, Popular Literary Genres studies the conventions and implications of specific genres in popular literature, for example romance fiction, horror, mystery, the western, or the spy thriller. That is, the course examines in depth the narrative, aesthetic, and ideological elements within a particular genre or small set of genres, as revealed by multiple instances of each genre. In this way, the course enables students to see genre conventions as subject to revision and as reflectors of social change. For example, how might the postmodern detective story subvert or resist traditional depictions of gender and sexuality in hard-boiled fiction?

12. Estimate of Impact on Resources within the Department, for other Departments and the University. (Attach)

This course does not duplicate current course offerings. It will make use of existing spatial and technological resources. With no foreseeable changes or additions to accommodations, facilities, and technological holdings on campus, there will be no increased costs for such

resources. The English Department has both lecturers and full-time faculty available to teach ENGL 253.

There will not be additional costs for administrative support. There are no foreseeable additional costs through the production of departmental publications or an increase in the library's holdings. The library's holdings already contain appropriate primary texts (books, film and other media), including a bestsellers collection, and relevant research (see attached bibliography).

As an elective in the new Popular Culture Minor, the course will be rotated through the schedule in place of other existing electives, depending on student demand.

Furthermore, both newly proposed electives in the new minor (ENGL 253 and ENGL 254) can be rotated into the standard set of GE courses that we currently offer without undue pressure on department resources. In particular, we anticipate that sections of ENGL 253: Bestselling Literature will take the place of a similar number of ENGL 255, our current 200 level GE course. In other words, we do not anticipate drawing a large number of new GE students to English, but instead redistributing GE students across three 200-level courses (253: Bestselling Literature, 254: Popular Literary Genres, and the current 255: Introduction to Literature), instead of concentrating them into ENGL 255. All three courses will have a similar purpose: introducing GE students to thinking, reading, and writing critically about literature. Adding the two new 200-level GE courses simply diversifies and expands the range of texts available to students and faculty and thereby strengthens the overall program.

One section of 253 will be offered each semester (two per year) for at least the first year. As long as the course fills to at least 12 students, the Department is prepared to absorb the cost of running it while it builds enrollment. After that, we will assess demand and increase or decrease the offer frequency accordingly, in conjunction with similar adjustments to 255.

13. Course Outline and Syllabus

Note: This outline reflects a consensus of relevant faculty in the department. Unlike the accompanying syllabus, it addresses faculty.

Course Outline English 253: Bestselling Literature

This course outline reflects a consensus of relevant faculty in English. Unlike the accompanying sample syllabus, this outline addresses faculty, establishing the broad contours of the course.

I. Course Description (University Catalog)

Preparatory: Completion of the Lower Division Writing requirement. Study of selected literary works that have enjoyed wide commercial popularity. Focus will be on recent texts, although readings may also include older bestsellers. Analysis of the financial, cultural, or critical success of those works, and the implications of that success for diverse social groups and identities. Focus on skills requisite for thinking critically about recent and current

developments in popular literature and culture. Available for General Education, Lifelong Learning.

II. Pre-Requisites

None.

III. Course Objectives

Students will:

1. Explain how the success of works of contemporary popular literature illuminates ongoing social, cultural, or political dynamics in the United States.
2. Analyze how, and to what extent, works of contemporary popular literature represent or relate to diverse identities and communities in the United States.
3. Demonstrate ability to use methods of literary and cultural analysis drawn from the field of English.
4. Demonstrate understanding of conceptual debates over the intersections of art/literature, the popular, and the market.
5. Demonstrate critical reading skills and further hone their analytical writing skills.
6. Develop greater understanding of the workings of scholarly community and interaction through in-class participation and collaboration.

III. Methods of Evaluation

III.A. Reading Requirements and Assignments

III.A.1. Primary Texts

Instructors will assign a range of recent, commercially successful literature as the course's primary reading load. While instructors have the discretion to select texts suited to their own pedagogical style and thematic interests, the texts selected should be commercially successful (i.e., bestselling titles, as recorded by a standard measure such as lists compiled by the *New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly*, or Amazon's records of top-selling titles) and/or culturally prominent in the United States (i.e., a title chosen by a prominent arbitrator of popular and cultural tastes, like Oprah's Book Club). Titles should mostly have been published within the last 10-15 years, and the bulk of titles selected should reflect the current state of commercial literature at the time the course is being offered. Titles selected should speak, through their thematic investments and/or content, to issues of concern to a diverse range of social groups and identity positions. The status of "bestseller" or "commercially popular" should not necessarily connote any judgment of aesthetic quality.

III.A.2. Secondary Texts

Accompanying the primary literary texts, instructors will assign a smaller set of theoretical and/or historical-contextual texts to introduce students to such issues as: debates over the merit or cultural impact of popular literature, the sociopolitical and aesthetic implications of the commercialization of literature, theoretical approaches to reading and the popular, the dissemination of popular reading practices and the influence of institutions devoted to popular literature, the frequently-perceived conflict between aesthetic merit and commercial popularity, the question of the academy's relationship to the popular, and the specific cultural

influence of certain primary texts selected for the course. If appropriate, instructors may elect to introduce non-literary cultural works that inform the study of the primary texts and/or their popularity (for example, a recent film or television adaptation of one or more of the primary texts), but the main focus of the course should remain on popular *literature*. Instructors may select secondary texts at their discretion. Secondary texts may be incorporated into the course in diverse ways, such as: in an opening unit on methodologies and contextual approaches, or paired with relevant primary texts to encourage students to practice specific theoretical or sociohistorical approaches, or as a source of contextual information regarding the marketing or reception of the course's primary texts.

III.B. Writing and Participation Requirements and Assignments

English 253 is intended to be an introductory-level, discussion-focused course, one that encourages students with a range of academic skill sets (who may not be English majors and may never intend to become English majors) to begin to think critically about the current state of bestselling commercial literature and its sociocultural implications. Individual assignments should be crafted by the instructor to meet the particular needs and orientation of the course, but students should be evaluated through written work (such as formal essays and/or short weekly responses) as well as in-class participation (in full-class discussions, small group work, and/or presentations). In designing writing and participation requirements, instructors should preserve the course's discussion-based nature, emphasizing the active communal exploration of relevant issues over the passive mastery of facts, details of the assigned readings, etc. Formal essays assigned should be of brief-to-moderate length (e.g. about 2 to 5 pages) and should encourage students to explore their own interpretations of the course's literary works and/or their social and cultural popularity. Active in-class participation should be a major component of the course design, with requirements that provide students multiple methods for sharing their responses and ideas. Reading quizzes may be appropriate. Instructors may opt to craft assignments that incorporate outside research into relevant issues, such as annotated bibliographies, in-class presentations focused on current literary events and developments relevant to the course, essay assignments requiring secondary sources, etc.

IV. Bibliography of Suggested Texts

IV.A. Sample Primary Texts

Max Brooks, *World War Z* (2006)
Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (2003)
Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008-2010)
Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007)
Janet Fitch, *White Oleander* (1999)
Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005)
Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom* (2010)
Gillian Flynn, *Gone Girl* (2012)
Sara Gruen, *Water for Elephants* (2006)
Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003)
Charlaine Harris, *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* series (2001-2013)
Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* (2003)
E.L. James, *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy (2011-2012)
Stieg Larsson, *Millennium* series (2005-2007)

Yann Martel, *Life of Pi* (2001)
 George R.R. Martin, *A Song of Ice and Fire* series (1996-2011)
 Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006)
 Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* series (2005-2008)
 Jodi Picoult, *Nineteen Minutes* (2007)
 J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007)
 J.K. Rowling, *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013)
 Alice Sebold, *The Lovely Bones* (2002)
 Nicholas Sparks, *Safe Haven* (2010)
 Kathryn Stockett, *The Help* (2009)
 Jess Walter, *Beautiful Ruins* (2012)

IV.B. Sample Secondary Texts (monographs can be assigned in whole or in part)

Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (2001)
 Harold Bloom, "Can 35 Million Book Buyers Be Wrong? Yes." (2000)
 Harold Bloom, "Dumbing Down American Readers" (2003)
 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (1984)
 Gwendolyn Davies, *Fiction Treasures by Maritime Writers: Best-selling Novelists of Canada's Maritime Provinces* (2015)
 Cecilia Farr, *The Oprah Affect: Critical Essays on Oprah's Book Club* (2008)
 Cecilia Farr, *The Ulysses Delusion: Rethinking Standards of Literary Merit* (2016)
 Frank Felsenstein, et. al., *Print Culture Histories Beyond the Metropolis* (2016)
 John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (1989)
 Jonathan Franzen, "Why Bother?" (2002)
 Monica Germanà, *Apocalyptic Discourse in Contemporary Culture* (2014)
 Keith Gessen, "How a Book is Born: The Making of *The Art of Fielding*" (2011)
 Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'" (1998)
 Kameron Hurley *The Geek Feminist Revolution* (2016)
 Elizabeth Kantor, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to English and American Literature* (2006)
 Julie Kim, *Class and Culture in Crime Fiction* (2014)
 Elizabeth Long, *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life* (2003)
 Dwight Macdonald, *Masscult & Midcult* (1960)
 Sarah J. Paulson, et. al., *Literature in Contemporary Media Culture: Technology, Subjectivity, Aesthetics* (2016)
 Tom Perrin, *The Aesthetics of Middlebrow Fiction* (2015)
 Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (1984)
 Aldo Regalado, *Bending Steel: Modernity and the American Superhero* (2015)
 Katie Roiphe, "Working Women's Fantasies" (2012)
 Kathleen Rooney, *Reading with Oprah* (2005)
 Megan Sweeney, *Reading is My Window: Books and the Art of Reading in Women's Prisons* (2010)
 Harvey Teres, *The Word on the Street: Linking the Academy and the Common Reader* (2011)
 Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary" (1958)
 Raymond Williams, "Literature" from *Keywords* (1976)
 Helen Young, *Race and Popular Fantasy Literature: Habits of Whiteness* (2016)

English 253: Bestselling Literature Syllabus

Course Description

This course will be a discussion-based exploration of a set of recent commercially successful literary works, the social and cultural significances of the popularity of these works, and the broader conceptual problem of the intersection of literature with the commercial marketplace. In our discussions of these texts, we'll ask why these books, specifically, have commanded bestseller status in recent years. What does their popularity tell us about current social and cultural developments in the United States? What does it suggest about the current tastes and priorities of American readers? Why have books about vampires been so popular in recent times, and does it have anything to do with the reasons that a trilogy about explicit sex, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, has also been popular? How have ostensibly "serious" authors responded to both the popular market and to the commercial success or failure of their work? Does the American marketplace impose restrictions on the kinds of claims a novel can make about sex, or race, or gender while still being commercially viable? Finally, is aesthetically and formally complex literature by definition opposed to commercial literature, or is this distinction itself a fabrication? We'll consider a range of theoretical arguments and contextual readings informing the many issues, problems, and points of debate related to the commercialization and popular appeal of literature. Finally, the course will encourage you to become a critical consumer of literature yourself by becoming aware of the significance of developments in the market for bestselling literature in the U.S.

Required Texts

Primary literary works:

Gillian Flynn, *Gone Girl*

Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom*

Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight*

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

Kathryn Stockett, *The Help*

Additional shorter texts will be provided electronically and/or in a course packet.

Grading

Your final grade for the course will consist of the following components:

Paper #1 – 20%

Paper #2 – 40%

In-class Presentation: 20%

Participation: 20%

Paper #1 (3 pages): Your first paper assignment will require you to present your own argument—drawing on your own opinions and on the literary texts we've read during the course—framed as a contribution to the scholarly debates with which the course opens (i.e., the

readings for weeks 2-4). The paper should demonstrate comprehension of the terms of those debates, and through its argument offer reasoned, informed, original, and persuasive commentary on the issues raised in those debates. A rough draft of paper # 1 will be due the week before you turn in the final draft.

Paper #2 (8 pages): Your final paper will require you to select a literary work from the course, and advance an argument as to how the work and the fact of its commercial popularity reflect, inform, or index current social, cultural, and political developments in American life. A rough draft of paper #2 will be due the week before you turn in the final draft.

Papers will be graded on the following criteria, in order of importance: 1) originality, persuasiveness, and clear and ordered exposition of a central argument; 2) appropriate and effective use of textual and contextual evidence; 3) adherence to conventions of spelling, grammar, and essay organization; and 4) adherence to conventions of MLA format.

In-Class Presentation: Once during the semester, in a group with two to four of your classmates, you will make an in-class presentation on the reading assigned for a given week. You should provide relevant contextual information about the reading; identify important passages, issues, and concerns to be discussed, and then guide that discussion; and draw connections between the week's reading and the content of discussions in previous weeks. This assignment is your chance to collaborate with your peers in order to set the course for class discussion and to shape that discussion around issues of interest to you. Feel free to craft in-class activities, show multimedia clips, or take other routes for encouraging conversation. Your presentation should be about 20 minutes long.

Presentations will be graded according to the following criteria, in order of importance: 1) evident preparation the group has taken to encourage, inspire, and foster in-class conversation and debate; 2) substance and originality of the issues, claims, ideas, or problems framed by the group for in-class discussion; 3) relevance of additional information introduced by the group to enhancing the class's understanding of the assigned material.

Participation: English 253, as a discussion class, places a high value on in-class participation. I expect that, for each class meeting, you will fully prepare by completing all of the assigned reading beforehand, and that you will be an active, engaged, thoughtful, and respectful participant in all in-class conversations and activities.

Participation is graded according to a contract basis. If you miss no more than 2 classes, and participate in each class period you attend in a manner that shows that you've at least read the assigned materials with some care, you will earn a "B" for participation. A more frequent and substantive record of active participation will earn you a higher grade, while less frequent or demonstrably-unprepared participation will result in a lower grade. At midterm, you will receive an estimate of your participation grade based on your performance to that point.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense and is treated accordingly. Plagiarizing an assignment may result in you receiving no credit on that assignment. Additionally, it may cause you to automatically fail the course, and may lead to further punitive action. For a useful website

that offers advice on avoiding plagiarism as well as the CSUN policy on plagiarism, see:
<http://library.csun.edu/Guides/ResearchStrategies/AvoidingPlagiarism>

Disability Accommodations

If you have a disability and need accommodations, please register with the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) office or the National Center on Deafness (NCOD). The DRES office is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110 and can be reached at (818) 677-2684. NCOD is located on Bertrand Street in Jeanne Chisholm Hall and can be reached at (818) 677-2611. If you would like to discuss your need for accommodations with me, please contact me to set up an appointment.

Course Calendar

Week 1

Introductions

In-class discussion: a) the last book you read and enjoyed, and why; b) why do you read books, and what kinds of books do you enjoy reading? If you don't read, why not?

Week 2: Who Reads, and Why: Some Popular Uses of Literature

Assigned reading:

Cecilia Farr, *Reading Oprah* (excerpt)

Elizabeth Long, *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life* (excerpt)

Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (excerpt)

Megan Sweeney, *Reading is My Window: Books and the Art of Reading in Women's Prisons* (excerpt)

Week 3 and Week 4: Theoretical Debates Over Popular Literature

Assigned reading:

Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (excerpt)

Raymond Williams, "Literature" from *Keywords*

John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (excerpt)

Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular'"

Harvey Teres, *The Word on the Street: Linking the Academy and the Common Reader* (excerpt)

Week 5 and 6: J.K. Rowling and Popular Authorship

Assigned reading:

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (1998)

Harold Bloom, "Can 35 Million Book Buyers Be Wrong? Yes." and "Dumbing Down American Readers"

Week V—Review of Writing Prompt and Writing Samples

Week 7 and Week 8: Vampires, Sex, and Social Relations in America

Assigned reading:

Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* (2005)

Week 7—Rough Draft Due

Week 8—PAPER #1 DUE

Week 9: Sex, Fan Fiction, and Social Relations in America

Assigned reading:

E.L. James, excerpts from *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2011)

Katie Roiphe, “The Fantasy Life of Working Women”

Tracy Clark-Flory, “‘Fifty Shades of Grey’: Dominatrixes Take on Roiphe”

Week 10: The “Serious” Author in the American Marketplace, Part I

Assigned reading:

Jonathan Franzen, “Why Bother?”

Kate Julian, “The Franzen and Oprah Show”

Begin reading: Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom* (2010)

Week 11: The “Serious” Author in the American Marketplace, Part II

Assigned reading:

Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom* (2010)

Week 12: Selling Race Relations in the American Marketplace, Part I

Assigned reading:

Kathryn Stockett, *The Help* (2009)

Week 13: Selling Race Relations in the American Marketplace, Part II

Assigned reading:

Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark* (excerpt)

Association of Black Women Historians, “An Open Statement to the Fans of *The Help*”

In-class screening of *The Help* (2011)

Week 14 and Week 15: The Avant-Garde and the Popular: Can “Popular” Literature be “Good” Literature?

Assigned reading:

Dwight Macdonald, “Masscult & Midcult”

Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch”

Gillian Flynn, *Gone Girl* (2012)

Week 14--Rough Draft Due

PAPER #2 due on Final Exam Date

COURSE ALIGNMENT MATRIX

14. Directions: Assess how well ENGL 253 contributes to the program's student learning outcomes by rating each course objective for that course with an I, P or D.

Course Objectives	Popular Culture Minor SLO #1: Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze popular culture texts critically.	Popular Culture Minor SLO #2: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply and critically engage with theories relevant to the study of popular culture.	Pop Culture Minor SLO #3: Students will demonstrate the ability to research, critically evaluate, respond to, and ethically use information sources in popular culture studies.	GE Lifelong Learning SLO #1: Identify and actively engage in behaviors conducive to individual health, well-being, or development, and understand the value of maintaining these behaviors throughout their lifespan.	GE Lifelong Learning SLO #2: Identify and apply strategies leading to health, well-being, or development for community members of diverse populations.
1. Students will explain how the success of works of contemporary popular literature illuminates ongoing social, cultural, or political dynamics in the United States.	I	I	I	P	P
2. Students will analyze how, and to what extent, works of contemporary popular literature represent or relate to diverse identities and communities in the United States.	P	I	I	I	P
3. Students will demonstrate ability to use methods of literary and cultural analysis drawn from the field of English.	I	I	I	I	I
4. Students will demonstrate understanding of conceptual debates over the intersections of art/literature, the popular, and the market.	I	P	P	I	I
5. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills and further hone their analytical writing skills.	P	P	I	I	I
6. Students will develop greater understanding of the workings of scholarly community and interaction through in-class participation and collaboration.	P	I	P	P	I

15. Assessment of COURSE objectives

Course Objectives	Assessments of Student Performance
1. Students will explain how the success of works of contemporary popular literature illuminates ongoing social, cultural, or political dynamics in the United States.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers
2. Students will analyze how, and to what extent, works of contemporary popular literature represent or relate to diverse identities and communities in the United States.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers, in-class presentation
3. Students will demonstrate ability to use methods of literary and cultural analysis drawn from the field of English.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers
4. Students will demonstrate understanding of conceptual debates over the intersections of art/literature, the popular, and the market.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers
5. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills and further hone their analytical writing skills.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers
6. Students will develop greater understanding of the workings of scholarly community and interaction through in-class participation and collaboration.	Weekly in-class discussions, participation, research papers, in-class presentation

16. If this is a General Education course, indicate how the General Education Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (from the appropriate section) are addressed in this course. (*Attach*)

Student Learning Outcomes for Lifelong Learning:

1. Identify and actively engage in behaviors conducive to individual health, well-being, or development, and understand the value of maintaining these behaviors throughout their lifespan.

English 253 teaches students to be critical readers of the popular literature and the literary market of their time, equipping them to be able to evaluate and relate critically, throughout their lives, to this crucial area of American culture. Reading is a way of enhancing individual (intellectual and linguistic) development and (mental) well-being.

2. Identify and apply strategies leading to health, well-being, or development for community members of diverse populations.

English 253 addresses the significance of current trends in popular literature for the status and well-being of diverse groups and subject positions (included but not limited to those of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class). Individual sections might fulfill this objective by examining the representation of minority identities in popular literature, or by examining the ways popular literature can redefine, give new voice to, or silence traditionally-delineated subject positions.

17. Methods of Assessment for Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (*Attach*)

A. Assessment tools:

1. Regular assigned work and presentations regarding readings.
 2. Written assignments, such as a short term paper that builds toward a final written project.
 3. A final paper that advances an argument as to how a literary work and its commercial popularity reflect, inform, or index current social, cultural and political developments in American life.
- B. Describe the procedure dept./program will use to ensure the faculty teaching the course will be involved in the assessment process (refer to the university's policy on assessment).**

The English Faculty is supportive of the assessment process and, under the guidance of our Department Chair and Assessment Coordinator, periodic meetings will be held to determine if learning objectives and outcomes have been adequately met by students. Adjustments to teaching methodology, course content, and evaluation techniques will occur as needed.