“So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservatism, all of which may appear to give one peace of mind, but in reality nothing is more damaging to the adventurous spirit within a man than a secure future.”

Chris McCandless, letter to ‘Ron Franz’

Catalog Description: Survey of major authors and literary movements/paradigms in American literature from 1865 to present. Prerequisite: six semester hours of freshman English.

Course Description: English 230 is a course focused on the critical study of how American culture (in its broadest sense and definition) is both captured and questioned by the major writers of our nation. When studying these authors and their works we will do so in both a field specific way (focusing on literary period, nuance, and terminology) and in a broader cultural manner (how such texts “contribute” to the construction and questioning of a particular moment). And, while we will locate each author and text in his/her historical moment, we will also recognize that, in a way, these texts continue to “speak” to our current world(s) and make us think about our current moment and our personal lives. Finally, we must remember that the greater purpose of Art is to engage the audience in a dialogue about an array of topics; in our case, since we will be studying a national literature, many of our discussions will interrogate changing American ideologies.
Program Learning Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 230:
By the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. Exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for key works in American literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of periodization in American literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. Periodization is not merely a historical consideration, as defined by events, persons, or dates; students will demonstrate an understanding that historical, cultural, spiritual, and ethical issues, among others, shape human experiences and impact motivations.
3. Students will read literature with increased critical acumen, as evidenced in daily discussions of readings and in responsive essays.
4. Students will be able to respond to literature with facility, both orally and on paper, on important thematic considerations having to do with literary and historical milieu, culture, human responsibility, morality, ethics, and the manner and causes by which humans interact with one another.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the English Foundational Component Area in Language, Philosophy, and Culture may be assessed. These objectives are:
1. Critical Thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
4. Personal Responsibility: The ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Required Texts:

Course Requirements:
--A Midterm and Final exam. Each exam will be worth 100 points.
--Two essays. Each will be worth 100 points. The second of these essays will count as both a class essay and the Core Assessment Assignment.
--Reading quizzes. Quizzes will equal at least 100 total points. Individually, each quiz will be
worth ten points. At the end of the semester, I will keep your ten highest quizzes.

**The failure to complete any of the above assignments will result in the student earning 0 points for that particular exam, essay, or quiz.**

**Grade Criteria and Policy:**

Overall, your grade will be based on a total of 500 points. To be fair to all students in the class, I have not weighted any one assignment or exam more than any other. As such, to figure your grade out at any point in the semester, simply add up the number of points that you have and divide that by the number of points possible. This will give you an overall percentage.

Below, you will find a general grading standard; in other words, each definition will give you the “broad strokes” of what must be accomplished for one to earn an A, B, C, D, or F on any particular assignment. **One point to keep in mind is that the completion of the basic requirements for any assignment does not guarantee a high grade much less a passing grade.**

**General Grading Standard:**

A: 90-100: Students earning the grade of an A on any assignment will have completed work that obviously demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and fulfills all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of an A is reserved for that work which expertly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors.

B: 80-89: Students earning the grade of a B on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and fulfills all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a B is reserved for that work which adeptly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. However, the level of thought, while still above average, may fluctuate in terms of analytic abilities and expression.

C: 70-79: Students earning the grade of a C on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates an average understanding of the course material and fulfills all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a C is reserved for that work which displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand (more so through summary and response rather than analysis), recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas (however, the complications recognized will focus more on surface level issues rather than the greater whole), and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. As can be seen from this description, the level of thought will be acceptable and display that a student has read the assignment, but his/her analytic abilities and level of expression will not be nearly as complicated nor developed. Instead, C work will display a student’s hold to traditional methods of expression (simpler construction of sentence and paragraph development) and a struggle to display complex, critical thinking skills.
D: 60-69: Students earning the grade of a D on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a below average understanding of course material and may not fulfill all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a D is reserved for that work which displays one’s struggle or refusal to engage the ideas at hand, simply summarizes the work under study with no actual recognition of or dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and the translation of ideas into writing is completed in such a convoluted manner that the audience will have difficulty following the conversation.

F: 0-59: Students earning the grade of a F on any assignment will either (a) not have completed the assignment, (b) will have completed the assignment but not followed the guidelines, or (c) will have completed the assignment and demonstrated a total misunderstanding of the course material. In this case, it will be obvious that the student has either not completed the required reading and/or given him/herself enough time to develop the work. The grade of a F is reserved for that work which does not engage the issues at hand, offers a base (not complete) summary of the work at hand with no critical engagement, and the translation of ideas into writing is either incomplete or the audience will be unable to follow the conversation. It is important to remember that a student can receive 0 out of 100 points. In the case that a student only partially completes an assignment (in terms of page length, but not purpose), s/he may receive 0 points.

Course Policies:

Attendance and Late Work:
This course will employ a set Attendance Policy. As much of your success in this course will depend on improving your critical thinking and writing skills and we will work on these skills IN class, attendance is imperative. This being said, you will be allowed four absences without receiving any penalty (keep in mind that you will not be allowed to make up a missed quiz; so if you miss a quiz, you miss a quiz). However, if you miss 5 class meetings, your final grade may be no higher than a B; if you miss 6 class periods, your final grade may be no higher than a C; if you miss 7 class periods, your final grade may be no higher than a D; finally, if you miss 8 class periods, you may fail the course. Again, remember that while your final grade will not be directly penalized for any early absence, the fact that you will miss a quiz that cannot be made up or other assignment that cannot be made up will have an impact on your final grade. Also, if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes missed from a peer or come to see me during office hours. I will not “re-teach” an entire period to anyone through e-mail messages nor will I run through an entire lecture or presentation during office hours. I will gladly help to clarify and explore ideas, but I will not re-teach an entire period.

As for late work, I do my best to return all work in a prompt manner. In order to do so, I must have all assignments turned in on time. This being said, any assignment that is turned in late will be dropped 5 points for each day that it is late. Assignments will be turned in at the start of class. As you will know of due dates in advance, I will not accept such excuses as my printer broke, the library printer did not work, something happened to my computer, etc. Plan ahead!

The only absences that will count as excused absences will be DOCUMENTED family emergencies, university sanctioned events (this only includes sport/team events and will only count if I have documentation from the “coach”), and extreme medical issues. An excused
absence does not include absences due to doctor appointments, personal illness (a cold, the flu, etc.), work, etc. In the case of any excused absence, you must remember that any work that is due that day is still due that day unless you have contacted me in advance and I have agreed to other arrangements.

*Academic Integrity (A-9.1):*
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Stephen F. Austin State University defines academic dishonesty as:**

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at:  [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

In terms of this class, any paper that displays plagiarism will automatically receive 0 points. Furthermore, the incident may be reported.

**Free Speech and Class Conduct:**
In order to help improve our critical thinking and writing skills, we will regularly engage in class discussions and writings. The purpose of such work will be to recognize that while many of the students in the class may be similar in terms of age or year, there are different academic abilities in the classroom and different ways to look at an issue or piece of writing. In other words, one can always learn from his/her peers. In order for this to happen, we must respect one another. Therefore, while I will encourage students to share different opinions and will not stop individuals from disagreeing with one another, I will not allow any student to engage in the use of sexist, racist, or homophobic speech or any threatening action. Also, I will not allow any student to simply try to roll over or silence his/her peers.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.
In the case of this course, disruptive behavior will include the following: consistent use of cell phones/texting during class, consistent participation in side discussions that are not part of classroom dialogue, referring to your teacher or peers in an inappropriate way, physically threatening your teacher or peers, and completing homework assignments for another class. Students participating in such activities can be asked to leave the class and will be counted as absent. Furthermore, class will begin on time each day and run the entire period. It is your responsibility to arrive on time (if you are late and we are taking a quiz, you will not be given extra time) and to remain engaged until class has been completed.

Withdrawn Grades:
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.”
For the complete policy, http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/semester_grds.asp

Students with Disabilities:
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices

Writing Requirements and Resources:
During the semester, you will be expected to complete two essays. Each essay will be a minimum of three full pages in length. The first essay will focus on “cross-textual” analysis and interpretation. The second essay will ask you to critically and yet personally “interact” with a specific text that we have studied through the semester. This second essay will also count as the Core Assessment Assignment. During the semester, you will be provided with a handout that describes the specific requirements and goals of each paper.

These assignments must be typed, make use of 12-point Times New Roman font, be double-spaced, and have 1-inch margins on all sides. If you choose to include ANY outside resources, these resources must be recognized through in-text citation and the inclusion of a works cited page. All in-text citations and the Works Cited page must be done in MLA format. In the left hand corner of the first page ONLY there should be a header that includes your name, my name, the date, and the class.

Finally, each of your essays should be viewed as academic writing. As such, it should be written
in the academic voice (avoid the use of the first person unless instructed otherwise, avoid contractions, colloquialisms, text speak, etc.), be clean of stigmatized errors, display a clear thesis/supporting paragraphs/conclusion, and recognize all sources. Essays that do not comply with such standards will be graded accordingly.

Any student that commits plagiarism in any manner may receive an F for the assignment. For more information, see the section on “Academic Dishonesty” earlier in this document.

AARC:
The Academic Assistance and Resource Center located in Steen Library offers students tutoring help for writing classes. Students can set up appointments with writing tutors or use the on-line writing lab. It is important for you to be aware of the fact that the tutors at the Writing Center are not there to act as final editors or to proof read your paper. Instead, they are there to help you with the entire writing process. For more information on the AARC, either go to the first floor of the library and take a tour or you can look up information at the following web address: http://libweb.sfasu.edu/proser/aarc/.

Exams:
During the semester, you will have two exams. One exam will be given at the midterm and one exam will be given on the designated date for the final exam. Each exam will test you on literary and paradigmatic terminology, author biography and literary works, and the ability to interconnect concepts discussed in class with literary works and culture. Each exam will consist of three sections. The first section will be True/False, fill in the blank, multiple choice, short answer questions. The second section will be passage identification/short answer. The third section will consist of a single, essay question requiring a developed answer.

Quizzes:
Throughout the semester, I will give reading quizzes. The body of these quizzes will test each student on whether or not s/he read the assignment for the day or ask questions about previous lectures. The quizzes will not demand interpretive answers. We will take more than ten quizzes during the semester, but at the end of the semester, only the ten highest quiz grades will count towards your final grade.