**[American Literary Cultures Common Course Description](https://www.baylor.edu/artsandsciences/corecurriculum/doc.php/340432.pdf)**

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.

**Course Themes - Fall 2020**

**ENG 2310 American Literary Cultures: Imagining the American Experience**  
This course explores the diverse literary cultures of the United States, from the early 19th Century to the present.  Our job will be to listen to and analyze the different voices and intentions represented in American literature, imagining the lives of the rich and poor, men and women, free and enslaved, Northern and Southern, Eastern and Western, city-dwellers and country-dwellers.  Our goal will be to arrive at a richer, deeper understanding of the felt experiences of American lives, and hopefully a greater appreciation for the power, beauty, and wisdom offered in literature.

Some texts:  Cather, Willa.  *My Antonia*; Chopin, *The Awakening and Selected Stories*; *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*; Hurston, Zora Neale.  *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; James, Henry.  *Daisy Miller*.

ENG 2310.14 & .18

**ENG 2310 American Literary Cultures: Race, Culture, & American History**

ENG 2310.39

**ENG 2310 American Literary Cultures: Pursuing the Good Life: The Search for Meaning and Purpose in American Literature**  
In this course we will explore what American literature can teach us about living a good life. We will be guided by W.E.B. Du Bois’ quote, ““Nations reel and stagger on their way; they make hideous mistakes; they commit frightful wrongs; they do great and beautiful things. And shall we not best guide humanity by telling the truth about all this, so far as the truth is ascertainable?”. Telling the truth, means we will be honest about the nation’s past and present as we explore how different races, genders, and personalities find meaning and purpose in life. Hopefully, through this semester long study, we will arrive with a deeper and stronger understanding of what it means to pursue a good life.

ENG 2310.16 & .22

**ENG 2310 American Literary Cultures: Thirty American Voices and the Short Story Genre**  
This course uses the short story genre to introduce students to 25 American authors. In addition to the 25 stories, we discuss two autobiographical works, one novel, and two plays.

ENG 2310.10 & .21

**ENG 2310 American Literary Cultures: Promised Land - Nature, Culture, and Imagination**America was initially conceived of by European colonists as a Promised Land, a place of “milk and honey”; seekers and opportunists, idealists and realists, spiritualists and materialists sought answers and reward in the Promised Land.  This course promises to explore the American wilderness as a promised land, a place of paradox, where the ideal and the real, place of dreams, place of truths, what should be and what is challenge or conflict with one another.  In our readings (stories and a few shorter novels), we will explore the diversity and complexity of these works, the connections they draw among nature, culture, and the imagination.

ENG 2310.13 & .34