



## UNSW Course Outline

# ARTS2035 American Literature: Past and Present - 2024

Published on the 23 Sep 2024

## General Course Information

Course Code : ARTS2035

Year : 2024

Term : Term 3

Teaching Period : T3

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture

Academic Unit : School of the Arts and Media

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

### Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

## Course Details & Outcomes

### Course Description

This course offers a wide-ranging survey of American fiction and poetry. Our texts will be drawn from a range of historical periods, but we will pay especially close attention to the American century—the twentieth—and its aftermath. How, we will ask, are the defining fault-lines and

contradictions of contemporary American society reflected in its literature? How have American writers responded to the historical vectors that shaped America's present and what handle can novels, short stories, poems and other literary forms give us on the defining tensions of the American experiment? We will read classic works from the American canon alongside the best contemporary writing in order both to navigate a path through the complex literary history of the United States and construct an imaginary portrait of the world's most powerful nation.

## Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CL01 : Identify, describe and critically evaluate major developments in American literature
CL02 : Discuss the concept of 'America' in a variety of its applications
CL03 : Explain the relationship between American literature and other dynamics in 19th and 20th century American society, including racial, sexual and class inequality
CL04 : Explain key themes in American literary studies

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CL01 : Identify, describe and critically evaluate major developments in American literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay</li> <li>• Take-home exam</li> </ul>
CL02 : Discuss the concept of 'America' in a variety of its applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay</li> <li>• Take-home exam</li> </ul>
CL03 : Explain the relationship between American literature and other dynamics in 19th and 20th century American society, including racial, sexual and class inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay</li> <li>• Take-home exam</li> </ul>
CL04 : Explain key themes in American literary studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay</li> <li>• Take-home exam</li> </ul>

## Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Echo 360

## Assessments

### Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Essay Assessment Format: Individual	50%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 07/10/2024 11:59 PM
Take-home exam Assessment Format: Individual	50%	Start Date: 18/11/2024 09:00 AM Due Date: 22/11/2024 11:59 PM

# Assessment Details

## Essay

### Assessment Overview

2000-words

The essay give students an opportunity to engage with some of the texts studied in the first half of the course and use them as evidence in an independent argument.

Feedback via LMS

### Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Identify, describe and critically evaluate major developments in American literature
- CL02 : Discuss the concept of 'America' in a variety of its applications
- CL03 : Explain the relationship between American literature and other dynamics in 19th and 20th century American society, including racial, sexual and class inequality
- CL04 : Explain key themes in American literary studies

### Assessment Length

2000 words

### Assessment information

See Moodle for further information about the course assessments.

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

### Generative AI Permission Level

#### No Assistance

This assessment is designed for you to complete without the use of any generative AI. You are not permitted to use any generative AI tools, software or service to search for or generate information or answers.

For more information on Generative AI and permitted use please see [here](#).

## Take-home exam

### Assessment Overview

2000 words (4 x 500 words)

In the take-home exam, students write mini-essays in response to several of the texts and topics studied in the second half of the course.

Feedback via LMS

### Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Identify, describe and critically evaluate major developments in American literature
- CL02 : Discuss the concept of 'America' in a variety of its applications
- CL03 : Explain the relationship between American literature and other dynamics in 19th and 20th century American society, including racial, sexual and class inequality
- CL04 : Explain key themes in American literary studies

### Assessment Length

2000 words

### Assessment information

Contra the description above, you will be able to write on ANY four authors, not just the ones after week 5 (but not any that you have written about in the essay).

See Moodle for further information about the course assessments.

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

### Generative AI Permission Level

#### **No Assistance**

This assessment is designed for you to complete without the use of any generative AI. You are not permitted to use any generative AI tools, software or service to search for or generate information or answers.

For more information on Generative AI and permitted use please see [here](#).

## **General Assessment Information**

Consult Moodle for further information and instructions regarding the assessments.

### Grading Basis

Standard

### Requirements to pass course

You must attempt both the essay and take-home exam in order to be eligible to pass the course.

# Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 9 September - 15 September	Lecture	Introduction + Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass (1855/1892)
	Tutorial	Walt Whitman, selected poems (online) "Song of Myself" (1892 version) 1-6, 13, 15, 21, 24, 33, 42, 51-2 (I encourage you to read beyond these selections) "I Sing the Body Electric" 1, 7, 9 (I encourage you to read beyond these selections) "O Tan-Faced Prairie Boy" "How Solemn As One By One" "A Noiseless Patient Spider"
Week 2 : 16 September - 22 September	Lecture	Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself (1845)
	Tutorial	Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself (1845)
Week 3 : 23 September - 29 September	Lecture	Emily Dickinson, selected poems
	Tutorial	Emily Dickinson, selected poems. See Moodle for readings.
Week 4 : 30 September - 6 October	Lecture	Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937)
	Tutorial	Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937)
Week 5 : 7 October - 13 October	Lecture	American modernist poetry: see Moodle for readings
	Tutorial	American modernist poetry. See Moodle for readings.
Week 6 : 14 October - 20 October	Homework	No classes this week.
Week 7 : 21 October - 27 October	Lecture	Flannery O'Connor, Wise Blood (1952)
	Tutorial	Flannery O'Connor, Wise Blood (1952)
Week 8 : 28 October - 3 November	Lecture	Adaptation: If Beale Street Could Talk (Baldwin/Jenkins)
	Tutorial	James Baldwin, If Beale Street Could Talk (1974) If Beale Street Could Talk, dir. Barry Jenkins (2018) (streaming online via library website) *Please both read the novel, which is short, and watch the film. However, you will still be able to participate in the classroom discussion if you haven't had time to read/watch one or the other.
Week 9 : 4 November - 10 November	Lecture	Ling Ma, Severance (2018)
	Tutorial	Ling Ma, Severance (2018) Extract from Cathy Park Hong, Minor Feelings: An Asian-American Reckoning (2020)
Week 10 : 11 November - 17 November	Lecture	Natalie Diaz, selected poems from Postcolonial Love Poem (2020). See Moodle for readings.
	Tutorial	Natalie Diaz, selections from Postcolonial Love Poem (2020). See Moodle for selections.

## Attendance Requirements

### School of the Arts and Media mandatory attendance requirements

The School of the Arts and Media recognizes that to equip students with UNSW Graduate Capabilities to be Scholars, Professionals, Leaders, and Global Citizens, it is vital to ensure regular attendance. Only through ongoing engagement with peers can students develop effective skills to communicate, collaborate with, and lead others, including the ability to negotiate cultural differences and the awareness to act ethically and respectfully around others. Furthermore, only in the classroom will students be able to voice their opinions, hear those of others, engage in debate to develop their knowledge, and learn first-hand from world experts in their field of study.

**The School has a minimum attendance requirement of 80% for all non-lecture classes (tutorials,**

seminars, workshops, etc). Failure to meet the minimum attendance requirement will result in an Unsatisfactory Fail (UF) for the course regardless of performance on assessment tasks or other requirements for the course.

A student may be advised by the Course Convenor to withdraw from the course if they have already missed more than 20% of classes by the term census date. Students may also be refused final assessment if they have not met attendance requirements at the end of term.

An artefact of student attendance will be recorded by tutors and kept by the School. If a student has legitimate, documented explanation for absences (including adjustments provided by Equitable Learning Plans), the Course Convenor may choose to prescribe supplementary tasks in lieu of attendance.

Mandatory attendance requirements for SAM courses are aligned with these Program Learning Outcomes:

#### **Bachelor of Arts (3409)**

4. Collaborate effectively with others and engage sensitively with diverse cultural perspectives.
5. Communicate and debate complex ideas in a range of different contexts using a variety of suitable media.
8. Act ethically, respectfully and responsibly.

#### **Bachelor of Media (3341)**

2. Critically analyse the evolving media landscape in relation to historical, social, political, material and theoretical contexts, including settler colonialism
5. Deploy a critically informed approach to ethics, justice, and social engagement in media practices, industries, and contexts.
7. Collaborate effectively with local and international communities of practitioners across media contexts.

#### **Bachelor of Fine Arts (4830)**

4. Communicate complex ideas about art and culture using coherent methods for a variety of

audiences.

6. Contribute to contemporary creatives fields through self-reflexive, ethical, and sustainable practices that incorporate principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

7. Employ professional practice principles to realise independent and collaborative initiatives.

### **Master of Communication and Journalism (8232)**

4. Investigate and analyse issues and, through a range of media, articulate their complexities to a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences

6. Act ethically, respectfully, and responsibly in the context of professional and regulatory frameworks

7. Collaborate effectively with others

### **Master of Public Relations and Advertising (8281)**

4. Shape nuanced, media-aware communication strategies and tactics for a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences

6. Act ethically, respectfully, and responsibly in the context of professional and regulatory frameworks

7. Collaborate effectively with others

## **Course Resources**

### **Prescribed Resources**

Texts available in bookshop

James Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (1845)

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

Ling Ma, *Severance* (2018)

Flannery O'Connor, *Wise Blood* (1952)

Natalie Diaz, *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) (**recommended text**)

## Film

*If Beale Street Could Talk*, dir. Barry Jenkins (2018) (streaming on the library website)

## Texts available online through Moodle

Walt Whitman, selected poems

Emily Dickinson, selected poems

American modernist poetry

Natalie Diaz, selected poems

## Recommended Resources

See the weekly modules on Moodle for additional secondary resources pertaining to the texts and authors studied in each week.

## Course Evaluation and Development

I regularly revise the syllabus in response to student feedback. In 2023, I added Natalie Diaz's *Postcolonial Love Poem*.

I take quantitative and qualitative feedback very seriously, so please share your views on texts, assessments and anything else related to the course in the MyExperience survey.

## Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	John Attridge		Robert Webster 228	Teams or email	Email me to make a time to meet	Yes	Yes
Tutor	Anna Douglas					No	No



# Other Useful Information

## Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- UNSW and Faculty policies and procedures;
- Student Support Services;
- Student equity and disability;
- Special Consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- Examination information;
- Review of results;

Please see: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines>

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.
- Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another

university.

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items. UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW, but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

### **Use of AI for assessments**

As AI applications continue to develop, and technology rapidly progresses around us, we remain committed to our values around academic integrity at UNSW. Where the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, has been permitted by your course convener, they must be properly credited and your submissions must be substantially your own work.

In cases where the use of AI has been prohibited, please respect this and be aware that where unauthorised use is detected, penalties will apply.

[Use of AI for assessments | UNSW Current Students](#)

### **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

Assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, alternative submission details will be stated on your course's Moodle site. For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://>

## Late Submission Penalty

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per calendar day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five calendar days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request [Special Consideration](#) as early as possible before the deadline. Support with [Time Management is available here](#).

**Important note:** UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

## School-specific Information

### Use of Recording Devices

"To protect privacy and intellectual property, the School of the Arts and Media prohibits the use of recording devices in class (including live translation apps) without the explicit permission of the tutor and other class members. Doing so will be considered a breach of the UNSW Code of Conduct and Values."

## School Contact Information

### School of the Arts and Media

**Location:** Room 312, Level 3 Robert Webster Building

**Opening Hours:** Monday -Friday, 9am - 5 pm

**Email:** sam@unsw.edu.au

**Phone:** +612 9385 4856

**web:** <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/our-schools/arts-media>