

Las Positas College  
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## Course Outline for HUMN 10

### THE AMERICAN STYLE

Effective: Fall 2009

#### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

HUMN 10 — THE AMERICAN STYLE — 3.00 units

Humanities of the United States. Major works of literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, film, music, philosophy, technology, religion and political and social institutions. Particular attention to values and meanings that reflect the American cultural experience.

3.00 Units Lecture

#### Grading Methods:

#### Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	54.00

#### II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

#### III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. identify major elements of the American character;
- B. demonstrate how historical changes have influenced value shifts;
- C. recognize how American literary and visual artists have portrayed American values throughout the nation's history;
- D. appraise significant political texts;
- E. evaluate the roles of philosophy and religion in American culture;
- F. examine the role of technology in American culture;
- G. compare and contrast American regional similarities and differences;
- H. assess what is "American" in his/her culture.

#### V. CONTENT:

A. Pre-industrial America: Frontier and Agrarian to 1977. Materials selected from:

1. Music
  - a. Pima Indian Emergence Song
  - b. Hymns from the Bay Psalm Book
  - c. Folk songs, e.g., The Erie Canal, Casey Jones, Home on the Range, Freight Train, Shenandoah
  - d. Spirituals, e.g., Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, Deep River
2. Poetry
  - a. Winnebago, This Newly Created World
  - b. Anne Bradstreet, The Flesh and the Spirit
  - c. Phillis Wheatley, On Being Brought from Africa to America
  - d. Walt Whitman, Song of Myself
3. Diaries/letters, autobiographies
  - a. Christopher Columbus, from Journal of the First Voyage to America
  - b. Mary Rowlandson, Captivity Narrative
  - c. Juan Nepomuceno Sequin, from Personal Memoirs
  - d. Sarah Grimke, The Condition of Women in the United States
4. Novels
  - a. Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki), Dawn Land
  - b. James Fenimore Cooper, The Pioneers
  - c. Louisa May Alcott, Little Women
  - d. Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter
5. Visual arts
  - a. Native American decorative art, e.g., paintings on buffalo robes, shields, pottery
  - b. Gilbert Stuart, George Washington
  - c. George Caleb Bingham, Fur Traders Descending the Missouri, 1845
  - d. Mathew Brady, Civil War photographs
6. Architecture
  - a. The tipi, the longhouse, the pueblo
  - b. The log cabin, New England clapboard

- c. Monticello
  - d. The White House
- 7. Political texts
  - a. Speech of Chief Seattle
  - b. John Winthrop, from A Model of Christian Charity
  - c. Thomas Jefferson, A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled
  - d. Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address
- 8. Religion and philosophy
  - a. History of the Miraculous Apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe in 1531
  - b. Jonathan Edwards, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God
  - c. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Circles
  - d. Samson Occom (Mohegan), A Sermon
- 9. Science and technology
  - a. Early agricultural methods
  - b. Transportation
  - c. Inventors and inventions
  - d. Communication
- B. Industrial America: Business and Industry 1977-1945. Materials Selected from:
  - 1. Music
    - a. Native American songs
    - b. Vaudeville music
    - c. George Gershwin, Porgy and Bess
    - d. Jazz
  - 2. Poetry
    - a. Alexander Poesy (Creek) Ode to Sequoyah
    - b. Emily Dickenson
    - c. Robert Frost
    - d. Langston Hughes
  - 3. Diaries/letters/autobiographies
    - a. Edith Maud Eaton (Sui Sin Far), Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian
    - b. Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams
    - c. Booker T. Washington, Up from Slavery
    - d. Abraham Cahan, The Autobiography of an American Jew
  - 4. Novels
    - a. D'Arcy McNickle, The Surrounded
    - b. Upton Sinclair, The Jungle
    - c. Edith Wharton, The Age of Innocence
    - d. Anzia Yezierska, The Bread Givers
  - 5. Visual Arts
    - a. Photography
    - b. Painting
    - c. Sculpture
    - d. Film
  - 6. Architecture
    - a. Victorian houses
    - b. Skyscrapers
    - c. Factories
    - d. Suburban Houses
  - 7. Political texts
    - a. Jose Marti, Our America
    - b. August Spies, The Revenge Circular (anarchist essay)
    - c. Jacob Coxey's undelivered speech from the March on Washington by Coxey's Army, 1894
    - d. W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk
  - 8. Religion and philosophy
    - a. Black Elk Speaks
    - b. Josiah Royce
    - c. William James
    - d. John Dewey
  - 9. Science and technology
    - a. Agricultural boom and bust periods
    - b. Developments in manufacturing
    - c. Transportation: trains, automobiles, airplanes
    - d. Communication: telephone, radio
- C. Post-industrial America: Information and Technology 1945 to present. Materials selected from:
  - 1. Music
    - a. Contemporary art music
    - b. Contemporary popular music
  - 2. Poetry
    - a. Allen Ginsberg
    - b. Wendy Rose
    - c. Gwendolyn Brooks
    - d. Gary Soto
  - 3. Diaries/letters/autobiographies
    - a. Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail
    - b. John Steinbeck, from Steinbeck: A Life in Letters
    - c. Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X
    - d. Mary Brave Bird, Lakota Woman
  - 4. Novels
    - a. Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man
    - b. N. Scott Momaday, House Made of Dawn
    - c. Rudolfo Anaya, Bless Me Ultima
    - d. Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior
  - 5. Visual Arts
    - a. Photography
    - b. Painting
    - c. Sculpture
    - d. Film
  - 6. Architecture
    - a. Malls

- b. Tract housing
  - c. Public housing developments
  - d. Urban renewal
- 7. Politics
  - a. President John F. Kennedy, Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba
  - b. Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 7 August 1964
  - c. Martin Luther King, Jr., I Have a Dream
  - d. Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet
- 8. Religion and philosophy
  - a. Herbert John Benally
  - b. Aldo Leopold
  - c. Elizabeth V. Spellman
  - d. Nellie Wong
- 9. Science and technology
  - a. Growth of agribusiness
  - b. Shift from manufacturing to service industries
  - c. Transportation: space travel
  - d. Communication: computer technology

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. Instructor-guided discussions of reading
- C. Film presentations and follow-up discussions
- D. **Field Trips** -
- E. In-class listening to musical selections
- F. Small group collaborations
- G. In-class reading aloud

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Reading 1. Read Anne Bradstreet's *The Flesh and Spirit* and Elizabeth V. Be prepared for a class discussion. B. Post-discussion short writing assignment 1. Discuss your group's response to Emerson's theory of nature. Referencing your own experience in nature, discuss how your response to Emerson's view was similar or different from that of your classmates. C. Group Presentations 1. Select an American landscape painter to discuss in front of the class. Using examples of his/her work, show how you think this artist's paintings can be related to the philosophical and religious theories of nature that we discussed. D. Four to five page essay 1. Find an example of art that exists in our local community. Interpret that work of art by relating it to the ideas discussed in class, other examples of American artistic works, and your own American experience. E. Oral presentation of essay 1. Using a poster board or PowerPoint, present the work of art that you discussed in your 4-5 page essay. In addition, show and discuss the works of American art that you used to help interpret that work, and briefly discuss how that work of art relates to American ideas and the American experience

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

- A. **Methods**
- B. **Frequency**
  - 1. Two written examinations (midterm and final)
  - 2. Weekly post-discussion short write-ups
  - 3. One group presentation
  - 4. Two, 4-5 page essays per term
  - 5. 2 oral presentations of essays

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Lewis, Michael *American Art and Architecture*. 1st ed., Thames & Hudson, 2006.
- 2. Novak, Barbara *Voyages of the Self: Pairs, Parallels, and Patterns in American Art and Literature*., Oxford University Press, 2007.
- 3. Pohl, Francis K. *Framing America*. 2nd ed., Thames & Hudson, 2008.
- 4. Scheller, William *America: A History in Art: The American Journey Told by Painters, Sculptors, Photographers, and Architects*., Black Dog & Leventhal, 2008.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: