



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Seminar of English Literature: American Short Story	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Dr. Grant Rosson	Institute of English, Romance, and Classical Studies

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
Semester 4 (Year 2)	Optional

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Seminars	Spring semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: Advanced English language proficiency (B2, C1)	Additional requirements (if any): Introduction to Literary Theory

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	32	102

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
<p>This course will examine the genre of the American short story, focusing on the construction of short narratives. In order to explore the poetics of a short narrative, the theoretical framework of Seymour Chatman's narratological theory will be used. By analyzing selected American short stories and tracing the development of the genre, the fundamental concepts of narrative elements will be discussed.</p> <p>Generic competences to be developed (as per the aims of the English Philology programme):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1. <u>Responsibility</u>: the ability to set goals and make plans, and take responsibility for them; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1. will be able to set goals, choose and use resources necessary for the completion of a task, plan their time and follow deadlines; - 1.2. will be able to take responsibility for their work / study results and learn from mistakes; - 3. <u>Intercultural competence</u>: respect and openness to other cultures, the ability to work in a multicultural environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3.1. will be able to understand the specifics of different cultures and to analyze and assess cultural contexts; - 3.2. will be able to study, work, and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds and develop awareness, respect, and openness to cultural diversity; - 4. <u>Problem solving</u>: the ability to solve problems by relying on analytical, critical, and creative thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4.1. will be able to identify problems and challenges in their own and related fields; - 4.2. will be able to identify problems by finding, analysing, and critically assessing relevant information, generate new ideas, choose the most optimal solutions; - 5. <u>Openness to change</u>: the ability to understand the necessity of change and the intention to constantly improve oneself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5.1. will be familiar not only with the changes taking place in their field of interest, but also their causes, challenges, opportunities; - 5.2. will be open to new ideas, strive to change, and be creative and innovative; - 5.3. will be able to evaluate the quality of their actions and achievements and strive to acquire the competencies necessary for future change

Subject-specific competences (as per the aims of the English Philology programme):

- 7. Essential knowledge and skills of literary science: perception of literature as a phenomenon and perception of literature as a scientific discipline:
 - 7.1. will know, understand and be able to describe literature as a phenomenon and properly use and interpret the basic concepts and terms of literary studies;
 - 7.2. will acquire knowledge of the main branches and methods of literary studies;
- 9. Understanding and analysis of English literature: the ability to analyze and interpret English literature as a phenomenon:
 - 9.1. will gain knowledge of the development of English literature, the most important authors and the most significant works;
 - 9.2. will be able to analyse, interpret and evaluate the phenomena of English literature in the wider context of world literature, using appropriate terminology and methods;
- 10. Understanding English culture: The ability to understand and explain the peculiarities of British and American culture;
 - 10.1 will gain knowledge of English-speaking countries (especially Great Britain and the United States) and their socio-cultural context (aspects of geography, history, public policy, literature and art, mentality and self-awareness, customs and traditions, everyday communication conventions, etc.);
 - 10.2 will be able to distinguish the most prominent features of British and American culture, compare the culture of English-speaking countries with Lithuanian culture, and identify and explain similarities and differences;

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>Course-specific learning outcomes: Students will develop an understanding of the literary tradition of the American short story; they will expand their knowledge of canonical American short stories and classic authors, while simultaneously developing the competence to analyze the generic form of a short story (being able to provide well-argued interpretations).</p> <p>Subject specific learning outcomes: students will become fluent in the use of literary analytical terms, particularly regarding the study of genre and narrative structure; they will learn to recognize the features and tropes of several key movements in American literature; they will become familiar with social and political contexts that influenced the careers of several major American authors.</p> <p>Generic learning outcomes: students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills; they will hone their ability to make connections among various texts and their contexts.</p>	Lectures, seminar-style discussion; reading, discussion, analytical thinking.	Cumulative assessment: contribution to class discussion and participation in exercises, average test score (midterm and final examination).

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours				Self-study work: time and assignments
	Tutorials	Seminars	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Introduction: the generic origins of the American short story; the essential trends in its development and aesthetics.		2	2		
2. <u>Romantic period</u> : Nathaniel Hawthorne “The Minister’s Black Veil” (Key concept – characterization) Edgar Allan Poe: review of Hawthorne’s Twice-Told Tales - the aesthetics of the short story		2	2	6	<p>Introduction from Chatman’s <i>Story and Discourse</i> (pp. 15-41); chapter 3 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 58-62)</p> <p>Read and analyze stories by Hawthorne and Poe.</p>

3. <u>American Authorial Anxiety</u> : Catharine Maria Sedgwick, "Cacoethes Scribendi" (1830) (Key concepts – authorship, women writers)		2	2	6	Read and analyze Sedgwick story.
4. <u>The American Gothic</u> : Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (Key concepts – setting, narration)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 3 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 62-65) Read and analyze Poe story.
5. <u>Post-Civil War Era</u> Charles Chesnutt, "The Wife of His Youth" (Key concepts – race relations)		2	2	6	Read and analyze Chesnutt story.
6. <u>Realism</u> : Henry James, "The Real Thing" (Key concept – irony)		2	2	6	Defining key concept: chapter 6 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 186-190) Read and analyse story by James.
7. <u>Modernism</u> : Ernest Hemingway, "Big Two-Hearted River" (Key concepts – dialogue, inner monologue)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: sub-chapter "Pure Speech Records" from Chatman's <i>Story and Discourse</i> (pp. 173-178). Read and analyse Hemingway story.
8. The American South Flannery O'Connor's "The Life You Save May Be Your Own" (Key concepts – theme, ideology)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 8 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 273-280) Read and analyse O'Connor story.
9. <u>African-American short fiction</u> : James Baldwin "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon" (Key concepts – point of view, character-filter)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 5 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 130-141) Read and analyze Baldwin story.
10. <u>Postmodernist short fiction</u> : John Barth's "The Balloon" (Key concepts – self-conscious fiction, experimentation)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 9 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 304-309, 311-312) Read and analyze Barth story.
11. <u>American Minimalism</u> : Raymond Carver "Cathedral" (Key concepts – narrator, narratee)		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 4 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 90-97) Read and analyze Carver story.
12. <u>Chicano/a Literature</u> : Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek"		2	2	6	Defining key concepts: chapter 7 from <i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i> (pp. 240-247) Read and analyze Cisneros story.
13. <u>Play with Genre</u> : Karen Russell, "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves"		2	2	6	Read and analyze Russell story.
14. <u>Contemporary</u> : George Saunders, "Exhortation"		2	2	6	Read and analyze Saunders story.

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Assessment strategy	Weight,%	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Midterm exam	40%	Midterm	The midterm examination will consist of a series of open- and close-ended questions based on the analysis of the texts discussed during the course. Students are expected to present a coherently-argued case in their responses. The examination is assessed on a 10-point scale.
Final exam	60%	End of	The final examination will consist of a series of open- and close-

		semester	ended questions based on the analysis of the texts discussed during the course. Students are expected to present a coherently-argued case in their responses. The examination is assessed on a 10-point scale.
Attendance and participation requirements			<p>The attendance of seminars is recommended. Students are expected to take active part in the discussions of selected texts.</p> <p>This course is heavily based on close reading, therefore the students will be required to read the chosen short stories in full, in the original language, not summaries or descriptions available online.</p>

Author	Year	Title	Issue or volume	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
SHORT FICTION				
Nathaniel Hawthorne	1836	“The Minister's Black Veil”		Available online
Catherine Maria Sedgwick	1830	“Cacoethes Scribendi”		Available online
Edgar Allan Poe	1847 1843 1839	“Tale Writing: A review,” “Fall of the House of Usher”		Available online
Charles Chesnutt	1898	“The Wife of His Youth”		Available online
Henry James	1892	“The Real Thing”		Available online
Ernest Hemingway	1927	“Big Two-Hearted River”		Available online
Flannery O'Connor	1955	“The Life You Save May Be Your Own”		Available online
James Baldwin	1965	"This Morning, This Evening, So Soon"		Available online
Donald Barthelme	1968	“The Balloon”		Available online
Raymond Carver	1981	“Cathedral”		Available online
Sandra Cisneros	1991	“Woman Hollering Creek”		Available online
Karen Russell	2006	“St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves”		Available online
George Saunders	2012	“Exhortation”		Available online
THEORETICAL MATERIAL				
Seymour Chatman	1993	<i>Reading Narrative Fiction</i>		Macmillian Publishing Company: New York.
Seymour Chatman	1980	<i>Discourse and Narrative: Narrative Structure in Film and Fiction</i>		Cornell University Press: Ithaca.
Optional reading				
Scofield, M.	2006	<i>The Cambridge Introduction to the American Short Story</i>		Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Gerlach, J.	1985	Toward the End: Closure and Structure in the American Short Story		Alabama: The University of Alabama Press.
Notes				
Course Description Updated: February 2, 2022				