

TERM: Fall 2024

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 2300: History of Lit, Media, and Culture

COURSE TITLE: Representing Truth: American Realism

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: TR 3:40-5:20 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Robin Miskolcze

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

We live in an age when what is true and what is not true is blurred by spin and contested by polarizing opinions on what “really happened.” This is not anything new. This course traces the representation of truth in American culture by exploring American realism in novels and short stories written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Realism, both a literary technique and an artistic movement that aimed to represent ordinary events and experiences, arose as a challenge to romanticism and emerged in tandem with the rise of journalism, anthropology, ethnography and evolutionary science. Artists, writers, and photographers aimed to represent life truthfully and without sentimental coloring as the country encountered massive urban growth, a second Industrial Revolution, post-Reconstruction migration and a burgeoning middle class.

While we explore this time period between the end of the Civil War in 1865 to the first decades of the twentieth century, we will theorize about the connections between history and literature, literary history and today.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- examine the historical, social and economic contexts of American Realism
- learn how to write about literature within its historical contexts
- have an appreciation of how and why early American literary texts and practices change across time.
- understand how the literature in any given period draws on and modifies its literary and cultural antecedents.
- gain experience presenting history and literary history to an audience

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

N/A

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

English Major/Minor

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

OLD CURRICULUM

- GENRES (LD)
- HISTORIES (LD)
- AUTHORS (UD)
- CRITICAL/THEORETICAL (UD)
- COMPARATIVE (UD)
- CREATIVE/ARTISTRY

NEW CURRICULUM

- DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (LD)
- HISTORY OF LIT, MEDIA, AND CULTURE (LD)
- READING AND WRITING GENRES (LD)
- THEORY, POWER, AND RHETORIC (LD)
- PRE-1800 (UD)
- CREATIVE ARTISTRY (UD)
- RACE, INTERSECTIONALITY, AND POWER (UD)
- UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE (UD)
- 5000-LEVEL SEMINAR (UD)