

General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: Engl. 174 Popular Fiction Units 4
Prefix No. Title

Department: English School: Arts & Humanities

GE Category (Indicate one category only):

Foundation: A1___; A2___; A3___; B4___
Breadth: B1___; B2___; C1___; C2___; D___; E___
Integration: B___; C X; D___; International/Multicultural___

Existing Course___; Revised Course X; New Course___
Course Included in Current GE Program X

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.
Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

Proposed catalog description: Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

Survey of major types of popular fiction: detective, horror, spy, science fiction, Western, fantasy, etc. Discussion, lectures, writing. Examination of works in cultural and historical context and as literary and commercial art.

Enrollment limit per section: 40
Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 1 per year; Year 3 1

Attachments:

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

Approval for Inclusion in General Education

Candace Swin 4-30-98 Kim Morin 8/24/98
Department Chair Date School Curriculum Committee Date

✓ P. J. Cort 8/27/98 P. J. Cort 2/20/01
School Dean Date General Education Subcommittee Date

Schevernia 2/20/01
Associate Provost Date

Attachment # 2: Statement of elements common to all sections of the course
Proposed Course: Engl. 174 Popular Fiction

English 174 Popular Fiction 4 units

Catalog description: Survey of major types of popular genre fiction: detective, horror, spy, science fiction, Western, fantasy, etc. Discussion, lectures, writing. Examination of works in cultural and historical context and as literary and commercial art.

Content: English 174 will cover at least four genres from the following list: detective, science fiction, spy/thriller, horror, Western, satire/comedy, melodrama, fantasy. Other genres may be covered at the discretion of the instructor. The course treats the readings in part as expressions of the cultures in which the work was produced. "Culture" includes aspects of political and social thought, historical context, anthropological background, and psychological process for both reader and writer. One approach is through identification and discussion of archetypes such as dangerous boon, sacrificial savior, journey underground. Another approach is neohistorical: a future setting post-atomic war novel written in the 1960s in the U.S., for instance, discussed in the context of the Cold War. The course also examines the works in comparison to television, film, and other pop culture media. The works are read as commercial and literary art, with analysis of style, plot technique, characterization, point of view. The course includes a strong diversity component developed by different instructors, consisting of one or more of the following approaches: consideration of the influence of American popular literature and other pop media on world culture; consideration of archetypes present in English language popular fiction in relation to non-Western examples of the same archetypes; consideration of race, ethnicity and gender as themes in popular literature and culture; and /or reading or viewing of works by minority and /or non-Western authors.

Objectives:

Students will:

- read, discuss, and analyze works of popular fiction, representing at least four genres
- explore the connections between the works and the cultures which produced them, including cultural assumptions and cultural critiques
- explore and reflect critically on the beliefs and values underlying the fiction
- distinguish between subjective and objective responses to literature and understand the connections between the two
- explore the connections between popular fiction and other popular media and the relationships between literary and commercial art
- practice close reading of texts, with attention to the role and nature of language
- practice writing about literature, using techniques of literary criticism; become familiar with aspects of fictions such as plot, characterization, point of view, and style

Required student activities:

- close reading of texts as homework
- participation in discussion of the works (as a class or in small groups)

Revised 11/5/98

Attachment # 2: Statement of elements common to all sections of the course
Proposed Course: Engl. 174 Popular Fiction

Required student activities (cont.):

- final exam (according to CSUF policy and schedule)
- a combination of two or more of the following (with writing assignments, including the final exam, totaling at least 4,000 words)
 - entries in a reading journal
 - in-class written reading responses/quizzes
 - in-class essays
 - midterm exam
 - out-of-class essays
 - group discussion and presentation
 - individual presentation
- required attendance

Grading policy: The grade for Engl. 174 will be based on some combination of grades for in-class and out-of-class writing assignments, exams, participation in discussion, presentations, and attendance. Each syllabus will contain a grading policy.

Representative texts: The texts for this course vary widely from semester to semester, often reflecting very current popular fiction. However, as noted before, the selections always represent at least four genres.

Approximate schedule for the course: The fiction is approached by genre with at least 4 genres represented from the following list: detective, science fiction, spy/thriller, horror, Western, satire/comedy, melodrama, and fantasy. Other genres may be covered at the discretion of the instructor. Each genre receives 1-3 weeks of study, depending on the number of genres to be covered. Writing assignments are spaced regularly throughout the semester, and a final exam is scheduled during the regular CSUF final examination schedule.

Revised 11/5/98

Attachment # 3: Typical syllabus
Proposed Course: Engl. 174 Popular Fiction

English 174: Popular Fiction
Fall 1997 — Prof. F.A. Hart

TEXTS: M. H. Abrams. A Glossary of Literary Terms (6th ed., HBJ)
Robert B. Parker. Promised Land (Berkeley) [detective]
Ellis Peters. The Leper of St. Giles (Mysterious Press) [detective]
Amanda Cross. Death in a Tenured Position (Ballantine) [detective]
Ross Thomas. Briarpatch (Viking/Penguin) [detective]
Shakespeare. Othello (Penguin) [tragedy]
J.D. Salinger. Catcher in the Rye (Little, Brown) [satire]
Martin Cruz Smith. Nightwing (Ballantine) [horror]
J.R.R. Tolkien. Fellowship of the Ring (Ballantine) [fantasy]
R.A. Heinlein. Farnham's Freehold (Ace) [science fiction]
Kurt Vonnegut. Sirens of Titan (Dell) [science fiction/satire]
Aldous Huxley. Brave New World (Har-Row) [science fiction/satire]

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to six of the basic types of popular story-- detective, science fiction, fantasy, horror, tragedy and satire; to increase your understanding of those types (and of fiction in general as a literary and pop lit form); and, just as important, for us to have fun along the way. All the works we'll read, including the more literary ones, were done by writers who wanted people to enjoy what they wrote; to pay for it, so the writer could eat steak rather than Hamburger Helper for dinner; and to take from it both a sense of aesthetic pleasure in the writing and a sense of some of the truths of the human condition. Writers as different as Shakespeare and Heinlein wanted to do all these things. The line between literary and popular story forms is a lot less clear than many think.

In addition to being stories, all the works we'll read are also sociological examples: they tell us something about ourselves as human beings in our society, and about each author's own society and his/her concerns about it. In addition to discussing the reading as literature, therefore, we will also talk about psychosocial themes like the image of women (and men, and man-woman relationships); heroic ideals; images of crime; attitudes toward science, towards violence, etc.

The one thing I would emphasize strongly at this stage is that we should have as much free, open discussion in class as possible. I intend to lecture no more than 10% of the time. That means that you should always do the assigned reading in full, on time, and always come to class with ideas you are willing to share about it. No one of us has a lock on the truth. You will understand some things about each book we read that others (including me) don't--until you tell us.

In addition, to the novels and play that constitute the main reading, I will make frequent assignments in the Abrams Glossary of Literary Terms to provide background information on

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Attachment # 3: Typical syllabus
Proposed Course: Engl. 174 Popular Fiction

COURSE DESCRIPTION (cont.):

literary technique. I'll announce these assignments one week ahead, at the preceding class meeting. Background information sheets handed out in class will also be a part of the assigned reading--in (among other senses) the sense that they're fair game for coverage on tests.

WRITTEN WORK: A midterm exam and a final exam, each part essay (min. of 500 words each), part passage ID, and part multiple choice. Three out-of-class essays (4-5 pages or 1,000 to 1,250 words each). Pop quizzes (5-10 minutes each), all objective, all given at the beginning of class. Quizzes missed due to nonattendance or late arrival (for whatever reason) cannot be made up.

GRADING:

Essays (10% each)	30%
Midterm	20%
Final	25%
Participation	25%

(Participation grade includes quizzes, attendance, and participation in class discussion.)

ATTENDANCE: It's best if I'm clear about this up front. Attendance is required. My policy about it is strict. I take attendance twice at each regular meeting--at the beginning of class and right after break. (There will be a 20 minute break about halfway through each class meeting.) Anyone who misses more than four half sessions gets a U in the course--in other words, you lose the units.

INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesdays 4:15-5:15 p.m.; Fridays 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; and by appointment, in Peters Building 443. Phone: 278-4918
English Dept. Office, PB 382, 278-2553 (secretaries and mail box)

Three special issues:

If you have any medical or learning disability which might affect your work in this class, do two things: let me know; and get in touch immediately (if you have not already) with the University's Disabled Student Services Office.

You should be aware that the possible penalties for plagiarism, or for having someone else write an essay for you, include (but are not limited to) failure on that assignment and failure in the course.

Finally, you need to be aware that some of the reading for this class, and at least one of the films contain graphic presentation of sex and violence. I will feel free to use R rated films if they seem appropriate to our work. If it would cause problems for you to read/view this sort of material and discuss it frankly in class, please consider dropping the course.

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CALENDAR

Dates and reading subject to change. I will be adding assignments in Abrams as we go along.

8/28: Course introduction — What is popular fiction? Literary art vs. commercial art--
what's the difference?

9/4: Promised Land — detective fiction — cultural assumptions, formulas, writing
about fiction, etc.

9/11: Leper of St. Giles — detective fiction set in medieval times
Essay # 1 due, on Promised Land

9/18: Death in a Tenured Position — detective fiction

9/25: Briarpatch — detective fiction

10/2: Othello — tragedy, expectations of popular stories in Shakespeare's time

10/9: Film of Othello
Essay # 2 due

10/16: Midterm exam

10/23: Catcher in the Rye — satire, cultural assumptions, formulas, etc.

10/30: Nightwing — horror, cultural assumptions, formulas, etc.

11/6: Film

11/13: Fellowship of the Ring — fantasy, cultural assumptions, formulas, etc.

11/20: Farnham's Freehold — science fiction, cultural assumptions, formulas, etc.
Essay # 3 due

11/27: Thanksgiving — no class

12/4: Sirens of Titan — science fiction, satire

12/11: Brave New World — science fiction, satire

Final exam according to CSUF final exam schedule

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