

Skyline College

Official Course Outline

Date: April 2007

1. TITLE:

Literature 432: Folklore

3.0 units, 3 lecture hours per week

Prerequisite: English 100 or English 105 or equivalent

2. COURSE CLASSIFICATION:

Credit course applicable to the Associate Degree

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:

Catalog description:

A lively study of folk tales, legends, beliefs, superstitions, proverbs, mythology, folk life, folk speech, folk songs, lyrics, folk epics, and their influence in the literature and culture that form our heritage. Special attention will be given to folklore of various racial and ethnic groups that mold American society. Transfer credit: UC; CSU (C2).

Schedule of Classes description:

Study of representative novels, short stories, plays, and poems, with an emphasis on the issues revealed in these works. Readings, discussions, critical papers. Transfer: UC; CSU (C2).

4. COURSE JUSTIFICATION:

This course is intended for English majors for the A.A. degree and satisfies the transfer requirement for English majors for many California State Universities and Universities of California. Because the study of folklore/folkways reveals important insights into the American cultures, the study of these works offers students and appreciation and understanding of the timeless, universal themes of the human dilemma and a study of the evolving American culture. Essential for English majors, the course complements the work of social science, psychology, history, and other disciplines and offers more work in critical reading, thinking, and writing skills. The course, therefore, serves the whole student body. Transfer: UC; CSU (C2).

5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO'S):

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify, analyze, and evaluate major themes and literary techniques in the reading
- Critically read, discuss, and interpret texts
- Write coherent, analytical, and original responses to course content

6. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

During the course, students will be asked to:

- Analyze and synthesize the works of a variety of writers
- Understand the cultural and literary contexts of various works
- Trace the cultures' developing themes, characters, and imagery
- Understand the relevance of the various works' ideas to the present
- Compare/contrast the various works to works of others
- Draw sound inferences from the literature

7. COURSE CONTENT:

The course covers a representative sample of works from the entire range of folklore/folkways; appropriate historical and literary backgrounds and analyses; and writing essays/research papers, demonstrating independent analytical responses.

- I. Historical backgrounds and contexts
- II. Literary backgrounds and contexts
- III. The languages of writers of folklore in America
- IV. Universality of the works of folklore writers in America
- V. Colonial Folklore: at least one work in depth and others for discussion
 - A. Historical background
 - B. Sources
 - C. Themes, character, setting, plot structure, dramatic conventions
- VI. Native American Folklore: at least one work in depth and others for discussion
 - A. Historical background
 - B. Sources
 - C. Themes, character, setting, plot structure, dramatic conventions
- VII. Immigrant Folklore: at least one work in depth and others for discussion
 - A. Historical background
 - B. Sources
 - C. Themes, character, setting, plot structure, dramatic conventions
- VIII. Modern Folklore: at least one work in depth and others for discussion
 - A. Historical background
 - B. Sources
 - C. Themes, character, setting, plot structure, dramatic conventions
- IX. Other: at least one work in depth and others for discussion
 - A. Movies
 - B. Song lyrics
 - C. Television

8. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Lectures, small/large group discussions, guided readings, reading journals, critical essays, oral reports, field trips to live performances as appropriate, films, dramatic presentations, and collaborative/individual projects.

Reading assignments will cover a segment of a work or several works per class session, plus reading background materials, with a total of at least five works. Students will keep reading journals in response to specific questions on the texts.

Writing critical essays, totaling at least 2,500 words, will demonstrate understanding of the materials and independent analytical responses, supported by references to the texts.

9. ASSIGNMENTS: Typical assignments might include the following:

Course Objective	Instructional Methods	Assignment	Method of Evaluation
Identify, analyze, and evaluate major themes in the works of folklore.	Lecture: Instructor gives oral presentation to introduce students to the specific period being studied—origins, themes, literary histories; identifies major themes and concerns of that period of	Reading Journal: Students reflect on the associations of the word “folklore,” for example; write responses to specific questions on the texts for discussions. Guided reading:	Essays: Students present written textual analyses which show understanding of the contexts and ideas of the works. Essays

<p>Critically read and interpret the works of folklore.</p> <p>Analyze the languages, including the uses of imagery, iambic pentameter, and other literary techniques, in folklore.</p>	<p>folklore; connections with modern themes.</p> <p>Student Discussion: Student-led oral discussions based on journal reading; structured group interactions.</p> <p>Guided reading in-class: Students read aloud a passage from a work, role-playing. Instructor explains difficult language, highlights certain passages to critically analyze.</p> <p>Group work: Groups report on findings in their assigned works, contributing to general analyses of the works.</p> <p>Collaborative/individual projects: Student-initiated projects related to coursework or related materials (biographical/historical contextual, etc.).</p>	<p>Students are assigned a part of a work to read in advance and again in class.</p> <p>Group work: In groups, students continue analysis modeled by instructor by preparing analyses of works, looking for themes, tone, rhythm, sound, imagery, etc.</p> <p>Collaborative/individual projects/reports: Students work in groups or individually to create visual projects, perhaps with the aid of media or performing or visual arts, which demonstrate understanding of coursework or background materials (biographical/historical context, etc.).</p> <p>Exercises/homework: Students will be assigned practical exercises and other brief homework activities to practice interpretive skills and modern translations of the texts.</p>	<p>must also present original ideas supported by references to the texts.</p> <p>Oral participation: Participating in and initiating discussions demonstrates understanding of the works and their contexts; also, leading discussions and participating actively in small and large group (class) discussions demonstrates how far students have developed original responses.</p> <p>Presentation of report or project: Students will be judged on the quality of their research as well as their presentation skills.</p> <p>Exams and quizzes: Students will be evaluated on their understanding of texts and contexts as well as on their interpretation of contents.</p>
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Suggested Out-of-class Assignments:

- **Readings**—Selected works and supplementary essays by scholars
- **Journals**—Written responses to questions or course materials (readings, videos, film, lectures, etc.)
- **Essays**—Write critical compositions of 500 to 1,250 words analyzing and evaluating themes and issues in the works of folklore writers supported by references to the texts

- **Projects/reports**—Oral/written presentations of individual or collaborative research on relevant subjects
- **Viewing**—Students may be asked to watch/listen to a relevant videotapes, audiotapes, or other presentations with appropriate written responses and analyses

10. **EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:**

Letter grade will typically be based on

Essays—Organized coherent and developed critical essays demonstrating understanding of material and presenting independent analytical responses supported by references to the texts.

Oral participation—Active participation in class discussions demonstrating understanding of and responses to the texts.

Journals—Written critical responses to assigned readings and class discussions demonstrating understanding and analyses of important concepts in the texts.

Oral presentations/reports—Students will be judged on the quality of their work as well as on the delivery of the information.

Quizzes—Students will be quizzed on comprehension of material.

Homework/exercises—Students will be required to practice interpreting the works of folklore writers into themes in short, written exercises.

Final exam—Students will be required to demonstrate that they have learned to recognize, analyze, and evaluate concepts and themes in the works of folklore writers.

11. **RECOMMENDED or REQUIRED TEXT(S)/AUTHOR(S):**

Brunvand, Jan Harold. *A Study of American Folklore*. 4th ed. New York: Norton, 1998.

Faurot, Jeannette L. *Asian-Pacific Folktales and Legends*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.

Hamilton, Virginia, Leo Dillon, and Diane Dillon. *People Could Fly: American Black Folktales*. New York: Knopf, 1993.

Lake-Thom, Bobby, and Robert Lake-Thom. *Spirits of the Earth: A Guide to Native American Symbols, Stories, and Ceremonies*. New York: Penguin, 1997.

Read, Kay Almere Almere, and Jason J. Gonzales. *Handbook of MesoAmerican Mythology*. New York: ABC-CLIO, 2002.

Toelken, Barre. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. 2nd ed. Logan: Utah State UP, 1996.