

**SOUTHERN STUDIES 101
THE LITERARY SOUTH**

BULLETIN INFORMATION

SOST 101 – The Literary South (3 credit hrs)

Course Description:

Principles, practices, and contexts of major literary works of the American South.

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will introduce students to important literary texts of the American South, ranging from European contact through the 21st century. We will also emphasize the interplay of Southern literary output with and in reaction to important historical and political trends. Within the Carolina Core, this course meets the Aesthetic and Interpretative Understanding learning outcome in that students will be able to interpret the literature of the American South, which will help them understand the human condition as it is expressed through literary output.

This course will provide (1) a thematic overview of the rich literary tradition of the American South; (2) a broad overview of key periods and important movements in Southern literature; and (3) a series of interpretative lenses through which students can achieve a broader understanding of regional culture and how that regional culture intersects with broader national and international cultures.

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of SOST 101, students will be able to:

1. Apply key conceptual terms and concepts to literary texts about the American South;
2. Discuss the critical nature of the interplay between fiction and nonfiction about the American South
3. Interpret a range of literary texts about the American South
4. Explain the development of aesthetic notions of the South and how those notions interact with history and popular culture

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS

1. Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*
2. Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.
3. Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*.
4. Washington, Booker T. *Up From Slavery*.
5. Twelve Southerners. *I'll Take My Stand*.
6. Welty, Eudora. *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*.
7. Faulkner, William. *Go Down, Moses*.
8. Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*.

9. Smith, Lillian. *Killers of the Dream*.
10. O'Connor, Flannery. *The Complete Stories*.
11. Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*.
12. Allison, Dorothy. *Bastard Out of Carolina*.
13. Links to additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS

1. **Short, Interpretative Essay:** Students will produce a 3- to 5-page essay focused on the analysis and interpretation of one of the works from the syllabus. Your essay should include a thesis-driven argument that focuses on a close reading that applies appropriate conceptual terms and concepts relevant to the American South.
2. **Essay Review:** Students will produce a 3- to 5-page essay review of three essays by literary critics about a class text. Of particular importance to this assignment is the discussion of the critical nature of the interplay between fiction and nonfiction about the American South.
3. **Exams:** Students will take two exams (one at mid-term and one final exam) during the semester. Exams will consist of several essay prompts, of which students will respond to one. Expectations include a thesis-driven argument in which students interpret appropriate texts and explain the development of aesthetic notions of the South and, where appropriate, how those aesthetic notions relate to popular culture.
4. **Reading Quizzes:** Students should expect a series of unannounced reading quizzes during the semester.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

Week 1: Theories of Southern Agrarianism

Primary Text: Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia*

Secondary Reading: Robert A. Ferguson's "*Mysterious Obligation: Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia*"

Week 2: Theories of Southern Agrarianism

Primary Text: Twelve Southerners *I'll Take My Stand*

Secondary Reading: Martyn Bone's "'Not a Mere Real Estate Development': Capital, Land, and the Agrarians' Proprietary Ideal"

Week 3: Slave Narratives/Counter-Slave Narratives

Primary Text: Harriet Jacob's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Secondary Reading: Anne Bradford Warner's "Harriet Jacobs at Home in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*"

Week 4: Slave Narratives/Counter-Slave Narratives

Primary Text: Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*

Secondary Reading: Susanna Ashton's "Entitles: Booker T. Washington's Signs of Play"

Week 5: Slave Narratives/Counter-Slave Narratives

Primary Text: Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Secondary Reading: Linda Krumholz's "The Ghosts of Slavery: Historical Recovery in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*"

Week 6: Slave Narratives/Counter-Slave Narratives

Primary Text: Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

EXAM ONE

Week 7: Literary Modernism and the South

Primary Text: William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*

Secondary Reading: H. L. Mencken's "Sahara of the Bozart"

Week 8: Literary Modernism and the South

Primary Text: William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*

Secondary Reading: Abdul-Razzak Al-Barhow's "A Measure of Victory: *Go Down, Moses* and the Subversion of Racial Codes"

Week 9: Literary Modernism and the South

Primary Texts: Eudora Welty's "Lily Daw and the Three Ladies" and "A Worn Path" & Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and "Revelation"

Secondary Reading: Eudora Welty's "Place in Fiction" and Flannery O'Connor's "The Catholic Novelist in the Protestant South"

Week 10: Literary Modernism and the South

Primary Text: Selections from Richard Wright's *Black Boy*

Secondary Reading: Charles T. Davis's "From Experience to Eloquence: Richard Wright's *Black Boy* As Art"

Week 11: The Gendered South

Primary Text: Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*

Secondary Reading: Vincent King's "Hopeful Grief: The Prospect of a Postmodernist Feminism in Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*"

Week 12: The Gendered South

Primary Text: Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*

Week 13: The Gendered South

Primary Text: Selections from Lillian Smith's *Killers of the Dream*

Secondary Reading: Selections from Fred Hobson's *But Now I See: White Southern Racial Conversion Narratives*

Week 14: The Gendered South

Primary Text: Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

Secondary Reading: Carole Stone's "The Female Artist in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening: Birth and Creativity*"

Week 15: Student Research Presentations

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FINAL EXAM IS "EXAM TWO" administered according to University exam schedule.