COURSE DETAIL

HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Country
Japan

Host Institution
International Christian University

Program(s)
International Christian University

UCEAP Course Level
Lower Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
English

UCEAP Course Number
64

UCEAP Course Suffix
A

UCEAP Official Title
HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

UCEAP Transcript Title
HIST AMERICAN LIT

UCEAP Quarter Units
4.00

UCEAP Semester Units

2.70

Course Description

This course introduces the history of American literature between 1492 and 1865.

In 1620, John Winthrop pictured the Massachusetts Bay Colony as “a model of Christian charity.” In 1776, Thomas Jefferson wrote down the principles of a new American nation, declaring “all men are created equal.” In 1837, Andrew Jackson ended his presidency celebrating that America was “honored and respected by every nation of the world.”

To readers living a few centuries later, it is impossible to ignore that American “freedom” has gone hand-in-hand with the capture and enslavement of Black people, indigenous genocide and land dispossession, and inequality before the law and in the labor market for the vast majority of people. Importantly, the irony of Winthrop, Jefferson, or Jackson’s words was not lost on those living when they spoke them: political struggle has attended the development of American society, culture, and economy at every step. Literature is a key window into the debate and bloodshed surrounding this struggle. Studying the development of language and narrative helps us to highlight the contradictions between American ideals and American reality, to understand the historical forces that produce these contradictions, and to study how everyday people try to build a better world, in the past as today.

Working within the bounds of 1492 (the year Christopher Columbus “discovered” America) and 1865 (when the US Civil War ended), this course examines the early colonial period in the northeast and Virginia; the war for independence from Britain; the removal of the Five “Civilized” Tribes from the southeast; and the establishment, expansion, and abolition of slavery as US colonization crept westward. The course examines a range of primary source documents -- letters, journals, myths, speeches, sermons, laws, poems, songs, memoir, autobiography, confessions, and more -- to explore the early centuries of the United States.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number
LIT104E

Host Institution Course Title
HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE I

Host Institution Course Details
https://campus.icu.ac.jp/public/ehandbook/PreviewSyllabus.aspx?regno=11250&year...

Host Institution Campus
International Christian University

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department
Literature

Course Last Reviewed
2023-2024

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