

“Science has not yet told us whether madness may not be the sublime form of intelligence.”

Edgar Allan Poe

“Reading the American Gothic”: Literature 272 American Literature Since 1865 ♦ Summer 110 ♦ Delta College ♦ Monday & Wednesday ♦ 2:00pm – 5:40pm ♦ Room S105



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Course Description

This course examines how cultural representations of horror and terror in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature codify individual and national anxieties in American culture. We will read tales such as *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe, *Absalom, Absalom!* by William Faulkner, *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman and *Requiem for a Dream* by Hubert Selby Jr. We pay particular attention to themes such as fear, madness, the supernatural, victimization, incest, identity and the ‘Other.’ We also pay close attention to social perceptions of civilization and savagery and good and evil. Finally, we will explore how a factor such as a writer’s cultural background influences his or her interpretation of the American gothic form.

Course Outcomes and Objectives

<http://www3.delta.edu/english/Outcomes/lit272w.PDF>

Course Prerequisite READING - LEVEL 7 or ENG 113.

Course Materials

Absalom, Absalom!, by William Faulkner

Requiem for a Dream, by Hubert Selby Jr.

A Short Guide to Writing about Literature, by Sylvan Barnet and William E. Cain

3-Ring Binder to keep hand-outs and assignments

Two-pocket folder for final paper

Reliable computer access

Storage device (example: USB drive)

Writing Utensil

Notebook

*All materials can be found at Delta College Bookstore.

Major Course Assignments

Final Presentation/Paper: 100 points: This project is designed to culminate your learning experience with American culture, language and literature. Here, you will examine a major theme, author, literary movement and/or literary theory within the context of one of the stories covered this semester. You can approach this assignment from a variety of ways such as creating a blog or website, creating a PowerPoint presentation or creating a podcast. The possibilities are endless! You will present your findings to your peers during the final week of class.

Discussion Board: 10 points each: Each week, you will summarize and respond to in-class and out-of class readings. You are to post your reflection to the discussion board on **EDUCTOR**. After you post your reflection, you will respond to two other classmates. Your summary/response must be posted no later than **11:59pm Friday night**. Your response to two of your classmates must be posted no later than **11:59pm Sunday night**.

In-Class and Out of Class Writing Assignments: 10 points each: Directions for in-class and out of class assignments will be given in class. I will randomly collect these assignments so it is very important that you are **present** and **actively participating** on a regular basis.

Quizzes: 20 points each: You will have **two** cumulative quizzes over the course of the semester. These quizzes will cover topics covered during in-class lectures, discussions and readings.

Course Policies and Procedures

Grading

Every assignment is graded according to accuracy, detail, depth and complexity. In addition, all writing assignments are graded according to rubric (see hand-out). Your final grade is based on the earned total points for the course.

Your grade is based on the following scale:

93-100% = A	80-82% = B-	67-69% = D+
90-92% = A-	77-79% = C+	63-66% = D
87-89% = B+	74-76% = C	60-62% = D-
83-86% = B	70-73% = C-	Below 60 % = E (failing)

Late Work

*Excuses are tools of the incompetent
which create monuments
of nothingness
those who specialize in them
are seldom
good in anything...*

Any assignment turned in after the due date can only earn the highest grade of a C. This means that if you have written a “B” paper and turned it in late, you will earn a “D” on the paper. If you have posted to the discussion board late and you wrote a response worthy of 10 points, you will only receive 7 points.

Absences

You are **not allowed** to make up any missed quizzes, tests or in-class assignments due to an absence. Absences also include information missed due to tardiness or leaving class early.

Three absences will result in an instructor initiated drop from the course.

***Instructor-Initiated Drops:** An instructor has the option of authorizing a grade of "WI" for you if you have missed an excessive number of course hours of instruction or you lack the course prerequisites. This authorization may be initiated through four-fifths of the course and reported to Records and Registration.

Withdrawal from the Course: If you wish to withdraw from this course, you must contact the Registration Center and follow the procedures outlined in the 2008-2009 Delta College Catalog. You will receive a full tuition refund if you drop the course within the first week of class. For more information visit:

www.delta.edu/acad/calendar.html **NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to drop a student from the course for excessive absences and/or disruptive behavior.**

Classroom Conduct

-You are expected to treat your classmates and instructor with respect at all times. We may discuss “sensitive” or controversial topics in class, so please respect the opinions of others.

-Remember to silence **cell phones and pagers.**

-Disruptive behavior (e.g. talking/whispering while others are trying to listen, harassing others, texting, etc.) will not be tolerated. When using computers in class, you will not be allowed to make unauthorized use of the computers, either to complete work for another course or for your own entertainment; doing so will result in a verbal warning or even loss of access to a computer. Please see Delta’s Disruptive Student Policy for a full definition of “disruptive behavior” and the consequences of being disruptive in class.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is defined as, “the false assumption of authorship; the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind and presenting it as one’s own” (Lindey “Plagiarism and Originality”). If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing on an exam or an assignment, you will receive a zero on that exam or assignment and a written notification will be issued to you, the Division Chair, the Academic Dean, and the Chief Academic Officer of the College. If you are caught cheating more than once, you will fail the course. If a case is reported to the Chief Academic Officer of the College, a permanent record of the incident will be maintained and the Chief Academic Officer of the College will decide appropriate consequences, including, especially in the case of repeat violation, dismissal from the college. Please review

the policy on Academic Integrity online at <http://www.delta.edu/catalog/StudentsRights.asp>. If you are uncertain what constitutes plagiarism, please contact your instructor. (I am more than willing to help prevent you from plagiarizing and receiving a poor grade.)

Students with disabilities

If you require additional assistance and/or if you have a documented disability which affects your academic abilities and performance and can benefit from reasonable accommodations and support, you are advised to contact Mike Cooper, Director Disability Services, in D102 for a consultation. He can be reached at 686-9322.

Adverse Weather

In the case of adverse weather, Delta College will make every effort to contact local radio and television stations as early as possible. Please tune to Delta Q-TV (channels 19 and 35), Delta Public Radio (90.1FM) or other local TV and radio stations, or call the weather line at (989) 686-9179 (or 1-800-686-9179).

Valuing Diversity

In our classroom, we value diversity. Diversity represents an environment of inclusion and equity that fosters creativity, innovation, and growth. We welcome and appreciate differences in identity, expertise, experiences, ideas, and opinions. Each person will be respected regardless of real or perceived gender identity/expression, race, color, ability, socioeconomic status, national origin, sexual orientation, political belief, physical characteristics, parental status, marital status, linguistic/language difference, creed, sex, religion, height, age, arrest record, weight, and/or veteran status.

Course Subject Matter Agreement

Please note that you will view images and participate in discussions, lectures, or readings that may contain explicit or contentious material. These materials are deemed necessary to the development of course content. By signing this agreement, you are agreeing to read (and at times read aloud to the class) and discuss William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*, which contains the excessive use of the word *nigger*. By signing this contract, you are also agreeing not to take personal offence but to intellectually discuss racially charged themes and depictions of sex and violence.

Signature _____ Date _____