**American Literature Syllabus**

**-INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION/SUPPORT-**

**Instructor:** Olivia Murr

**Email:** olivia.t.murr@btk.elte.hu

**Office**: 439

**Student Help Hours:**  Wednesday by Appointment

**-COURSE EXPECTATIONS-**

**Course Description:** Contemporary American Literature focuses on giving students a detailed overview of American fiction stories from the 1945-Present. Specific attention will be paid to the genre of American Gothic and Horror and how American societal fears appear in literature in the form of horror, suspense, and supernatural tales. This class will also examine women authors.

**Texts Needed**:

-*Class Compendium* (to be distributed in class by the professor)

- Jackson, Shirley. *The Haunting of Hill House*. Penguin Classics, 2006 (or a comparable edition)

\*All readings will come from this book. Failure to read selected chapters before class will affect your attendance grade.

**Attendance:** Attendance is the part of the grade for this class. The university allows you to miss three classes, if you miss four you fail for the entire semester. I will take role at the beginning of every class. Plan your day accordingly as so not to miss any classes. Additionally, it is your job as a student to be aware of how many classes you have missed or been late—you will not receive any warnings from me. If there is some emergency, it is your responsibility to inform me as soon as possible. I will not remind you at every class.

Phones and laptops will only be used for the readings. Though I may occasionally let you use them for special assignments, if I see you using an electronic device in class without permission you will be marked absent. Do notcheck your email or Facebook/Twitter/Instagram etc. during class.

**Expectations:** Students will take both a midterm and final exam in this course. All students will also write a final essay on our capstone novel. Additional participation assignments will include: journaling, discussions, and group activities. When covering *Hill House* students will participate in group discussions and you will need to bring 2 questions to class about that day’s readings. Your questions can be about anything you found interesting or would like to explore in more depth. If you fail to bring your questions, you will have points deducted from your participation grade.

**Evaluation:**

In-class Participation/Attendance: 10%

Unit 1 Exam: 30%

Unit 2 Exam: 30%

Capstone Essay: 30%

**Rules of the class:** Come to class prepared and fully present and do not arrive late. If you must arrive late, come into class as quietly as possible (knocking will only disrupt your fellow students). You will have open discussion in this class and are expected to be civil. Remain calm, polite, and respectful as you interact with your classmates, your instructor, and their ideas. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the course assignment detail and deadlines. Additionally, you should avoid distractions and focus on the lecture. Electronic devices will be put away until the professor instructs you to use them. If you are not engaging in class, it’s an absence.

You are also expected to conduct yourselves with academic integrity: No copying off of fellow students, cheating on tests, relying on software to complete your work, etc.

**Class Schedule**

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| **Lecture #** | **Subject** | **Readings/Assignments** |
| **Lecture 1** | Class Introduction and Introduction to American Lit. |  |
| **Lecture 2** | The Fathers of the American Gothic Genre | +“The Fall of the House of Usher” by Edgar Allan Poe  +“Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne |
| **Lecture 3** | Early Female Authors | +“Desiree’s Baby” by Kate Chopin  +“The Wind in the Rose Bush” by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman |
| **Lecture 4** | Female Gothic | +“The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman  +“Afterward” by Edith Wharton |
| **Lecture 5** | Southern Gothic | +“A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor  +“A Worn Path” by Eudora Welty |
| **Lecture 6** | **Midterm Exam** |  |
| **Lecture 7** | Folklore and Horror | + “Black Death” by Zora Neale Hurston  + “Woman Hollering Creek” by Sandra Cisneros |
| **Lecture 8** | Domestic Horror | +” Where Are You Going Where Have You Been?” by Joyce Carol Oates  +”The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson |
| **Lecture 9** | Contemporary Horror and the Canon | +“The Lake” by Tananarive Due  +Bree Newsom’s “Wake”—watched in class |
| **Break** | **No Class** |  |
| **Lecture 10** | **No Class** | Reading Day |
| **Lecture 11** | Temporalities and Ghosts | +“The Haunting of Hill House” by Shirley Jackson (pg. 1-182) |
| **Lecture 12** | **Capstone Essay** | \*Must be written in class |
| **Lecture 13** | **Final Exam** |  |