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Central Piedmont Community College

Module for Curriculum Revision

English 113: Literature-Based Research

Course Description:

The Central Piedmont Community College English 113 course, the second in a series of two, expands the concepts developed in ENG 111 by focusing on writing that involves literature-based research and documentation. The course will encourage the exploration and critical analysis of prose and poetry through the study of selected issues, trends, authors and notable historical periods. Upon completion, students should be able to construct grammatically-sound, MLA documented essays and original research papers that examine and respond to the assigned literary works and films.

Description of the Module:

The English 113 Global module will focus on introducing literature of diverse genres from the Caribbean and Latin America. The module will focus on a few countries that are representative of the Caribbean and Latin America's diverse ethnicities, cultures, and histories. Students will engage in an introductory literary investigation of the southern hemisphere and Caribbean archipelago. They will examine past and present political, social, and cultural issues confronting these societies and their immigrant communities. Students will investigate regional factors such as tourism, religious practice, trade, environmental fluctuations, and cultural values. Films augment classroom discussion when necessary.

Global Learning Outcomes:

- *Demonstrate an appreciation of the Caribbean and Latin American's cultural and racial diversity*
- *Employ various critical and theoretical approaches to analyze and interrogate literature from the Caribbean and Latin America*
- *Discuss specific ways that trade, travel, religion, and the environment establish the Caribbean and Latin America's influence and global worldview*
- *Identify select authors and artists that represent the current complexities of the Caribbean and Latin America in a coherent and intelligent manner*
- *Examine the cultural and historical specificities of gender and race in Anglophone Caribbean*

Student Learning Activities

1. *Prose Non-Fiction: Indigenous Populations and the Explorers*

- ✓ *Objective 1:* Discuss the social networks of indigenous native populations in 16th century Caribbean and Latin America before explorers arrived
- ✓ *Objective 2:* Discuss the rhetorical attributes of testimony or travel diary writing
- ✓ *Objective 3:* Analyze how the European Explorers help to shape the legacy of Indians of the Americas

Activity Description:

- First, students will read Bartolome de las Casas's "The Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies."
- Next, students will write about their current understanding of Native Americans and what stereotypes they have heard about indigenous populations of the Americas.
- Finally, each student must research the history of one of the following four indigenous populations: the Incas, Arawaks, Caribs, or Taino Indians.
- Students should present their research in-class and focus on the contributions, challenges, and demographics of these groups. Ideally, each student or small student groups will compare and contrast historical information while reflecting on the sacrifices of these indigenous populations.

Resources/Background Info:

- *The Maya, Aztec, Olmec – Ancient Americans and Lost Kingdoms of South America* documentary, <https://ezproxy.cpcc.edu/login?url=http://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=103872&xtid=50471&luid=174025>
- Bartolome de las Casas. "A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies." Excerpted by the National Humanities Center, 2006: www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/pds/pds.htm
- Eric Williams. *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean* (1970)

2. Poetry: Classical Influences

- ✓ *Objective 1:* Trace the literary influences of the contemporary and classical epic poem
- ✓ *Objective 2:* Define literary terms symbol, tone, diction, and allegory
- ✓ *Objective 3:* Discuss the term diaspora and its application to people of African descent

Activity Description:

- First, students will read Derek Walcott's epic poem *Omeros* (1990)
- Allow students to break into groups and discuss examples of African heritage, the oral tradition, and the role of the community in this poem.
- Next, the instructor will need to provide a summary or overview of Homer's *The Iliad and the Odyssey* so that students can reference characters, themes, plot, etc.
- Finally, students will write a brief 500-600word essay that asks them to employ a literary term from above list in a thesis-driven, short analysis. This analysis essay does not require research, but does require adequate textual evidence from the primary source.

Resources/Background Info:

- *Life in Debt* (2003) documentary by Stephanie Black
- Derek Walcott reading *Omeros, Book 1*, <https://youtu.be/hQupJNRE3b0>
- Maik Nwosu, "Derek Walcott's *Omeros* and the Refiguration of the Caribbean Eden" *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 2008, 44:2, 127-137.
- Online or print of copy of Homer's *The Iliad and the Odyssey*.

3. *Poetry/Music: Contemporary Influences*

- ✓ *Objective 1:* Study and critique some of the music of the Caribbean’s most popular musical artists
- ✓ *Objective 2:* Showcase the similarities between the form and function of poems and songs
- ✓ *Objective 2:* Define Rastafarianism and West Indian culture and outline brief history

Activity Description:

- First, Students will study select music lyrics by Jamaican Reggae artists Bob Marley, Tanya Stephens, and Chronixx.
- I recommend Songs “Get Up, Stand Up” by Marley; “These Streets” by Stephens; and “Start a Fyah” by Chronixx to start with.
- Next, Instructor should distinguish the nuances or differences of Jamaican Creole and Standard American English.
- Then, Students will look at key songs’ production in relation to historical context and make reasonable connections to regional social and political events.
- Students should work in small groups to discuss and create an oral and visual presentation that illustrates the nature of civil protest. Have students work from the premise of “What is their picket-sign-issue?” The Parkland High School Students interrogating gun laws and legislation is an example. Ultimately, music can be a tool for protest or “hold a mirror up” to a nation’s ills.

Resources/Background Info:

- Bob Marley performance “Get Up, Stand Up” at 1980 concert, <https://youtu.be/F69PBQ4ZyNw>
- Jamaican Gleaner Newspaper, <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/>
- Carolyn Cooper’s “Disguise up de English Language: Turning Linguistic Tricks in Creole-Anglophone Caribbean Literature.” *Teaching Anglophone Caribbean Literature* (2012), edited by Supriya Nair.
- Pauline Christie’s *Language in Jamaica* (2003)

4. Prose Fiction: **Magical realism**

- ✓ *Objective 1*: Discuss history and social and political life of Colombia, South America
- ✓ *Objective 2*: Define magical realism and employ term to understand reading.
- ✓ *Objective 3*: Explore the history of Latin American cities and its progress and problems related to human societies

Activity Description:

- Students will begin by reading two short stories by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (1968) and “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World (1968).”
- Next, break students into small groups and discuss the topic of intruders and cultural norms for accepting or rejecting them.
- Then, students should transition to a writing prompt that allows them to engage in a magical realist critical reading with the following questions: which elements of the stories seem to be fantasy and reality and consider what if conditions were reversed? Can a dead man be beautiful or can an alien be holy? Can normal be redefined to include grotesque and gothic beings?
- Next, Watch the film *Gabo: The Creation of the Gabriel Garcia Marquez*
- End this activity with student roundtable panel about Marquez’s complicated engagement with his culture and craft.

Resources:

- *Gabo: The Creation of the Gabriel Garcia Marquez* documentary (2015) by Justin Webster, <https://youtu.be/j15f2o8ffko>
- The Nobel Peace Prize website, https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-bio.html
- Danny Anderson and Jill Kuhnheim’s *Cultural Studies in the Curriculum: Teaching Latin America* (2003)

5. Prose Fiction: **Political Martyrs**

- ✓ **Objective 1: Brainstorm current problems and challenges of the 20th and 21st century**
Caribbean Leaders
- ✓ Objective 2: Discuss the importance of sociological analysis with respect to gender inequality
- ✓ *Objective 3: Define dictatorship and martyr.*

Activity Description:

- Student will create a timeline journal while reading the novel *In the Time of the Butterflies* (1994) by Julia Alvarez.
- Students should have between 7-10 entries about related weekly topics by the completion of the novel. The literary terms given above help to capture some of the key discussions in this novel.
- Instructor should clarify and define creative non-fiction. This novel is based on true events but does stray creatively with some details.
- At the conclusion of novel and journal writings, have students in small groups discuss notions of dependence and independence as it relates to citizenship and gender.
- Students should also discuss distinctions between power, authority, and government
- Finally, Students can conclude with the topic: under what conditions do women break out of gender roles or are treated opposite of assigned gender roles?

Resources:

- *In the Time of the Butterflies* film (2001) by Mariano Barroso
- *National Endowment for the Arts* project,
<https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/nea-big-read/time-butterflies>
- NEA Teachers guide for *In the Time of the Butterflies*,
<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Teachers-Guide-Alvarez.pdf>