A. **TITLE:** Contemporary American Fiction

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ENGL 214

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3

D. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks

E. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Spring

F. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:** 3 lecture hours

G. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**
Through the writings of current authors, students examine literary trends and their relationship to social, political, cultural phenomena in America. Students are given an opportunity-through their own writing and class discussion to explore contemporary ideas, values, and attitudes expressed in the literature.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-COURSES:** None

I. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):** By the end of this course, the student will:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Institutional SLO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. interpret and analyze selections of contemporary American fiction</td>
<td>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. understand and display ability to apply terms common to the humanities</td>
<td>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. argue for specific interpretations of course materials</td>
<td>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</td>
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J. **TEXTS:** Texts will vary with instructor and course theme.
- "I Stand Here Ironing," Tillie Olsen
- "Townies," Andre Dubus
- "The Unclouded Day," E. Annie Proulx
- "The Lesson," Toni Cade Bambara
- Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston (1937)
- The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood (1985)
- The Shipping News, E. Annie Proulx (1993)
- The Tortilla Curtain, T. Coraghessan Boyle (1995)

K. **REFERENCES:** Contemporary Literary Criticism, New Revision of Contemporary Authors, Contemporary Authors, Black Literature Criticism, Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction

L. **EQUIPMENT:** Instructor computer with projection.
M. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

N. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**
- papers
- in-class writing and participation
- reading journal
- research
- quizzes

O. **TOPICAL OUTLINE:** Attached.

P. **LABORATORY OUTLINE:**

TOPICAL OUTLINE

ENGL 214 - CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FICTION

**TOPICS**
(theme specific)

I. Literary Terminology
   A. Narrative Structure
   B. Characterization
   C. Style, Theme, Symbolism

II. Social and Cultural Context
   A. Race
   B. Class
   C. Gender

III. Literary Genres
   A. Realism
   B. Fabulism
   C. Formalism
   D. Satire
   E. Southern Gothic
   F. Metafiction
IV. Social Class Themes in The Short Story:

A. Ethnicity and Economics: *The Lesson*, Toni Cade Bambara


C. Economic, Job, Lifestyle: *The Unclouded Day*, E. Annie Proulx

D. Economic, Education: *Townies*, Andre Dubus

V. Social Class Themes in the Novel

A. Ethnicity: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston

B. Gender and Political Oppression:
   1. Science Fiction as Satire - *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Margaret Atwood
   2. *The Handmaid’s Tale* - film
   3. Analysis of genre using social class as lens


D. Ethnicity, Economics, Lifestyle: *The Tortilla Curtain*, T. Coraghessan Boyle

VI. Choosing Social Class: Social Mobility

A. Upward Mobility

B. Down Shifting