



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
English

Syllabus

American Nobel Laureates and the Question of Literary Value

Course Code:

ENGANL

Course Title:

American Nobel Laureates and the Question of Literary Value

Amerikanska nobelpristagare och frågan om litterärt värde

Credits:

7.5

Degree Level:

Undergraduate level

Progressive

First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements (G1N)

Specialisation:

Major Field of Study:

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2025-03-04, and is valid from the Autumn semester 2025 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

General admission requirements and upper secondary level English 6 or B

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. analyse literary texts using the theories, concepts, and methods of literary studies,
2. reflect upon different aspects of literary value and literary quality in the analysis of literary texts by American Nobel laureates,
3. discuss literary history and the development of literary criticism in relation to literary texts and literary prizes, and
4. produce structured and coherent literary analyses in Standard English.

Content

Between 1930 and 2020, eleven Nobel Prizes for Literature have been awarded to American authors. In this course, students read a selection of texts by several American Nobel Laureates and discuss them in relation to key issues in literary studies, including literary value and valuation, literary quality or excellence, the designation of a literary classic, and the formation and conception of a literary canon. The course also treats questions of how and why certain literary works achieve cultural longevity while others are forgotten, considers literature both as a national institution and as a transnational discourse, and examines trends and developments in literary criticism and history.

Instruction is in the form of seminars. In preparation for seminars, students read texts by American authors who have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, relate the texts to genres and literary periods, and reflect upon them with reference to secondary sources about literary value.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on individual oral presentations and an individual written hand-in assignment.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to Targeted Study Support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

Quality Assurance

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

Course Certificate

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

Additional information

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.