

**How America was Made: the Expansion of Society in North America**  
**Liaocheng University**  
**May - June 2019**

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**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to nineteenth and twentieth century American culture through a collection of carefully selected nonfiction, fiction, and poetry. We will examine the early influences of adventure, education, industry, and initiative and the writers who typify the American spirit such as John Steinbeck, Herman Melville, Stephen Crane, Willa Cather, Ernest Hemingway, Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman. The fertile fields of the American west stimulated migration and along with this migration, authors who chronicled the changing landscape.

**Course Objective:** Students will become familiar with American authors from the nineteenth and twentieth century and their writing style. We will examine their contribution to American literary history. We will also carefully analyze some of the most important writing from these iconic American authors. Students will explore the relationship between cultural and social dynamics of this time period. Through writing assignments and class discussions, students will specifically discover the author's diction, syntax, and writing style along with comparing their own. Finally, students will develop their ability to annotate, analyze, and assess specific figurative language including images, symbols, metaphor, and allusions in passages through the text. Students will present their interpretations to the class.

**Examination:** We will have three (one hour) tests throughout the period. There will be two group presentations. Each of the tests will be based on a particular text we studied in class and will contain questions regarding the theme, characterization, plot, and rhetorical devices used. The presentations will be graded with a rubric based on the literature content, application of the rhetorical devices discussed in class, and communication skills. There will be weekly short writing assignments in response to a portion of the text assigned and studied during that time period.

**Group Presentations:** Each group will be comprised of 3-4 students. Each person in the group will be expected to present information about their given topic. All topics will be related to one of the Hemingway short stories. Powerpoint or an equivalent program may be used for the presentation, however, it must be used as a support tool with minimal text. The group will be graded as a collaborative group.

**Reading Assignments:** Students are expected to read the entire assignment before attending class. Students should make annotations throughout the text including words they are not familiar with or would like further inquiry as a note of interest. Students will learn how to develop their own literary criticism and contextualize the meaning of the author's writing.

**Expectations:** Students are expected to arrive on time and attend each class. Cell phones and laptop computers are not allowed. Students should listen carefully during the class time and be prepared to participate in class discussions as appropriate. Participation is a critical aspect of the class discussion and students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking and ideas based on the reading.

Each student should provide a digital photo with their name in Chinese characters, the student's name in pinyin, the student's ID number, and the English name that the student uses.

**Texts:** Will be provided in PDF or internet accessible copy format.