

## SECTION HEADING

### ENGL 2203: Defining Midwest Literature

#### Description

Defining Midwest Literature introduces students to the ethos of the "Heartland" through poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction that reflect the region's rural landscapes, socio-economic history, and cultural complexity.

#### Credits

3

#### Prerequisite

STSK 0095 or placement by multiple measures

#### Topics to be Covered

1. What it is and means to be Midwestern
2. The twelve primary states that denote the Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin
3. Native Nations and European settlement
4. Nostalgia, violence, and regionalism
5. Farm poetry and/or fiction that explore farm life, rural landscapes, and the immigrant experience through such works by Hamlin Garland, Willa Cather, Berbert Quick, Ole Rølvaag, Phil Stong, Herbert Krause, Frederick Manfred, Lois Phillips Hudson, Douglas Unger, Wendell Berry, Jane Smiley, Don Kurtz, and Bill Holm
6. Small-town poetry and/or fiction that explore small-town life through such works by Sinclair Lewis, Edgar Watson Howe, Edgar Lee Masters, Zona Gale, Sherwood Anderson, Larry Woiwode, Garrison Keillor, and Marilynne Robinson
7. Nonfiction works that explore the relationships between the people and the land through such works by Curtis Harnack, Douglas Bauer, Verlyn Klinkenborg, Linda Hasselstrom, William Least Heat-Moon, Sarah Smarsh, Bill Holm, and Wendell Berry

#### Learning Outcomes

1. Identify how the Heartland's regional geography, diverse history, socio-economic evolution, and immigrant culture shaped the constellation of Midwest literary expression (thematic, stylistic, and symbolic elements) across a variety of works genres (MnTC 6.1, 6.2).
2. Articulate an informed personal explanation of the unique significance between the land and its people in Midwest literary works, considering how they reflect or challenge dominant narratives of place, identity, and community (MnTC 6.5).
3. Categorize the people, cultures, ideas, and forces that have shaped Midwestern life (MnTC 6.1).
4. Judge how Midwest literature represents Native Nations and Indigenous perspectives (MnTC 6.3).
5. Situate scholarly responses within Midwest Literature's fragmented historical and socio-economic contexts (MnTC 6.3).
6. Compare and contrast connections between texts, authorial intents, and regional identities as expressions of individual and collective values (MnTC 6.3).
7. Define the central characteristics that make a work distinctively Midwestern (MnTC 6.2).

#### Credit Details

Lecture: 3

Lab: 0

OJT: 0

MnTC Goal Area(s): Goal Area 06 - The Humanities and Fine Arts, Goal Area 07 - Human Diversity

#### Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies

Goal Area 06: The Humanities and Fine Arts

1. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within a historical and social context.
3. Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
5. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.