# Anglo-American Anthropology and Culture

## Prof. Francesco Rognoni

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to analyse a selection of works in order to explain the key elements of the history of literature and culture in the United States. In addition, it will develop the concepts of literary and intersemiotic translation (which means the transformation of a literary work into a cinematographic one). At the end of the course, students will acquire a highly representative overview of North American culture of the 1900s.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module one (first semester): *Hard-boiled novels: classics and neo-noir.*

Lectures will focus on the analysis of four classic hard-boiled novels – *The* *Postman always Rings Twice* by J. Cain, *The Maltese Falcon* by D. Hammet, *The Big Sleep* and *The Long Farewell* by R. Chandler – and on two novels from the Sixties-Seventies, *The Godfather* by M. Puzo and *The Last Good Kiss* by J. Crumley. The main film versions of these books will also be taken into consideration.

Module two (second semester): *Classicism and experimentalism within American narrative following World War 2: John Williams’ novels.*

John Williams’ three novels, *Butcher’s Crossing*, *Stoner* and *Augustus* will be studied for their stylistic and structural aspects, and collocated in their historical-social context. Each novel is highly original as well as being an example of a well-codified genre: a western novel, a campus novel and a historical novel.

***READING LIST***

Module 1:

J. Cain, *The* *Postman always Rings Twice*

D. Hammet, *The Maltese Falcon*

R. Chandler, *The Big Sleep*

R. Chandler, *The Long Farewell*

M. Puzo, *The Godfather*

J. Crumley, *The Last Good Kiss*

Module 2:

John Williams, *Butcher’s Crossing*

John Williams, *Stoner*

John Williams, *Augustus*

The books on the reading list may be any edition, but they must be in the *original language*, not translated. Further readings will be provided during lectures.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures in class in English and Italian.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam in English. The exam is divided into two parts, in which students will be asked open questions. In the first part, students must demonstrate their knowledge of the authors covered in module 1, as well as their work (Cain, Hammet, Chandler, Puzo e Crumley), and be able to place them in their respective historical-literary contexts; they must also demonstrate their ability to read aloud correctly, their understanding of the passages from the texts on the syllabus, their grasp of vocabulary and linguistic structures and their ability to analyse and interpret them in a critical way and with independence of judgement. The same applies for the author covered in the second module (J. Williams), bearing in mind that where the authors in the first module operate within a single ‘literary genre’, Williams consciously adopts and manipulates the rules of three distinct ‘genres’*.* The final mark, expressed in thirtieths, will result from the average between the first (50%) and the second (50%) part of the assessment: in order to pass it, students must obtain at least 18/30 points in each part. Other assessment criteria include use of proper language, ability to make clear presentations, and development of argumentative skills. In addition, students who have made presentations in class will have the possibility either to reduce the number of questions or to increase their mark during the final assessment.

The course syllabus is the same for everyone (regardless of class attendance).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

For students who wish to obtain 4 or 5 credits, the exam will be on *one module only* *(of their choice)*; for students who wish to obtain 8 or 10 credits, the exam will be on both modules.

There are no prerequisites for attending the course. However, students should have good writing and speaking skills in English, and a basic knowledge of American literature. In addition, students should ideally show a certain curiosity and passion towards reading.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.