

## Course description

### Descriptif du cours

**Department : English**

**Instructor (s): Hager Miladi**

**Academic year: 2021-2022**

**Level: Third year**

**Course title: American novel**

#### **Course outline:**

Week 1- Introduction. Henry James: biographical and literary contexts/commentary on the title

Week 2- Chapter one: setting the scene: the narrative point of view/setting/plot.

Week 3- Chapter two: the characterization of Tita and Juliana

Week 4- Chapters three and four: art versus reality/identities versus masks

Week 5- Chapter 5: the garden as both a literal and a metaphorical space

Week 6- Chapter 8: the unreliable narrator and psychological realism

Weeks 7 and 8- Chapter 9: climax and resolution

Week 9- Ambiguities and omissions in *The Aspern Papers*

Week 10- Realism versus modernism in *The Aspern Papers*

#### **Course description:**

This course aims to introduce students to Henry James' writings through a study of his novella *The Aspern Papers*. It will concern itself primarily with James's characteristic use of narrative point of view, not only as a way to show the complexities of psychological realism but also as a means to underscore the ambiguity inherent in his story. Second, it will consider the atmosphere of splendour and decay created by the choice of Venice as a setting and how it relates to the themes of the novel: the relationship between art and reality, literature and criticism, past and present as well as the contradiction between the idealisation and the commodification of art.

**Method of evaluation:**

The exam consists in a text analysis. Students are required to use literary concepts as well as to show their knowledge of the novel and of the themes and aspects dealt with in class. A correct use of language is the prerequisite to pass the exam.

**References:**

**(all of the following references are available from "Jstor")**

« BEYOND IRONY IN HENRY JAMES: "THE ASPERN PAPERS" », BARBARA CURRIER BELL. *Studies in the Novel*. Vol. 13, No. 3 (fall 1981), pp. 282-293 (12 pages)  
Published By: The Johns Hopkins University Press

« Revising Henry James: Reading the Spaces of *The Aspern Papers* », Ellen Brown  
*American Literature*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (Jun., 1991), pp. 263-278 (16 pages)  
Published By: Duke University Press

« *The Aspern Papers: Henry James's 'Editorial Heart'* », Tessa Hadley, *The Cambridge Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (1997), pp. 314-324 (11 pages)  
Published By: Oxford University Press

"*The Aspern Papers: From Florence to an Intertextual City, Venice*" (pp. 103-112)  
From: *Henry James's Europe: Heritage and Transfer*. Rosella Mamoli Zorzi. Open Book Publishers (2011)