

# ENGL 242: American Literature II

Dr. Michael Germana

Fall 2021

9:30-10:20 MWF

## Course Description:

If the first half of the American Literature survey dramatizes the rise of a new nation and the creation of a unique literary tradition, the second half demonstrates how the American Civil War and Reconstruction changed the course of U.S. history and American literature alike. In this class we will examine the social and cultural history of the United States from this “new beginning” to the present through the lens of American literature.

The course will culminate in an extended reading of Ralph Ellison’s 1952 novel *Invisible Man*, which engages nearly all of the course texts in conversation. Readings will also include Luis Valdez’s play *Zoot Suit* and a wide variety of poems and short stories arranged by social movement and analyzed as participants in a national dialogue that is still unfolding.

## Course Requirements:

Four in-class essay exams  
Ten short reading responses  
Class participation

