

**American Studies 453**  
**“The American Writer in Paris”**

Credit Hours: 3 credits, 45 contact hours

Gertrude Stein wrote in Paris, France “America is my country but Paris is my hometown.” Although few Americans lived in France as long as Stein or identified with Paris to the same degree, Paris has long attracted Americans who have sought to express in word, paint, photography and music their responses to this unfamiliar world. However, if Paris offered a glimpse into another culture, another way of life, it was also a mirror which revealed their own values, their own thoughts and concerns. Most writers, in other words, brought their ‘hometown’ to Paris. In so doing they reveal to us a complex meshing of imagination and experience with which we can compare and glimpse our own presence in France.

In this course, we will first discuss the general theoretical and thematic issues addressed in Jean Meral’s *Paris In American Literature*. Next we will sample various short selections from the wonderful collection of writings compiled by Adam Gopnik in *Americans In Paris: A Literary Anthology* so as to gain some insight into the social, political and intellectual concerns that Americans have brought with them. Finally, we will read four novels written in the twentieth century: Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room*, and Jack Kerouac, *Satori in Paris*.

Although the “American Writer In Paris” is the focus of this course, we too are writers who have brought ourselves to the French capital. Not only, then, will we immerse ourselves in the haunts and places our writers have known, but we will also record our own impressions and share them with one another.