

Introduction to Literature

LIT 2000-17CD

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 7 (1:55-2:45)

CBD 0210

Instructor:

Ashley Manchester

manchester@ufl.edu

Office: TUR 4323

Office Hours: Fridays 11:30-1:30

Course Pre-Requisite: ENC 1101

Course Description:

This course examines the role literature has played in individuals' lives and in society. It is centered on three questions: What is literature? Why do we write literature? Why do we read literature? LIT 2000 introduces students to a diverse range of literary genres, from different national traditions and historical periods.

Among the primary aims of this course is to help students develop critical skills of literary analysis and interpretation. Students will also learn how formal and stylistic elements as well as historical contexts shape the meaning and significance of literature. By becoming more skillful readers of literature and its contexts, students become better readers of the worlds that literature addresses, develop their ability to decipher meaning from language, and better understand their own relationship to science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

Course Objectives:

In addition to gaining a deeper appreciation of the expressive potential of language and the varieties of literature, students will develop a broader cultural literacy and an understanding of the changing definition and role of literature in society.

Therefore, by the conclusion of the course it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of specific literary works and the structures and conventions of different literary genres.
2. Produce original, critical readings of literary texts, using different methods of interpretation and analysis, while identifying and interpreting formal and genre-related elements in the texts.
3. Critically assess the variety of roles that literature has played historically and continues to play in the human experience.
4. Draw connections between literary texts and their biographical, historical, and cultural contexts of authorship and reading.

Required Materials:

Aidoo, Ama Ata. *Our Sister Killjoy*. Longman, 1994. ISBN: 9780582308459

Joyce, James. *The Dead*. Coyote Canyon Press, 2015. ISBN: 9780979660795

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. Touchstone, 1996. ISBN: 9780684826806

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Vintage, 2006. ISBN: 9781400033416

Satrapi, Marjane. *The Complete Persepolis*. Pantheon, 2007. ISBN: 9780375714832

Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Simon and Schuster, 2003. ISBN: 9780743477109

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. Dover Thrift Editions, 1996. ISBN: 9780486292731

****All readings marked with a “(C)” can be found on Canvas****

Grade Distribution:

Summary:

- Attendance and Participation/In-Class Discussion (75 points; 15%)
- 4 Brief Responses (100 points; 20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a Literary Text or Passage (100 points; 20%)
- 1 Critical Analysis Paper (125 points; 25%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (100 points; 20%)
 - TOTAL POINTS: 500

Explanation of assignments:

1. **Attendance and Participation (15%)** – Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. If you are more than 15 minutes late for class, you will be counted as absent. You are allowed 3 absences from class without penalty. Any absences after the third will severely affect your final grade. More than 6 absences over the course of the semester will result in you failing the course.

UF Policy: In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.

It is crucial that you not only attend class, but also participate to the best of your ability. Participation will be factored into your final attendance grade.

2. **Brief Response Papers: 300 words each (20%)** – *Four* times over the course of the semester, students are required to write a brief (300 word) response to the week’s reading. Students can decide which reading they wish to respond to and must upload their response to the course discussion board on Canvas.

Response papers are designed to demonstrate students’ critical and interpretive engagement with the assigned readings. A successful response paper will offer a critical examination of or argument about the chosen text’s themes, language, symbolism, motifs, or form. Alternately, students may decide to comment on the historical, social, or ethical context of the work.

**Students are required to respond to at least *five* posts written by their classmates over the course of the semester.

3. **Close Reading of a Literary Text or Passage: 1,000 words (20%)** - This assignment will test student skills in close reading, especially as that skill pertains to works of poetry and short fiction. Students will be expected to analyze a text carefully and develop an argument regarding the whole of the text through a close reading. No outside sources may be used for this assignment. **Due: February 13 by 1:55pm**
4. **Critical Analysis Paper: 1,500 words (25%)** - This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in one of the supplemental readings. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence. **Due: April 27 by 12pm**
5. **Midterm Exam (20%)** – The midterm exam will comprise matching and short essay questions based on readings, lectures, and discussion sections. **Date: February 20 in class**

Classroom Policies:

Late Work: All assignments are due *via Canvas* prior to the start of class on the noted due date, with no exceptions! If an emergency occurs that affects your ability to complete your work, please notify me *as soon as possible*. If you fail to hand in an assignment, or hand it in late without prior arrangements, you will receive a zero on that assignment. I reserve the right to make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Technology: Since you are required to fully participate in this course, which largely depends on class discussion, you will **ONLY** be allowed to use laptops or other computing devices for note-taking or other class-related purposes. If you choose to use a computer during class, be prepared to show me your notes at any time. Anyone found using their laptops for purposes other than class activities will be asked to leave class and will forfeit their attendance points.

Safe Space: Each of us brings a unique perspective to the classroom that enriches the learning experience for everyone. This classroom will be constructed as a safe space where all voices are heard and respected. Language and actions that compromise this goal by

harassing, disrespecting, or promoting violence against any group or individual will not be tolerated. This includes blatant rudeness directed toward the professor or any other student present or not. To that end, I will ask anyone who disrupts the safe space to leave the classroom.

Grading Scale:

A	100-94%	C	<77-74%
A-	<94-90%	C-	<74-70%
B+	<90-87%	D+	<70-67%
B	<87-84%	D	<67-64%
B-	<84-80%	D-	<64-61%
C+	<80-77%	Failing	<61-0%

Academic Honesty:

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student.honor.code.aspx>

****Under no circumstance will any academic dishonesty be tolerated. If you are found plagiarizing in any way, you will receive a penalty of a failing grade on your assignment and, upon my review, be reported to the university.**

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Counseling and Mental Health Resources:

Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352 392-1575;

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>).

Statement on Harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>

Online Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Course Schedule (Subject to revision):

UNIT 1: What is Literature?

WEEK ONE: Introduction: The Borders of Literature?

Wed., Jan 4

- Course introduction
- Syllabus overview

Fri., Jan 6

- Terry Eagleton, “What is Literature?” (C)

WEEK TWO: Drama

Mon., Jan 9

- William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Acts I and II)

Wed., Jan 11

- Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Acts III and IV)

Fri., Jan 13

- Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (to end)

WEEK THREE: Epic

Mon., Jan 16 – NO CLASS; HOLIDAY

Wed., Jan 18

- Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book One (C)

Fri., Jan 20

- Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book One (C)

WEEK FOUR: Poetry

Mon., Jan 23

- Emily Dickinson, Selections (C)

Wed., Jan 25

- Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” (C)

Fri., Jan 27

- Sylvia Plath, Selections (C)
- Anne Sexton, Selections (C)

WEEK FIVE: Short Story

Mon., Jan 30

- Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (C)

Wed., Feb 1

- Alice Munro, "The Moons of Jupiter" (C)

Fri., Feb 3

- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (C)

UNIT 2: Why Write Literature?

WEEK SIX: Self-Expression/Self-Construction

Mon., Feb 6

- Peer reviewing for Close Reading Paper
DUE: First draft of Close Reading Paper

Wed., Feb 8

- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (to "Our Nights")

Fri., Feb 10

- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (to "Chemical Examination")

WEEK SEVEN: Self-Expression/Self-Construction

Mon., Feb 13

- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (to "Die drei Leute vom Labor")
DUE: Close Reading Paper Final Draft

Wed., Feb 15

- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (to end)

Fri., Feb 17

- Midterm Review

WEEK EIGHT: World Making

Mon., Feb 20

- **Midterm Exam**

Wed., Feb 22

- James Joyce, "The Dead" (to page 40)

Fri., Feb 24

- Joyce, "The Dead" (to end)

WEEK NINE: Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction

Mon., Feb 27

- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (to page 67)

Wed., Mar 1

- Morrison, *Beloved* (to page 125)

Fri., Mar 3

- Morrison, *Beloved* (to page 187)

WEEK TEN:

Mon., Mar 6 – NO CLASS; SPRING BREAK

Wed., Mar 8 – NO CLASS; SPRING BREAK

Fri., Mar 10 – NO CLASS; SPRING BREAK

WEEK ELEVEN: Shaping Citizens, cont'd

Mon., Mar 13

- Morrison, *Beloved* (to page 257)

Wed., Mar 15

- Morrison, *Beloved* (to end)

Fri., Mar 17

- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Part I: A Voyage to Lilliput)

UNIT 3: Why Read Literature?

WEEK TWELVE: Exploration and Discovery

Mon., Mar 20

- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Part II: A Voyage to Brobdingnag)

Wed., Mar 22

- Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (to Part III: A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbubdrib, and Japan)

Fri., Mar 24 – NO CLASS; PROF AT CONFERENCE

WEEK THIRTEEN: Moving Beyond the Self

Mon., Mar 27

- Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (to end)

Wed., Mar 29

- Elizabeth Bishop, "The Fish" and "Pink Dog" (C)

Fri., Mar 31 – NO CLASS; PROF AT CONFERENCE

WEEK FOURTEEN: Finding New Selves

Mon., Apr 3

- Ama Ata Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (to "From Our Sister Killjoy")

Wed., Apr 5

- Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (to "A Love Letter")

Fri., Apr 7

- Aidoo, *Our Sister Killjoy* (to end)

WEEK FIFTEEN: New Ways of Seeing

Mon., Apr 10

- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (to "The Cigarette")

Wed., Apr 12

- Satrapi, *Persepolis* (to "The Veil")

Fri., Apr 14

- Satrapi, *Persepolis* (to end)

WEEK SIXTEEN: Conclusion: Where to now?

Mon., Apr 17

- Peer reviewing for Critical Analysis Paper
DUE: First draft of Critical Analysis Paper

Wed., Apr 19

- Helen Vendler, "How to Welcome and Nurture the Poets and Painters of the Future"
<http://harvardmagazine.com/2012/11/writers-and-artists-at-harvard>

****Final draft of Critical Analysis Paper due: April 27th by 12:00pm**