

# LIT 2000: INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

**Section:** 1A42

**Time:** MWF Period 6

**Room:** TUR 2306

**Instructor:** Kristen Gregory

**Email:** kg246@ufl.edu

**Office:** Turlington 4323

**Office Hours:** Wednesday, Period 8, and by appointment

## 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? And 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 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

Students should purchase the following texts. Unless otherwise noted, only the specific editions (ISBNs) noted below are acceptable.

- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (Vintage; ISBN: 978-1400033416)
- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (ISBN: 978-0375714832)
  - William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (no specific edition required, available for free via Open Source Shakespeare:  
[http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/play\\_view.php?WorkID=merchantve nice&Scope=entire&pleasewait=1&msg=pl](http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/play_view.php?WorkID=merchantve nice&Scope=entire&pleasewait=1&msg=pl))
- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (no specific edition required, available for free via Project Gutenberg: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/829/829-h/829-h.htm>)

## GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- Participation and in-class discussion (20%)
- 4 Brief Responses (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (20%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (20%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (20%)

### 1. *Participation and In-Class Discussion (20%)*

**Participation:** Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class, and will be responsible for one presentation on an important figure, event, or concept in a text. We will sign up for these presentations in the first week of class. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade. Bring your texts to class every day—either electronic copies, print-outs, or books.

### 2. *Brief responses (20%)*

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (300 word) response to the day's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our course blog BEFORE class the day on which they are due.

These responses raise either *interpretive* or *critical* questions concerned with textual meaning. They comment on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also may make judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of interpretive and critical responses indicates that there may well be neither simply "right" nor simply "wrong" answers; the success of a response is based on the evidence and reasoning students employ to support their analysis and judgment. Students are also expected to comment on their peer's responses at least 5 times across the semester.

### 3. *Close Reading Assignment: 2-3 pages (15%)*

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.

### 4. *Critical Analysis Paper: 3-4 pages (25%)*

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in class or supplemental readings. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence.

### 5. *Exam (20%)*

This take-home exam will be distributed on-line (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of matching and short essay questions based on readings, lectures and discussion. Submitted exams will be assessed for evidence of collusion.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. Late arrivals to class will count as half an absence. Students will lose 3% of their final grade for every absence after the third. Seven absences results in a failure of the course. Absences will be excused only in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and those absences covered by UF's twelve-day rule (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> ). Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class and for making up all assignments. Students are responsible for all work covered in class, all announcements, and all changes to the syllabus made in class.

**Policy on making up missed work:** Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuse (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> ), there will be no make-up option for a missed exam or late assignment. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case of illness, student should contact instructor on his or her return to classes and produce documentation of their illness or emergency.

**Cell phone and laptop policy:** Students must turn cell phones to silent before coming to class. Cell phones may never be used in class. Students may use laptops, e-readers, or tablets in class only to view texts under discussion. Students who violate this policy will receive an absence for the class period and may lose their right to use technology in the classroom.

## Grading Scale:

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

**Note:** A grade of C– is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

**Final Grade Appeals:** Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Department of English Program Assistant. Grade appeals may result in higher, lower, or unchanged final grade.

**Statement on 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>

**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>

**Sexual Assault and Harassment:** Title IX of the U.S. Higher Education Amendments of 1972 makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are civil rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Recent guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Education states that these protections apply also to transgendered individuals. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

[http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty\\_staff/fees\\_resources\\_policies/addressing\\_sexual\\_misconduct/reporting\\_sexual\\_misconduct/](http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/addressing_sexual_misconduct/reporting_sexual_misconduct/)

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

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/interpersonal-violence>

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/group-listings>

<http://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/programs/strive>

[http://www.police.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/UPD-Safe-Campus-2014\\_Rev10-15-14.pdf](http://www.police.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/UPD-Safe-Campus-2014_Rev10-15-14.pdf)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

**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/>).

**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>.

**Classroom Behavior:** I will not tolerate any rude, coarse, or offensive remarks based upon race, gender, ability, or sexual identity, in written assignments or in class discussion. In addition, please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Many of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

**A Note on Course Content:** At times this semester we will be discussing literary works that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you ever feel the need to step outside during one of these discussions, you may do so without academic penalty. (You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually.) If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or with me afterwards, I welcome such discussion as an appropriate part of our coursework.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Students should note that the schedule is a guideline and may change; students are responsible for all changes made to the syllabus and all changes announced in class, even if they are absent on the day of the announcement. It is each student's responsibility to keep up with the readings and all assignments.

*Note: you will be expected to have read the texts listed on each day prior to that day's discussion.*

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
<b>Unit One: What is Literature?</b>			
Week One (8/22)	Syllabus and Course Overview	Student Introductions	Eagleton, "What is Literature?"
Week Two (8/29)	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> * Acts I & II	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> * Act III	<i>Merchant of Venice</i> * Acts IV & V
Week Three (9/5)	<b>Labor Day-No Class</b>	Dante's <i>Inferno</i> Canto I	Dante's <i>Inferno</i> Canto XVI
Week Four (9/12)	Dickinson Poems*	Dickinson Poems*	<b>No Class</b>
Week Five (9/19)	Writing Lesson: Organization	<b>Close Reading Workshop</b>	<b>Close Reading Due</b>
<b>Unit Two: Why Write Literature?</b>			
Week Six (9/26)	"The Six Motives of Creativity"	O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"	<i>Beloved</i>
Week Seven (10/3)	<i>Beloved</i>	<i>Beloved</i>	<i>Beloved</i>
Week Eight (10/10)	<i>Beloved</i>	Midterm Review	<b>Homecoming-No Class</b>
Week Nine (10/17)	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> Book I	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> Book I
Week Ten (10/24)	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> Book IV	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> Book IV	Writing Lesson: Style
<b>Unit Three: Why Read Literature?</b>			
Week Eleven (10/31)	"Neil Gaiman on Why We Read"	Joyce, "The Dead"	Joyce, "The Dead"
Week Twelve (11/7)	<i>East, West: Stories</i>	<i>East, West: Stories</i>	<b>Veteran's Day-No Class</b>
Week Thirteen (11/14)	<i>Persepolis</i> *	<i>Persepolis</i> *	<i>Persepolis</i> *
Week Fourteen (11/21)	<i>Persepolis</i> *	Conferences	<b>Thanksgiving-No Class</b>
Week Fifteen (11/28)	Bishop Poems	Writing Lesson: Argumentation	Writing Lesson: Synthesizing
Week Sixteen (12/5)	<b>Critical Analysis Workshop</b>	Course Reflection <b>Critical Analysis Due</b>	<b>Reading Day-No Class</b>

\*These readings are common to all LIT 2000 sections taught through the English department this semester.