

Syllabus for LIT 2000 (Section 15486): Introduction to Literature

Instructor Name: Maxine Donnelly

Course meeting times & locations: MWF 10:40-11:30 (Period 4)

Office Location and Hours: Turlington 4335; hours TBD

Course website: Access via Canvas

Instructor Email: maxinedonnelly@ufl.edu

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

The following texts can be purchased at the UF Bookstore or online (search for the text using the provided ISBN). Unless otherwise specified, these exact editions must be purchased.

Books to Purchase

Adoo, Ama Ata. *Our Sister Killjoy*. ISBN: 978-0582308459.
(Other editions are acceptable)

Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. ISBN: 0156453800
(Other editions are acceptable)

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. ISBN: 978-0684826806
(Other editions are acceptable.)

Satrapa, Marjane. *The Complete Persepolis*. ISBN: 0375714839

GRADE DISTRIBUTION (see below for Grading Scale)

- Participation and in-class discussion (20%)
- 4 Brief Responses (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (15%)
- 1 Critical Analysis paper (25%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (20%)

COURSE POLICIES:

Course Credit: You must complete *all* assignments to receive credit for this course.

Attendance: Attendance in this class is not only mandatory, it is essential. Since discussion is so important for interpreting literature, any tardiness or absence disrupts your understanding and that of you peers. Six absences result in failing the course. Late arrivals to class (*more than five minutes*) will count as partial absences; please see me after the class in question so I know you attended. Absences will only be excused if excusable under 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>).

If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for finding out what was covered in class and for making up all assignments—including all work covered in class, all announcements, and all changes to the syllabus made in class.

Classroom Behavior: Please keep in mind that your peers come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about may engage controversial topics and opinions. I hope this class will be a safe place to explore *all* points of view, but this also means encountering views you may not agree with. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class. A good rule of thumb:

take a breath and remember the person across from you is a *person*, not a viewpoint. If you cannot say something you would be comfortable having a parent, guardian, or young sibling hear, then it may be time to withdraw from discussion.

Technology: Laptops and similar devices will be allowed for class-related use only on a provisional basis; they may be banned without warning if they become an obvious distraction. Cell phones should be on silent and out of sight *unless* explicitly part of an activity. Disregard for this policy may result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

In-Class Work: Be prepared each day with *the textbook and printouts of or digital access to any additional readings, any notes you have taken on the readings, paper to write on, and a writing utensil*. You must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up.

Course Content: At times this semester we will be discussing some 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 *as long as you contact me later via email to explain your absence*. (You will, however, be responsible for any material that you miss and for any related assignments. If you do leave the room for a significant amount of time, get notes from another student or see me individually.)

Paper Format & Submission: All assignments are due via Canvas prior to the start of class on the noted due date. If an emergency occurs that affects your ability to complete your work, please notify your instructor as soon as possible. Your papers should be Word documents formatted according to MLA style: in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced with 1-inch margins with the appropriate heading and pages numbered.

Late Papers/Assignments: 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—I am somewhat more flexible with late papers if I know it stems from a legitimate cause. In case of illness, student should contact instructor on his or her return to classes and produce documentation of their illness or emergency

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities: Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

Writing Studio: The University Writing Studio (formerly the Writing Center in Tigert 302 is available to all UF students. Students can work one-on-one with a consultant on specific papers or skills. If you are having difficulty with an assignment, the folks here can be lifesavers. Keep in mind that since the Writing Studio's aim is to help students become more effective writers, they do not simply proofread or edit documents. They can, however, assist students to become better proofreaders and editors of their own work.

Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism: Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came. All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, ask for help!

Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.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 state 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.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>

Grading Policy: Grading for this course will be rigorous. On-time submittals are imperative, and extensions cannot be granted the day of an assignment, except in extreme circumstance. If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will be failed. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts. Submitted assignments short of the minimum word count will receive zero credit. For information on UF Grading policies, see:

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

Grade Appeals: In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Course Evaluations: Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Participation and In-Class Discussion (200 Points)

Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class. Consistent participation in class discussions and demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will contribute to this portion of the final grade. You should come to class each day with *one typed or written question, observation, or critique to raise during class discussion* and hand in at the beginning of class. Also be certain to bring your texts to class every day—either electronic copies, print-outs, or books – and paper and pen or pencil with which to write. Participation in writing lessons and peer review workshops is also included in this grade.

Brief Responses (200 Points)

Students are required to write a brief (100-200 word) response to the day's reading at least four times during the semester. These responses must be uploaded to our course Discussion Board 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/or symbolism within the narrative. They also may make judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. You are also expected to comment on your peers' responses at least four times across the semester. These comments should also be submitted before class.

Close Reading Assignment (150 Points)

This 600-800 word assignment will test your skills in close reading, especially as those skills pertain to works of poetry and short fiction. You will be expected to carefully analyze a poem or short story from this class and develop an argument regarding the whole text through a close reading. *No outside sources may be used for this assignment.*

Critical Analysis Paper (250 Points)

This 800-1000 word assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in class or supplemental readings. The goal is for you to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence.

Midterm Exam (200 Points)

This take-home exam will be distributed online (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of multiple choice and short essay questions based on readings, lectures and discussion. Submitted exams will be assessed for plagiarism, copying, cooperation, etc.

Total Points: 1000

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>

COURSE SCHEDULE

(A rough guide—readings and assignments subject to change. Pay attention to Canvas)

UNIT 1: What Is Literature?

Week 1 (1/7-11)

1/7: Syllabus Day + Icebreaker

1/9: Diving in with the *Odyssey*
Homer, Odyssey Book XIX (Canvas, pgs. 519-535)

1/11: *The Odyssey* and the Boundaries of Literature
Read Odyssey Book XXII (pgs. 547-557) AND
Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature?" (Canvas)

Week 2 (1/14-18)

1/14: "The Scottish Play," *Macbeth*
Read Macbeth Act 1-2 (pgs. 1-28)

1/16: *Macbeth* Cont'd
Read Macbeth Act 3-4 (pgs. 28-59)

1/18: Closing on *Macbeth*
Read Act 5 (60-end)

Week 3 (1/21-25)

1/21: MLK Day, NO CLASS

1/23: Introduction to Poetry
Read Emily Dickinson "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," "The Soul selects her own Society," "Some Keep the Sabbath Going to Church" (Canvas)

1/25: Walt Whitman
Read excerpts from "Song of Myself" (Canvas)
Lowell, "Why Read Poetry" (Canvas)

Week 4 (1/28-2/1)

First Response Due by Class Time, Monday

1/28: Meta Poetry

Read Browning, "My Last Duchess" and Yeats, "Adam's Curse"
on Canvas

1/30: Poetry in a Different Voice

Read Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B" and Sylvia Plath, "Fever 103" (Canvas)

2/1: Short Stories

Read Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (Canvas)

Week 5 (2/4-8)

Close-Reading Draft Due Before Class Friday

2/4: Short Stories Cont'd

Read Jorge Luis Borges, "The Aleph" (Canvas)

2/6: Short Stories Cont'd

Read John Cheever, "O Youth and Beauty" (Canvas)

2/8: Close-Reading Peer Review/Draft

UNIT 2: Why Write Literature?

Week 6 (2/11-15)

Close Reading Due Wednesday 11:59 PM on Canvas

2/11: *Survival in Auschwitz*

Read Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* "The Journey-Our Nights"

2/13: *Survival in Auschwitz*

Read Levi, "The Work-The Drowned and the Saved"

2/15: *Survival in Auschwitz*

Read Levi, "Chemical Examination-Die drei Luete..."

Week 7 (2/18-22)

MIDTERM EXAM DUE FRIDAY, 6:59 PM

2/18: *Survival in Auschwitz* and Motivations for Writing

Read Levi, "The Last One"- End

George Orwell, "Why I Write" (Canvas)

2/20: Marcel Proust

Read *Swann's Way*, "Overture" (Canvas)

2/22: MIDTERM

Week 8 (2/25-3/1)

Response 2 Due by Class Time Friday

2/25: Children's Books as Literature

Read Introduction (pg. 1-6) of *Ethics and Children's Literature* AND

Collodi, Pinocchio Chapter 1-12 (pgs. 2-27) (Canvas)

2/27: *Pinocchio* Cont'd

Read *Pinocchio* Chapter 13-23 (pgs. 29-64)

3/1: *Pinocchio* Concluded

Read *Pinocchio* Chapter 24-36 (65-120)

Week 9 (3/4-8)

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (3/11-15)

3/11: *Don Quixote*

Read *Don Quixote* Chapter I-V pgs. 162-239 (Canvas)

3/13: The Quest Continues

Read *Don Quixote* Chapter VII-X (260-324)

3/15: Quixote in Translation
Read Don Quixote Chapter XXII (590-619)
Ilan Stavans, "Don Quixote in Translation" (Canvas)

UNIT 3: Why Read Literature?

Week 11 (3/18-22)

3/18: Quixote, Madman or Wise Man?
Read Don Quixote Chapter LXXIV (2921-2938)

3/20: Persepolis
Read Satrapi's Persepolis, pgs. 1-93

3/22: Persepolis
Read Persepolis, 94-154

Week 12 (3/25-29)

Response 3 Due By Class Time Friday

3/25: Persepolis
Read Persepolis 155-232

3/27: Complete Persepolis
Read Persepolis, 233-End

3/29: Sister Killjoy
Read Ama Ata Adoo, Sister Killjoy "Into a Bad Dream" (1-17)
AND Resource Sheet on Postcolonial Theory (Canvas)

Week 13 (4/1-5)

4/1: Sister Killjoy
Read Sister Killjoy "The Plums" pgs. 19-60 (To "They sat and time crept on...")

4/3: Sister Killjoy

Read Sister Killjoy 61-108 (End of "The Plums"-end of "From Our Sister Killjoy")

4/5: Finish Sister Killjoy

Week 14 (4/8-12)

4/8: *Invisible Cities*

Read Calvino, Chapters 1-3

4/10: *Invisible Cities*

Read Calvino, Chapter 4-6

4/12: *Invisible Cities*

Finish Calvino

Week 15 (4/15-19)

Response 4 Due by Class Time, Wednesday

4/15: Poetic Interlude

Read Sylvia Plath, "Morning Song" and Langston Hughes, "The Ballad of the Landlord" (Canvas)

4/17: Writing and What's At Stake

Read Orwell, "Politics and the English Language"

4/19: Critical Analysis Outline/Workshop

Outline due 11:59 PM on Canvas

Week 16 (4/22-26)

Critical Analysis Draft Due by Class Time Monday

4/22: Critical Analysis Peer Review

4/24: Concluding Questions

Read Currie, "Does Great Literature Make Us Better?"

4/26: Reading Day

FINAL CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE 4/27 11:59 PM on Canvas