

Syllabus for LIT 2000 (Section 19CC, Class 17580): Introduction to Literature

Instructor Name: Maxine Donnelly

Course meeting times & locations: MWF 4:00-4:55 (Period 9)

Office Location and Hours: Turlington TBD; M 12:35-2:35, T 12:35-1:40

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. Yet all the works we will read are connected by their explorations of what it means to suffer, to grow, and to be human.

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. *This course confers H credit.*

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*. Longman, 1994. ISBN: 978-0582308459.

Morrison, Toni. *Sula*. Penguin, 2004. ISBN: 9781400033430.

Satrapa, Marjane. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. New York: Pantheon, 2004.
ISBN:978-0375714573

Shakespeare, William and Sparknotes. *No Fear Shakespeare: Merchant of Venice*. Sparknotes: New York, 2005. ISBN: 9781586638504

GRADE DISTRIBUTION (see below for Grading Scale)

- Participation and in-class discussion (20%)
- 4 Brief Responses (20%) <1 response can be creative>
- 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. Students will lose 3% of their final grade for every absence after the third. Six absences result in failing the course. Latecomers receive partial absences and must see me after class to ensure their attendance is marked. 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 can be found here: (<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. During discussion, any personal verbal attacks, aggression, etc. will not be permitted, and may result in dismissal from the discussion. 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: As shown in the grading scale, participation is central in this class. You will work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, reviews, and other in-class activities. You must come prepared each day: have on hand *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. You are expected to contribute constructively to each class session; this is difficult to do if you do not keep up with the readings and come prepared to class with the necessary materials.

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 that you miss and for any related assignments. If you do leave the room for a significant time, 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.

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 why they are late. In case of illness, you should contact me on your return to classes and produce documentation of your 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 Plagiarism:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- a. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
- b. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
- c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
- d. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author

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 to me early in the semester.

Students who are in distress or who are in need of counseling or urgent help, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> Also, do not hesitate to contact or speak to me personally if you feel able: while I cannot be your counselor, I will not judge any student who makes me aware of why their performance in class may be suffering.

Statement on Harassment: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>

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>

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

Students are expected to complete 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 or observation to raise during class discussion and hand in at the end of class for credit. Also be certain to bring your texts to class every day—either electronic copies, print-outs, or books – and paper and a pen or pencil with which to write. Participation in writing lessons and peer review workshops is also included in this grade.

Brief Responses

Students are required to write a brief (300-500 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. These questions are open-ended, as there are no purely “right” or “wrong” answers in literature; the response’s success is based on the evidence and reasoning supporting your point. You are also expected to comment on your peers’ responses at least 4 times across the semester. These comments should also be submitted before class.

Close Reading Assignment

This 2-3 page assignment will test your close reading skills: 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.*

Critical Analysis Paper

This 3-4 page 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

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

Writing Conferral: This class

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 (8/21-23)

8/21: Syllabus Day + Icebreaker

8/23: Diving in with *The Odyssey*
Read Homer, *Odyssey Book XIX* (Canvas, pgs. 519-535)

Week 2 (8/26-30)

8/26: *The Odyssey* and The Boundaries of Literature
Read *Odyssey Book XXII* (pgs. 547-557) **AND**
Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature?" (Canvas)

8/28: *The Merchant of Venice*
Read *Merchant Act 1-2*

8/30: *Merchant* Cont'd
Read *Merchant Act 3-4*

Week 3 (9/2-6)

9/2: LABOR DAY, NO CLASS

9/4: Closing on *Merchant*
Read *Act 5 (60-end)* **AND** Dautch, "A Jewish Reading of the Merchant of Venice"

9/6: 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) **AND**
Lowell, "Why Read Poetry" (Canvas)

Week 4 (9/9-13)

First Response Due by Class Time, Monday

9/9: Walt Whitman

Read excerpts from "Song of Myself" (Canvas) **AND** listen to first 20 minutes of podcast on Whitman (Canvas)

9/11: Genre-Bending and Meta Poetry

Read Browning, "My Last Duchess"

Yeats, "Adam's Curse"

Hughes, "Theme for English B"

All on Canvas

9/13: Short Stories

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

Week 5 (9/16-20)

Close-Reading Draft Due Before Class Friday

9/16: Short Stories Cont'd

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

9/18: Close-Reading Workshop/Practice

Bring story/poem being considered for close reading assignment

9/20: Close-Reading Peer Review/Draft

UNIT 2: Why Write Literature?

Week 6 (9/23-27)

Close Reading Due Monday 11:59 PM on Canvas

9/24: *I, Rigoberta Menchu*

Read Menchu Chapters 1-10

9/26: *Rigoberta Menchu*

Read Menchu Chapters 11-30 **AND** John Beverley, "On Testimonio" (Canvas)

9/28: *Rigoberta Menchu*

Read Menchu Chapters 31-40

Week 7 (9/30-10/4)

9/30: Rigoberta Menchu and Truth in Writing

Read Menchu Chapter 41-End **AND** Selections on Menchu Controversy (Canvas)

10/2: Marcel Proust

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

10/4: Jose Saramago

Read Saramago, "Tale of the Unknown Island" (Canvas)

Week 8 (10/7-11)

Response 2 Due by Class Time Friday

10/7: Toni Morrison

Read Morrison, *Sula* Chapter 1-3 **AND** "Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation" (Canvas)

10/9: *Sula* Cont'd

Read *Sula* Chapter 4-7

10/11: HOMECOMING, NO CLASS

Week 9 (10/14-18)

MIDTERM EXAM DUE FRIDAY, 6:59 PM

10/14: *Sula* Concluded

Read *Sula* Chapter 8-End

10/16: Don Quixote

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

10/18: MIDTERM EXAM

Week 10 (10/21-25)

10/21: The Quest Continues

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

10/22: Quixote in Translation
Read *Don Quixote Chapter XXII (590-619)* **AND**
Ilan Stavans, "Don Quixote in Translation" (Canvas)

10/24: Quixote, Madman or Wise Man?
Read *Don Quixote Chapter LXXIV (2921-2938)*

UNIT 3: Why Read Literature?

Week 11 (10/28-11/1)

10/28: Persepolis
Read *Satrap's Persepolis, pgs. 1-93* **AND** *McCloud, Understanding Comics* (Canvas)

10/30: Persepolis
Read *Persepolis, 94-154*

11/1: Persepolis
Read *Persepolis 155-232*

Week 12 (11/4-8)

Response 3 Due By Class Time Friday

11/4: Complete Persepolis
Read *Persepolis, 233-End*

11/6: Sister Killjoy and Diverse Books
Read *Ama Ata Aidoo, Sister Killjoy "Into a Bad Dream" (pgs. 1-17)* **AND**
Barcellona, "Six Reasons Why We Need Diverse Books" (Canvas)

11/8: Sister Killjoy as Postcolonial Literature
Read *Sister Killjoy "The Plums" pgs. 19-60* (To "They sat and time crept on...") **AND**
Postcolonial Handout (Canvas)

Week 13 (11/11-15)

11/11: VETERANS DAY, NO CLASS

11/13: Sister Killjoy
Read *Sister Killjoy 61-108* (End of "The Plums"-end of "From Our Sister Killjoy")

11/15: Sister Killjoy
Read *Sister Killjoy, "A Love Letter" (111-134)* **AND** *Ahmed, "Feminist Killjoy" (Canvas)*

Week 14 (11/18-22)

11/18: *Invisible Cities*

Read Calvino, Chapters 1-3

11/20: *Invisible Cities*

Read Calvino, Chapter 4-6

11/22: *Invisible Cities*

Finish Calvino

Week 15 (11/25-29)

Response 4 Due by Class Time, Wednesday

11/25: Writing and What's At Stake

*Read Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" AND
Yeats, "The Fisherman"*

11/26: THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS

11/30: THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS

Week 16 (12/1-5)

Critical Analysis Draft Due by Class Time Monday

12/1: Critical Analysis Peer Review

Bring computer/paper to work on analysis

12/3: Concluding Questions

Read Edmondson, "The Ideal English Major"

12/5: Reading Day

FINAL CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE 12/9 11:59 PM on Canvas