

**LIT 2000-1A42: Introduction to Literature**  
(General Education State Core)

**Instructor Name:** Kristen Gregory

**Course meeting times & locations:** MWF Period 6, Turlington 2305

**Office Location and Hours:** MW Period 8, Office Location TBD

**Course website:** On Canvas (elearning.ufl.edu)

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## **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 (in order that we will read them)**

Students must acquire their own copies of the following texts:

- William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (any edition)
- Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*\* (any edition)
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (Vintage edition)

- Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*\* (Pantheon edition)

\*These selections are common to all LIT 2000 sections taught by the English Department

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION** (see below for Assignment Descriptions and 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 (20%)
  - 1 Midterm Exam (20%)
- My Virtual Bookshelf Project (5%)

### **COURSE POLICIES**

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. You may miss up to three classes without penalty. After three unexcused absences, you will lose 3% off your final grade for each additional unexcused absence. If you miss two full weeks of class (6 unexcused absences), you will automatically fail the course. Arriving late to class three times will count as one absence. 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.
3. *Paper Format & Submission*: Except for the Brief Responses, which will be submitted to the Discussion Boards on Canvas, all papers should be formatted per MLA standards (TNR 12, double-spaced, one-inch margins, MLA header) and submitted to the assignment's Dropbox on Canvas as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file. (Canvas cannot process mac files)
4. *Late Papers/Assignments*: Papers that are submitted late will lose ten percent off their final grade for each day that they are late. After three days, I will not accept late papers. Brief Responses will not be accepted late.
5. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
6. *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/>.
7. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
8. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
9. *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.
10. *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>

11. 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>
12. *Classroom behavior and netiquette*: 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. You must turn cell phones to silent before coming to class. Cell phones may never be used in class. You 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.
13. *UF's policy on Harassment*: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

### ***1. Participation and In-Class Discussion***

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 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 pen or pencil with which to write. Participation in writing lessons and peer review workshops is also included in this grade.

### ***2. Brief responses***

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (300-500 word) response to the day's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our course Discussion Board BEFORE class the day on which they are due. Please consult the Brief Responses assignment prompt for further instructions and check the Canvas Discussion Boards for the due date for Brief Responses to each text.

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. These comments should also be submitted before class. Throughout the semester, I will provide some

creative alternative prompts for the Brief Responses. Students may choose to submit one of these creative responses in lieu of the traditional prompts listed on the assignment sheet.

### **3. *Close Reading Assignment: 2-3 pages***

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. Please consult the assignment prompt for a more detailed description of this essay.

### **4. *Critical Analysis Paper: 3-4 pages***

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. Please consult the assignment prompt for a more detailed description of this essay.

### **5. *Midterm Exam***

This take-home exam will be distributed on-line (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of matching, multiple choice, and short essay questions based on readings, lectures and discussion. Submitted exams will be assessed for evidence of collusion. I will release a more detailed prompt during the week of the exam.

### **6. *My Virtual Bookshelf Project***

This visual project will ask students to engage both critically and creatively with the question of why we read and how literature has shaped them. Students will choose a visual platform, like Tumblr, Pinterest, or Instagram, and construct their Virtual Bookshelf. Each Virtual Bookshelf should showcase at least 5 texts, one of which should come from this course. Each text should be represented by an image and caption. Captions should attest to the value of the text and articulate how this text speaks to some of the themes we will discuss this semester, including world making, self-construction, discovery, shaping citizens, moving beyond the self, and/or new ways of seeing. These projects will be shared with the class. Please consult the assignment prompt for a more detailed explanation.

## **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>

## READING SCHEDULE

*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 (8/21)	Syllabus and Course Overview	Eagleton, "What is Literature?"	Dante's <i>Inferno</i> Cantos 1-4
Week Two (8/28)	<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 (9/4)	<b>Labor Day-No Class</b>	Dickinson selected poems*	Dickinson selected poems*
Week Four (9/11)	Yeats selected poems	Munro, "Moons of Jupiter"	O'Connor "A Good Man is Hard to Find."
Week Five (9/18)	Writing Lesson: Organization	<b>Close Reading Workshop</b>	<b>Close Reading Due</b>
<b>Unit Two: Why Write Literature?</b>			
Week Six (9/25)	"The Six Motives of Creativity"	<i>Beloved</i> Foreword-59	<i>Beloved</i> 60-159
Week Seven (10/2)	<i>Beloved</i> 160-197	<i>Beloved</i> 200-276	<b>Homecoming-No Class</b>
Week Eight (10/9)	<i>Beloved</i> 280-end	Langston Hughes Selected Poems	Midterm Review
Week Nine (10/16)	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> * Book I, ch I-IV	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> * Book I, ch V-VIII
Week Ten (10/23)	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> * Book IV, ch I-VI	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i> * Book IV, ch VII-XII	Writing Lesson: Style
<b>Unit Three: Why Read Literature?</b>			
Week Eleven (10/30)	"Neil Gaiman on Why We Read"	Joyce, "The Dead" 1-12	Joyce, "The Dead" 12-end
Week Twelve (11/6)	<i>East, West: Stories</i> "At the Auction"	<i>East, West: Stories</i> "Good Advice"	<b>Veteran's Day-No Class</b>
Week Thirteen (11/13)	<i>Persepolis</i> * 1-93	<i>Persepolis</i> * 94-154	<i>Persepolis</i> * 155-232
Week Fourteen (11/20)	<i>Persepolis</i> * 233-end	<b>Thanksgiving-No Class</b>	<b>Thanksgiving-No Class</b>
Week Fifteen (11/27)	<b>My Virtual Bookshelf Due</b>	Writing Lesson: Argumentation	<b>Critical Analysis Workshop</b>
Week Sixteen (12/4)	<b>Critical Analysis Due</b>	"Holding on to What Makes Us Human"	<b>Reading Day-No Class</b>