



**WHY
READ
NOW
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ENC 1145-3309

#13704

Fall 2019 MWF 9 / 4:05-4:55 P.M.

CBD 0212

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Office: TUR 4103 W F 8/3:00-3:50

COURSE DESCRIPTION

No doubt we all agree reading is important. But why? What does it mean to actually read something? Seriously, what even is reading? And why should we do it? Answers to these questions are far less obvious than one probably at first thinks.

Nonetheless, this course seeks answers to these fundamental questions about reading, and they begin to take shape, this course presumes, when we reflect on *how* we read. We will reflect on our own reading habits by turning to texts in which encounters with artworks—or in which the acts of reading, writing, and the creation of readerly experience—are central, from European modernism (Virginia Woolf, Franz Kafka) to contemporary poetry (Cathy Park Hong, Layli Long Soldier) and science fiction (William Gibson, Ted Chiang).

Often understood as a solitary act, we will see that reading is quite the opposite: it is a social act. Reading helps us to narrate—and thus to make thinkable—the relationships that structure our everyday lives. Given this grounding presupposition, how does one not only read but read *well*? More particularly, how does one read well in the 21st century? And, more importantly, to what ends? How does one read generously, ethically, politically? How can reading, and the shared experience of a text, enable us to stitch artistic and cultural texts into the fabric of our individual and collective lives, to reflect on *and* shape the makeup of our reality?

This course will be of interest to students wanting to learn about how literature, and culture more generally, underwrite daily life; how to become conscious readers of all sorts of cultural “texts”; and how to better understand how art and culture play fundamental roles in how we relate to each other at all levels of social life, in ways seen and unseen. Fair warning: the assigned readings will likely be challenging to many students. But these challenges themselves will be a significant part of our discussions, and the texts will be rewarding to those seeking to rethink their own assumptions about, and approaches to, reading literature.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) or Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).

Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition

courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.

Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6,000 words.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication, and critical thinking:

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

TEXTS & READING GUIDELINES

All readings (inclusive page ranges) are to be completed *before* the day they appear on the schedule (see final page of syllabus below). This course requires not only careful and conscious reading, but also a sincere effort to discuss and engage with the text and your peers during class meetings. So, come having read the assigned texts and ready to discuss them.

The following texts are **required** and are available in the UF Bookstore. You may order used copies; just ensure 1) they are the correct edition and 2) they arrive in time to read for discussions.

- June Casagrande, *The Joy of Syntax* 978-0399581069
- William Gibson, *Pattern Recognition* 978-0425192931
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* 978-1400078776
- TBD by beginning of semester:
 - Layli Long Soldier, *Whereas* 978-1555977672
 - or Cathy Park Hong, *Engine Empire* 978-0393346480
- Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* 978-0156907392

ADDITIONAL READINGS—including poems, short stories, and criticism—will be provided via Canvas or will be available through UF’s libraries. Anything that does not appear in the list above will either be available to you for free or is provided by a service bought by your tuition.

ASSIGNMENTS

TECHNICAL DEFINITION: READING: Answer the question: <i>What</i> is reading?	250 words 5% 50 pts.
HOW TO READ 1: A close reading of one passage from one text discussed so far.	500 words 10% 100 pts.
HOW TO READ 2: A close reading of one of one passage from one text discussed so far (excepting the object of your last assignment).	750 words 10% 100 pts.
HOW TO READ 3: A synthetic close reading of two of texts discussed so far (including, possibly, one text you’ve previously written about).	1,000 words 15% 150 pts.
ABSTRACT: A brief, argumentative proposal, sketching your final project (Why Read?: A Manifesto).	500 words 5% 50 pts.
HOW TO READ: A NEW HABITUS: Part of this course is the analysis of texts that stage their own encounters with the arts. Similarly, you will be required to create those encounters for yourself, to fashion a new “habitus”—habits, skills, dispositions, sociality—for reading and for making textual experience a conscious part of your everyday reality. Over the semester, cultivate a new reading “habitus” that will help you to read the texts for this class (and perhaps other texts as well), and submit an explanation of <i>your</i> “habitus” and its effect on your ways of reading.	1,000 words 15% 150 pts.
WHY READ?: A MANIFESTO: Notice how the question has changed since your first assignment this semester. Do you have a new answer to this new question? After dwelling with this latter question all semester, and after the cumulative work of your past assignments, your final assignment must make a claim about why we (should) read now.	2,000 words 25% 250 pts.

PARTICIPATION:

A genuine effort to come to class with all required texts read and a readiness to discuss them and to engage your peers' comments, questions, and discussions. Includes proper use of office hours.

15%
150 pts.

GRADING SCALE

A	100 – 94	C	75 – 73
A-	93 – 90	C-	72 – 70
B+	89 – 86	D+	69 – 66
B	85 – 83	D	65 – 63
B-	82 – 80	D-	62 – 60
C+	79 – 76	E	59 – 0

GRADING CRITERIA

- Projects make thought-provoking and ambitious arguments; demonstrate a mastery of the assigned texts; demonstrate creative and independent thinking; and expand on the implications of class discussions.
- Arguments are logically coherent and well-supported by strong interpretations of primary and secondary texts. They demonstrate complexity of *thought* rather than complexity of language.
- Prose is well-written, engaging, and well-organized; it deploys elements of style adequate to the course and has few grammatical and mechanical errors.
- Information from both primary and secondary sources is accurate, and properly cited with foot- or endnotes in Chicago Manual Style 17th ed. The Purdue Online Writing Lab is a fantastic crash course in the Chicago (and other) formatting and style manual. For the purposes of our course, you must familiarize yourself with how to properly cite common texts (books, articles, chapters from a book, poems, etc.) on which your written assignments will rely. See: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html
- Contributions to class discussions build on and expand previous discussions, respond thoughtfully to others' contributions, include thoughtfully prepared questions and discussions points, and demonstrate an excellent grasp of the assigned readings.
- Assignments are graded for the complexity of thought and the quality of their arguments. Therefore, I will not grade any assignment that advocates sexist or misogynist; racist; or homo-, trans-, or xenophobic stances. Strictly speaking, these are not arguments at all; they are opinions, which require nothing remotely resembling critical thought.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

- Students who miss five **(5)** class meetings will not earn credit for the course. For more information on UF attendance policies, including exceptions to the attendance policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

COMPORTMENT

- You are expected to understand and follow basic principles of classroom decorum. Unruly or disrespectful behavior in class will not be tolerated.
- This is a small class involving lots of discussion, participation, and group work. Thus, transgressions such as cell phone use, non-course-related web-browsing, sleeping, talking above others, etc. create significant disruptions to our dialogue and communal learning environment and will not be tolerated.
- Be considerate of diverse identities within and outside of the classroom and treat your peers with respect.
- *UF's policy 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/>

OFFICE HOURS & COMMUNICATION

- I host office hours not only to help you in your assignments, but also to further our discussions and to give you opportunities to expand our engagement with the course materials. So, use my hours for consultation, elaborating on class conversations, planning assignments, pitching ideas, working out interpretations of texts, discussing independently discovered sources, and so on. I will not read assignments during office hours to see if they're "what I'm looking for" nor will I proofread assignments before submission. Treat office hours like any other kind of professional meeting, i.e., come prepared to carry a conversation.
- Email is for quick, routine queries or emergency updates (e.g., informing me you're sick, making an office hours appt., and so on).
- 24-48 hours is a reasonable amount of time to wait to receive a response to email queries. I will read all your emails in a timely fashion and respond within reasonable day-time hours.

ASSIGNMENTS AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- You must complete *all* assignments to receive credit for this course.

- I will not accept late work. Exceptions *may* be made in *exceptional* circumstances, but you must first discuss the possibility of such accommodations with me. I will not such exceptions *ex post facto*.
- I require hard copies of your assignments at the beginning of the classes in which they are due. You must also submit electronic copies of all assignments via Canvas.
- Keep duplicate copies of all assignments. In the unlikely event that I lose a hard copy, or of a corrupted Canvas submission, for example, we'll want an easily accessible backup. Similarly, save all returned, graded work until the semester is over and grades are finalized.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- *Academic Honesty and Definition of 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.
- *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 your instructor 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/>
- *Grading Policies.* 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.
- *Course Evaluations.* Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>.

SCHEDULE

Readings are to be read *before* the class meeting in which they appear. You are responsible for completing the inclusive page range for each meeting. If there is no inclusive pp. range, read the text in its entirety.

This schedule may be subject to change throughout the semester.

	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
AUGUST		21 Introduction	23 Berger, "Past Present"
	26 Kafka, "The Cares of a Family Man"	28 "The Cares" cont.; Kafka, "Letter to Oskar Pollak"	30 Technical Definition ; Borges, from <i>Labyrinths</i>
SEPTEMBER	2– No Class / Labor Day	4 from <i>Labyrinths</i>	6 from <i>Labyrinths</i>
	9 Woolf, <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	11 <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	13 <i>To the Lighthouse</i>
	16 How to Read 1 Due ; <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	18 <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	20, <i>Never Let Me Go</i>
	23 Ishiguro, <i>Never Let Me Go</i>	25 <i>Never Let Me Go</i>	27 <i>Never Let Me Go</i>
	30 How to Read 2 Due ; <i>Never Let Me Go</i>		
OCTOBER		2; <i>Never Let Me Go</i>	4 No Class / Homecoming
	7 Reading Habitus Due ; <i>Never Let Me Go</i> ; Brouillette, "Tragedy Mistaken..."	No Class / I will be traveling the rest of this week	
	14 Long Soldier, <i>Whereas or Hong, Engine Empire</i>	16 <i>Whereas or Engine Empire</i>	18 <i>Whereas or Engine Empire</i>
	21 <i>Whereas or Engine Empire</i>	23 <i>Whereas or Engine Empire</i>	25 How to Read 3 Due ; <i>Whereas or Engine Empire</i>
	28 Gibson, "The Gernsback Continuum"	30 "Gernsback"	
NOVEMBER			1 Abstract Due ; Gibson, <i>Pattern Recognition</i>
	4 <i>Pattern Recognition</i>	6 <i>Pattern Recognition</i>	8 <i>Pattern Recognition</i>
	11 No Class / Veteran's Day/Remembrance Day	13 <i>Pattern Recognition</i>	15 <i>Pattern Recognition</i>
	18 Chiang, "The Story of Your Life"	20 "The Story of Your Life"	22 "The Story of Your Life"
	25 TBD	27 No Class / Thanksgiving	29 No Class / Thanksgiving
DECEMBER	2 TBD	4 Why Read?: Manifesto Due	