

LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature (Class #12552)

Instructor: Judy Colindres
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Course Section: 17B9
Course Time: MWF (10:40-11:40AM)
Course Location: MAT 0005
Course Pre-Requisite: ENC 1101

Course Description

This course examines the unique and changing role literature has played in individuals' lives and in society. It is centered on three deceptively simple questions: What is literature? Why do we write literature? And why do we read literature? It introduces students to a range of literary genres from different countries and historical periods.

The primary aim of this course is to help students develop the critical skills of analysis and interpretation. Students will also learn how formal and stylistic elements as well as historical context shape the meaning and significance of literature. By developing skills for reading literature and identifying literary contexts, students will develop their ability to decipher meaning from language and better understand their own interactions with 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 it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate content knowledge 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.

General Education Designation

This course fulfills three credit hours of **Humanities (H) requirements**. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and

problems from multiple perspectives. **A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.**

State Core Course Description

In this course, students will be assigned readings representative of a broad range of literary genres and cultures. These readings will cover a variety of literary movements and historical eras. The readings will include, but are not limited to, selections from the Western canon. Written analysis of literary works may be required. Students will be provided with opportunities to practice critical interpretation.

State Core Course Learning Outcomes

- Students will identify a variety of literary movements, historical eras, and/or cultural contexts.
- Students will demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of America's constitutional republic.

Required Texts

Students will need the following complete texts:

- *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry
- *Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison
- *I Was Their American Dream* (2019) by Malaka Gharib

Shorter texts and excerpts will be provided to students via Canvas.

Grade Distribution

Summary of Grades

- Attendance & Participation (25%)
- Reading Responses (25%)
- Close Reading Assignment (25%)
- Final Exam (25%)

Attendance & Participation (200 points)

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. The instructor will use the Canvas attendance feature to award attendance points throughout the semester.

Participation: Students are expected to review 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. Final participation scores will be assessed at the

end of the semester. In-class activities will also be assigned via Canvas for participation points.

Reading Responses (200 points)

Before each period, students are required to contribute an interpretative question or response to on an online discussion forum. Students will be assigned as discussion leaders for select days and will act as participants for the remaining classes. Discussion boards will be posted via Canvas.

Description: Interpretive questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for your analysis of themes, figurative language, and symbolism within the narrative. They also call for discussion regarding the period, history, politics, and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of interpretive questions—which often use phrases such as "why do you think" or "how did you interpret"—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.*

Close Reading Assignment (1,000 words; 200 points)

This assignment will test students' 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. Limited outside sources may be used for this assignment.

Final Exam (200 points)

The final assessment for the course will be designed by the student to demonstrate their engagement with course themes and critical analysis skills. Students will have the option to write a reflection paper, complete an oral exam, or submit a creative project. All three options will require students to practice interpretation and analysis as they have done throughout the semester. Students will be assessed for thorough projects that clearly analyze textual evidence and make contextual connections.

Grading Policies

Grading Scale & GPA Equivalent

A (4.0) 100-93	C (2.0) 76-73
A- (3.67) 92-90	C- (1.67) 72-70
B+ (3.33) 89-87	D+ (1.33) 69-67
B (3.0) 86-83	D (1.0) 63-66

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>

B- (2.67) 82-80	D- (0.67) 62-60
C+ (2.33) 79-77	E (0) 59-

Grading Method: The writing assignments in this course will be graded holistically, and the instructor will provide written feedback for each paper. A general rubric for course assessments is included below. More specific guidelines may be included in Canvas.

Letter Grade	Assessment
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content and skills applied in the essay are well-developed • argument is persuasive with detailed reasoning and thorough evidence • organization includes an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, and easy to follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent, clear, and appropriate for the assignment • little to no mechanical errors
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content or skills applied in the essay need development • argument is persuasive, but further reasoning or evidence is needed • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, or easy to follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent overall but unclear or inappropriate at times • few mechanical errors
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content or skills applied in the essay need significant development • additional reasoning and evidence are needed improve persuasiveness • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement or topic and concluding sentences and easy to follow paragraphs • writing style is coherent overall but unclear and inappropriate at times • some mechanical errors
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content and skills applied in the essay need significant development • argument is not persuasive; reasoning and evidence are lacking • organization is missing an identifiable thesis statement, topic and concluding sentences, and easy to follow paragraphs • writing style struggles with logic, clarity, and appropriateness • frequent mechanical errors

E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course content and skills are not applied in the paper • reasoning for argument is unclear and evidence is missing • lack of organization causes difficulty following the argument • writing style is incoherent and inappropriate for the assignment • mechanical errors limit the ability to read the paper
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Classroom Policies

Communication: Communication is key when it comes to any issues or challenges that prevent students from participating in class, turning in an assignment on time, or impact their overall performance in our course. Communicating as early as possible when experiencing a challenge will ensure that the student and instructor can work together to maximize success in the course.

Email: Emails will be addressed within 48 hours. Please be aware that the instructor responds to emails on weekdays during business hours. Therefore, students should not expect quick responses after 5PM on a weekday or during the weekend.

Attendance: This is a discussion-based course. Attendance is mandatory. If a student misses class for any reason, they are responsible for informing themselves as to what was covered. Absences are counted by **class periods**:

- Students will earn a lowered course grade after **three** unexcused 50-minute absences.
- Students will automatically fail the course if they miss more than **two weeks** of class (failure *at* the **seventh** 50-minute absence).
- Students late to class by more than 10 minutes will be marked tardy. **Three** tardies will count as one absence.

Excused absences include university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, quarantine, illness, or serious family emergencies. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed.

Make-up Work: *All assignments must be completed to receive credit for this course.*

Making up missed work due to documented illness or emergency is at the discretion of the instructor on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the instructor or, when applicable, the [Dean of Students Office](#) as soon as you can to make them aware of the documented illness emergency.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with [university policies](#).

Paper Submissions: All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) documents to Canvas at the assigned deadline. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. MLA formatting is required.

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

Classroom Behavior: Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Effective course discussion requires that students demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from their own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism:

“Plagiarism. A Student must 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. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. 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.
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. 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” (13).

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code, which can be found at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>.

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). Please contact Ms. Blount at cblount@ufl.edu. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Course Evaluations. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting: <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Students in Distress: For guidance during distressing situations, please contact **U Matter We Care**, the **Counseling and Wellness Center**, or the **Dean of Students Office**. They can help

students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

U Matter, We Care: (352) 294-2273

Counseling and Wellness Center: (352) 392-1575

Dean of Students (CARE): (352) 392-1261 or **Peabody Hall** (Second Floor)

Student Health Care Center: (352) 392-1161

Field & Fork Pantry: 352-294-2208 (located near **McCarty B**)

UF 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/about/title-ix-rights/>

UF COVID-19 Response: In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones:

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.uf for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

Class Schedule

Students should note that the schedule is a guideline and may change.

Unit I: *What is literature?*

Week	Reading(s)
Week 1 (1/13 – 1/17): Introduction	Syllabus AND “How to Read and View” by Ramzi Fawaz
Week 2 (1/20 – 1/24): Poetry *No Class 1/20 – Holiday	“Essential oils are wrung” AND “Wild Nights – Wild Nights!” by Emily Dickinson

Week 3 (1/27 – 1/31): Short Story	“A Good Man is Hard to Find” (1953) by Flannery O’Connor AND “Everyday Use” (1973) by Alice Walker
Week 4 (2/3 – 2/7): Drama	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry
Week 5 (2/10 – 2/14): Drama	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1959) by Lorraine Hansberry
Week 6 (2/17 – 2/21): Workshop Week	Conferences

Unit II: *Why do we write?*

Week 7 (2/24 – 2/28): Exploring Identity Close Reading Assignment due 2/24	Excerpt from <i>I, Rigoberta Menchú</i> (1983) by Rigoberta Menchú AND “Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective” (1979) by Leslie Marmon Silko
Week 8 (3/3 – 3/7): Shaping Citizens	<i>Beloved</i> (1987) by Toni Morrison
Week 9 (3/10 – 3/14): Shaping Citizens	<i>Beloved</i> (1987) by Toni Morrison
Week 10 (3/17 – 3/21): N/A *No Class – Spring Break	N/A
Week 11 (3/24 – 3/28): Shaping Citizens	<i>Beloved</i> (1987) by Toni Morrison AND Excerpt from <i>Playing in the Dark</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison

Unit III: *Why do we read?*

Week 11 (3/31-4/4): New Ways of Seeing *No Class 4/11 – Judy is at a conference!	<i>I Was Their American Dream</i> (2019) by Malaka Gharib
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Week 12 (4/7 – 4/11): New Ways of Seeing	<i>I Was Their American Dream</i> (2019) by Malaka Gharib
Week 13 (4/14 – 4/18): Finding New Selves	“The Story of My Body” (1993) by Judith Ortiz Cofer AND Excerpt from <i>How to Leave Hialeah</i> (2009) by Jennine Capó Crucet
Week 14 (4/21 – 4/23): Conclusion Final Exam due 4/23	“ What reading slowly taught me about writing ” by Jacqueline Woodson