

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
LIT2000 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE
SYLLABUS
Spring 2025**



INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Instructor	Brooke Whitaker
Office	TBD
Office Hours	TBD
Contact	bwhitaker@ufl.edu

COURSE INFORMATION:

Time	Period 6
Location	MWF

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.

Among the primary aims of this course is to help students develop the critical skill 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 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 interactions with science, technology, media, commerce, and politics.

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 STUDENT 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.

GENERAL EDUCATION DESCRIPTION:

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.

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.

Additionally, by the conclusion of the course it is expected that 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:

All texts listed in the syllabus are required. At the start of the semester, the instructor will notify students what works need to be purchased versus what will be provided through Canvas.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Summary of grading

- Attendance & participation/in-class discussion (10%)
- Participation in Course Wiki, blog, or discussion board (20%)
- 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (15%)
- 2 Critical Analysis papers (15% each—30%)
- Multimodal Project (25%)

1. Attendance & Participation (10%)

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by class roll or sign-up sheet. Students will lose 1% from their final grade for every unexcused absence. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and the 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.

Participation: Students are expected to review the assigned readings before class. Each week will begin with a series of basic questions on the contents of the assigned readings. If students are unable to answer these questions, it will be assumed that they have not prepared the homework and will lose 1%. Consistent participation in class discussions, demonstrated knowledge of the assigned readings will also contribute to this portion of the final grade.

2. Participation in Course Blog (20%)

Before each discussion section, students are required to contribute a question or an answer to on an online discussion forum.

Description of assignment: *Interpretive* (or *Critical*) questions are open-ended and are concerned with textual meaning. They ask for opinions on themes, figurative language and symbolism within the narrative. They also ask for judgments regarding the period, history, politics and ethical questions that are relevant to the text. The open-endedness of Interpretive and Critical questions—which often use phrases such as "do you think" or "why do you suppose"—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.

3. Close Reading Assignment: 750 words, 15%

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.

The Close Reading assignment is due during the 6th week of the semester

4. Two Critical Analysis Papers: 1,00 words each, 15% each – 30% total

This assignment asks students to combine close reading skills with critical concepts or historical information introduced in one of the supplemental readings. The goal is for students to produce a strong conceptual argument supported by textual and contextual evidence.

The Critical Analysis assignments are due during the 7th and 14th week of the semester.

These papers will be graded on a point scale of 1 to 10: 9-10, excellent; 8-8.9, good to very good; 7-7.9 average to good; 6-6.9, below average; below 6 is not a passing grade. All students, whatever their grade, will have the option to rewrite the essay.

5. Multimodal Project, 25%

Students will select a work of literature and craft an analytical multimodal project. If the text is not one read during the course, it will have to be approved by the instructor.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

- **Makeup Policy:** 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 missed exams or late assignments. Where possible, make-ups should be arranged by email or in person prior to the expected absence. In case of

illness, student should contact instructor on his or her return to classes.

- **Late Policy:** A class roll will be passed around at the beginning of class. If a student is late, he or she will have to sign the roll after class. Such lateness distracts other students and the instructor and will affect the student's final participation grade. Students will lose 0.5% from their final grade each time they arrive late.
- **Cell phone policy:** Students must turn cell phones to silent before coming to class. Each time a student's cell phone rings or each time that a student texts during class, 1% will be deducted from that student's final grade.

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93 (4.0)	92-90 (3.67)	89-87 (3.33)	86-83 (3.0)	82-80 (2.67)	79-77 (2.33)	76-73 (2.0)	72-70 (1.67)	69-67 (1.33)	63-66 (1.0)	62-60 (0.67)	59- (0)

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>

Academic Honesty: Students are required to be honest in their coursework, may not use notes during quizzes or exams, and must properly cite all sources that they have consulted for their projects. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students, and may result in failure of the assignment in question and/or the course. For University of Florida's honor code, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352 392-1575; <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>).

Online Course Evaluation: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

CLASS SCHEDULE



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

UNIT I – WHAT IS LITERATURE?

- WEEK 1 **INTRODUCTION: The Borders of Literature?**
Reading:
“Introduction: What is literature?,” Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983), pp. 1-15
- WEEK 2 **Drama**
Reading:
Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
- WEEK 3/4 **Epic and Poetry**
Reading:
Epic of Gilgamesh and Beowulf
- WEEK 5 **Short Story:**
Reading:
Franz Kafka, “The Penal Colony”
Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat”
Ursula K. Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas”
- WEEK 6 **WRITING & REVIEW**

UNIT II – WHY DO WE WRITE?

- WEEK 7 **Self-Expression/Self-Construction:**
Reading:
Osamu Dazai, *No Longer Human*
- WEEK 8 **World Making (Cosmopoiesis)**
Reading:
James Joyce, “The Dead”
Marcel Proust, *Swann’s Way* (opening chapter)

WEEK 9/10 **Shaping Citizens: Moral Instruction**

Reading:

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

WEEK 11 **WRITING & REVIEW**

UNIT III ***WHY DO WE READ?***

WEEK 12 **Exploration & Discovery:**

Reading:

Terry Pratchet, *Night Watch*

WEEK 13 **Moving Beyond the Self**

Reading:

Rachel Carson, *Under the Sea-Wind*

Margaret Atwood, "Elegy for the Giant Tortoises"

WEEK 14 **Finding New Selves**

Reading:

Carol Swain, *Gast*

WEEK 15 **New Ways of Seeing**

Reading:

Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven*

WEEK 16 **Conclusion: Where to now?**

Reading:

Does Great Literature Make Us Better? Gregory Currie.

http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/01/does-great-literature-make-us-better/?_r=0