

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
LIT2000 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE
SYLLABUS
Fall 2021

Instructor Name: Ms. Claudia Mitchell

Course meeting times: MWF, Period 4 (10:40am-11:30am)

Classroom: MAT 0118

Remote Classroom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96156102811>

Office Hours: M, Period 6/7; Location TBD. Office hours temporarily on Zoom until office space is allocated

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: claudiamitchell@ufl.edu

Course Pre-Requisite: ENC 1101

NOTE: In response to student interest, this class will include a remote learning option. Class will be held in person each day, but will also be streamed over Zoom via the link above. Students may attend class either remotely or in-person.

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.

*Since this course includes perspectives from marginalized voices, it is important we be mindful and engage in discussion with care and empathy.

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 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:

- *Inferno*, Dante Alighieri
- *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare (Folger Shakespeare Library version recommended)
- "Theme for English B," "Harlem," Langston Hughes
- "Morning Song," Sylvia Plath
- "A Good Man is Hard to Find," Flannery O'Connor
- "O Youth and Beauty!," John Cheever
- *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, Rigoberta Menchu (translation by Ann Wright)
- *Swann's Way*, Marcel Proust (translation by C.K. Scott Monsneff)
- *Beloved*, Toni Morrison
- *Don Quixote*, Cervantes (translation by John Ormsby)
- *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, Carlo Levi (translation by Frances Frenaye)
- *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi

Nearly all of these texts are available for free online in some form.

The texts which are translated may vary across editions, since some will be different translations of the original text. The translations noted above are the ones I will be teaching from, but reading a different translation for the class is not an issue, and will in fact enhance our class discussions of translation as an art form.

Feel free to also check these books' availability on [the UF Smathers Library website](#) and the [Alachua County Libraries website](#).

Here is the website of a local book vendor, [Third House Books](#), where you can place your book orders.

Here are other, nation-wide book vendor alternatives for you to place your textbook orders with: [Bookshop](#) (the latest, hippest, online book market for independent booksellers) [AbeBooks.com](#) (second hand, affordable; potentially longer receipt time) [Amazon Books](#)

Any additional required readings will be provided in-class.

Grade Distribution:

1. Attendance & Participation (20%)
2. 4 Brief Responses (20%)
3. 1 Close Reading of a literary text or passage (15%)
4. 1 Critical Analysis paper (25%)
5. Midterm Exam (20%)

1. Attendance & Participation (20%)

Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class. Consistent contribution to class discussions, participation in in-class activities, 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 during 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.

2. Brief Responses (20%)

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (300 word) response to the week's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our course Canvas discussion board BEFORE class the day on which they are due. Discussion boards will be available to students each week (excepting weeks when a major assignment is due, and holiday weeks like Thanksgiving). Students can choose any four of the posted discussion boards throughout the semester to make their four required responses.

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; completion of these comments will be included in the final grade.

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 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.

4. Critical Analysis Paper: 1,500 words (25%)

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.

5. Midterm Exam (20%)

This exam will be distributed online via Canvas. The exam will be comprised of matching and short essay questions based on readings, lectures, and class discussion.

Course Policies

Completion Policy: You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

Attendance Policy: This class will be primarily discussion-based, and attendance and participation are both extremely important to your success in the course. Attendance at each class session is expected with the exception of up to three unexcused absences, and any excused absences. Absences will be excused in accordance with UF policy. Excused absences include those involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, and absences due to illness or injury (<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. More than three unexcused absences will result in a lowered course grade. There will be a separate participation grade that will be evaluated based on your level of active engagement in class. This grade will take into consideration your participation in class discussion, your attentiveness in lectures, and your engagement in class activities.

Late Policy: Latecomers receive partial absences, and must see me after class so I know you attended.

Paper Format & Submission: Class assignments are to be submitted via Canvas, in .doc or .docx format.

Late Papers/ Assignments Policy: Work submitted late without a previously-arranged extension will receive an automatic lowered score of one letter grade per day late.

“Hurricane” Policy: Here in Florida, we sometimes cancel classes or postpone assignment due dates during hurricane season in the event of severe weather. In these instances, the University and instructors recognize that personal health and safety comes first—meaning, before classwork. Likewise, I understand that sometimes students will experience extenuating circumstances that prevent them from submitting assignments on time—our own personal hurricanes. Students in this class may submit to me a “hurricane policy request” once during the semester. No documentation or personal details regarding the reason for the extension need be submitted as part of this request. In response to the request, I will grant a no-questions-asked assignment deadline extension. Additional extension requests will require documentation.

Academic Honesty:

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>). The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall 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. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.**
- 2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.**

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8, October, 2013)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code. Instances of plagiarism constitute dishonesty and a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. If you are unsure if what you are doing is considered academic dishonesty, ask your instructor before turning in an assignment. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute proof of plagiarism. Some (but not all!) examples of plagiarism are copying-and-pasting anything from the Internet without proper quotations and attributive tags, using work you have turned in to other classes without permission from the instructor, and insufficient paraphrasing.

If you commit academic dishonesty, you will receive a zero for the assignment, and the instructor will submit the incident to the Dean of Students Office as an Honor Code violation. Punishments can vary, but the instructor will recommend failing the course.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor early in the semester.

UF 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 (cblount@ufl.edu), in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

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/>).

UF's Policy on Sexual 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/>

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>.

Cell Phone Policy: Students must turn cell phones to silent before attending class.

Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

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

MAIN GRADING CATEGORIES

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or

	satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

Class Schedule

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

UNIT 1 – WHAT IS LITERATURE?

8/23-8/27

WEEK 1

Introduction

Monday: Introducing Syllabus & Class Expectations

Wednesday: Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature?"

Friday: Pam Bellock, "For Better Social Skills, Scientists Recommend a Little Chekov"; Joseph Frankel, "Reading Literature Won't Give You Superpowers"

8/30-9/3

WEEK 2

The Epic / Translation as Art

Monday: Dante's *Inferno*, Cantos I & XXVI

Wednesday: Continued discussion of *Inferno*

Friday: Listen: NPR, "The Art of Translation"

9/6-9/10

WEEK 3

Poetry

Monday: NO CLASS Monday 9/6; Labor Day

Wednesday: Sylvia Plath, "Morning Song";

Friday: Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B" and "Harlem";

9/13-9/17

WEEK 4

Drama

Monday: Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 1

Wednesday: *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 2

Friday: *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3

9/20-9/24

WEEK 5

Drama

Monday: *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 4

Wednesday: *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5

Friday: Viewing (in-class): *The Merchant of Venice* stage production (clips)

9/27-10/1

WEEK 6

Short Story

Monday: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

Wednesday: John Cheever, "O Youth and Beauty!"

Friday: CLOSE READING ASSIGNMENT DUE FRIDAY, 10/1

UNIT II – *WHY DO WE WRITE LITERATURE?*

10/4-10/8

WEEK 7

World-Making

Monday: Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way* (excerpt: "Swann in Love," first half)

Wednesday: "Swann in Love," second half

Friday: NO CLASS Friday 10/8; Homecoming

10/11-10/15

WEEK 8

Exploration and Discovery

Monday: NO CLASS Monday 10/11; Instructor Attending Conference

Wednesday: Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (excerpts)

Friday: Continued discussion on *Don Quixote*

10/18-10/22

WEEK 9

Self-Expression and Self-Construction

Monday: Rigoberta Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, Ch. I-XII
Wednesday: *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, Ch. XIII-XXIV
Friday: MIDTERM EXAM DUE ON FRIDAY, 10/22

10/25-10/29

WEEK 10

Shaping Citizens

Monday: *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, Ch. XXV-XXXIV

Wednesday: Watch (in-class): Toni Morrison Interview

Friday: *Beloved*, Ch. 1-7

11/1-11/5

WEEK 11

Shaping Citizens (cont.)

Monday: *Beloved*, Ch. 8-14

Wednesday: *Beloved*, Ch. 15-21

Friday: *Beloved*, Ch. 21-28 (End)

UNIT III **WHY READ LITERATURE?**

11/8-11/12

WEEK 12

Moving Beyond the Self

Monday: Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, Ch.1-8

Wednesday: *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, Ch.9-16

Friday: *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, Ch. 17-25

11/15-11/19

WEEK 13

New Ways of Seeing

Monday: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis 1: The Story of a Childhood*

Wednesday: *Persepolis 2: The Story of a Return*

Friday: Viewing (in-class): *Persepolis*

11/22-11/26

WEEK 14

New Ways of Seeing

Monday: Viewing (in-class): *Persepolis*

NO CLASS Wednesday 11/24; NO CLASS Friday 11/26; Thanksgiving

11/29-12/3

WEEK 15

Conclusion: Where to now?

Monday: Reading (in-class): Students will bring excerpts from their favorite literary works to class, and “show & tell”

Wednesday: Show & Tell, continued

Friday: Show & Tell, continued

12/6-12/8

WEEK 16

Conclusion: Where to now?

Monday: Helen Vendler, "How to Welcome and Nurture the Poets and Painters of the Future"

Wednesday: CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE ON WEDNESDAY 12/8