

## **LIT 2000: Introduction to Literature (Fall 2021)**

### **LIT 2000, Section 15829**

**Instructor Name:** Erika Rothberg

**Course meeting times & locations:**

Tuesday | Period 2 - 3 (8:30 AM - 10:25 AM), MAT 0051

Thursday | Period 3 (9:35 AM - 10:25 AM), MAT 0118

**Office Location and Hours:** (location TBD) Tuesdays/Thursdays 10:30-11:30am or on Zoom by appointment

**Course website:** Canvas

**Instructor Email:** erikarothberg@ufl.edu

### **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. *This course confers H 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.

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

\*Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos I & XXVI  
\*Shakespeare, *Macbeth*  
\*Langston Hughes: "Shakespeare in Harlem," "Harlem"  
\*Sylvia Plath: "The Colossus," "Fever 103°"  
\*Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"  
\*Ryunosuke Akutagawa, "In a Bamboo Grove"  
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*  
James Joyce, "The Dead"  
Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio*  
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*  
Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories*  
Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

\*Starred items will be placed on Canvas, so you will not need to purchase these texts.

Note: While you may purchase any edition of these texts, please be sure that they are not abridged.

## GRADE DISTRIBUTION (see below for 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 (25%)
- 1 Midterm Exam (20%)

## COURSE POLICIES

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: You will receive a lowered course grade after three 50-minute unexcused absences and an automatic failure you miss two weeks of class. Note that missing a *double* session counts as 2 absences. Please refer to official UF policy on excused and unexcused absences here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>
3. *Tardiness* policy: Latecomers receive partial absences and must see me after class so I know you attended. (If you are tardy three times, this counts as an absence.)
4. *Paper Format & Submission*: You must turn in your paper by the start of class digitally on Canvas the day it is due. (Tardiness will still be counted as a partial absence on dates when assignments are due, so keep this in mind as you turn in your work.) Physical printed papers will not be collected.
5. *Late Papers/Assignments*: I do not accept late papers. If you need an extension, you **MUST** contact me at least 24 hours prior to the deadline to make arrangements with me. Extensions requested day-of will not be approved.
6. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
7. *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/>.

8. 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.
9. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
10. *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.
11. *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>
12. 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: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
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: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>
14. *Policy on environmental sustainability*. Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)
15. *Remote option, to be polled on Day 1*: Per University recommendation, this course may offer a HyFlex option to attend class remotely. We will poll this option on day 1 to see if it could logistically work for our group, based on student interest.

## COURSE PROJECTS/ASSIGNMENTS

### 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 also contribute to this portion of the final grade. **You should come to class each day with one typed 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 physical books—and paper and pen or pencil with which to write.

### 2. *Brief responses (Four)*

Four times over the course of the semester students are required to write a brief (300 word) response to the day's reading. These responses must be uploaded to our course blog BEFORE class the day on which they are due. 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 5. *Midterm Exam*

This take-home exam will be distributed online (via Canvas). The exam will be comprised of matching and short essay questions based on readings, lectures, and discussion. Submitted exams will be assessed for evidence of collusion.

#### **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

A rubric will be provided for each assessment signifying what constitutes an A, B, C, D, and F level paper.

**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>

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

*Please note that this is subject to change based on class discussions—if we need more time with a piece than is allotted here, we may shift readings slightly. I will always keep you apprised of any adjustments.*

### **Unit One: What is Literature?**

#### Week 1

Tuesday August 24<sup>th</sup>: Class introduction, syllabus, intro to Epics/Dante's *Inferno* (Canto I)

Thursday August 26<sup>th</sup>: Terry Eagleton, "What is Literature?"; Dante's *Inferno* (Canto I & XXVI):

**Class will be ASYNCHRONOUS due to my scheduled surgery, please see email**

#### Week 2

Tuesday August 31<sup>st</sup>: Wrap *Inferno* (Canto XXVI); begin Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Acts 1-III)

Thursday September 2<sup>nd</sup>: Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Acts IV-V)

#### Week 3

Tuesday September 7<sup>th</sup>: Langston Hughes: "Shakespeare in Harlem," "Harlem" (What happens to a dream deferred)

Thursday September 9<sup>th</sup>: Sylvia Plath: "The Colossus," "Fever 103°"

#### Week 4

Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup>: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

Thursday September 16<sup>th</sup>: Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find"

#### Week 5

Tuesday September 21<sup>st</sup>: Ryunosuke Akutagawa, "In a Bamboo Grove"

Thursday September 23<sup>rd</sup>: Ryunosuke Akutagawa, "In a Bamboo Grove"

### **Unit Two: Why Write Literature?**

#### Week 6

Tuesday September 28<sup>th</sup>: Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (Chapters 1-12)

**Close Reading Assignment Due at the Start of Class Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>**

Thursday September 30<sup>th</sup>: Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (Chapters 13-17)

#### Week 7

Tuesday October 5<sup>th</sup>: James Joyce, "The Dead"

Thursday October 7<sup>th</sup>: James Joyce, "The Dead"

#### Week 8

Tuesday October 12<sup>th</sup>: James Joyce, "The Dead"

Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup>: Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (Chapters 1-8)

**Take home midterm exam: due by the start of class on Tuesday October 19<sup>th</sup>**

#### Week 9

Tuesday October 19<sup>th</sup>: Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (Chapters 9-28)

Thursday October 21<sup>st</sup>: Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio* (Chapters 29-36)

### Week 10

Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup>: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Parts 1 & 2)

Thursday October 28<sup>th</sup>: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Part 3)

### ***Unit Three: Why Read Literature?***

### Week 11

Tuesday November 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Part 4); Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories* ("East" stories)

Thursday November 4<sup>th</sup>: Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories* ("West" stories)

### Week 12

Tuesday November 9<sup>th</sup>: Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories* (Wrap "West" stories, "East, West" stories)

Thursday November 11<sup>th</sup>: No classes, Veterans Day

### Week 13

Tuesday November 16<sup>th</sup>: Mark Edmundson, "The Ideal English Major"

Thursday November 18<sup>th</sup>: Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics* (posted to Canvas)

### Week 15

Tuesday November 23<sup>rd</sup>: Zoom Conferences (appointments to be made the week prior)

Thursday November 25<sup>th</sup>: No classes due to Thanksgiving Break—have a safe and restful day off!

### Week 16

Tuesday November 30<sup>th</sup>: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis* (Read entire graphic novel)

Thursday December 2<sup>nd</sup>: Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

### Week 17

Tuesday December 7<sup>th</sup>: Last day of class, wrap Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*; final paper extra credit offered during in-class discussion only

***Final Paper (Critical Analysis) due at 11:59pm Tuesday December 7<sup>th</sup>!***